

NEW ART examiner

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CHICAGO WASHINGTON LONDON MADRID CORNWALL

JIMI DAMS: A Decayed Business Model

New York Art Scene Washing Out

CHARLES THOMSON on Remodernism
MIKLOS LEGRADY on the plight of Duchamp
MARK STAFF BRANDL on the plight of Chicago
DANIEL NANAVALI on the plight of the image

BRINGING BACK MANIFESTOS:
Declaration of the Independence of the Mind
(Rolland Romain 1919)

REVIEWS:

Terry Frost at Belgrave, St Ives by DEREK GUTHRIE
Newlyn Gallery, Cornwall by KEN TURNER.
Penwith Gallery, Cornwall with SUSANA GOMEZ LAIN
In Washington DC with AL JIRIKOWIC
In Chicago with ANNIE MARKOVICH & DOUG McGOLDRICK
In Pittsburgh with SCOTT TURRI

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The New Art Examiner is the product of the thinking and life-long contribution of Jane Addams Allen. We thank you in her name for reading her independent journal of art criticism.

If you have an interest in our venture, please consult Google, also Art Cornwall, for an interview with the publisher, Derek Guthrie, a painter who keeps his art practice private.

The New Art Examiner has a long history of producing quality and independent art criticism. Chicago and Cornwall, as any art scene, needs writers to keep a professional eye on art activity. Otherwise, insider trading will determine success in this troubled art world.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The New Art Examiner is a not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to examine the definition and transmission of culture in our society; the decision-making processes within museums and schools and the agencies of patronage which determine the manner in which culture shall be transmitted; the value systems which presently influence the making of art as well as its study in exhibitions and books; and, in particular, the interaction of these factors with the visual art milieu.

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EDITORIAL

The Plight of the Image

Susan Sontag wrote in 'On Photography', that everything today exists to end in a photograph. John Berger in Ways of Seeing told us that reproduction had reinforced an agreed canon of images and given us the expectation of what we see and its worth before we see it. Giacometti in his thinned out, sculptured busts brought sculpture near to the moving image as they follow you around the room. We have coloured our world in gloss and matt, silk and shine and now we carry it around in our pockets wherever we go on our phones. The first people who wandered the Serengeti were lost in a landscape and we are lost in a sea of images.

Photographs, like all our inventions, can be used for any reason – to reveal and to hide from sight; to portray or create an event; to affirm or deny a point a view; to enhance or obscure a truth. Without reference points outside the image, we are as lost looking at it as if we had no knowledge whatsoever of the world around us. So polluted has the image become in our hands that only the banal carries any honesty because hardly anyone is interested in manipulating the uninteresting. The filters and choices of those who create news are so heavily imbued with agendas, we can no longer wholly trust them.

One thing we know is that no image carries with it the whole story. That every individual image is a starting point for gaining an understanding. And this is as true for exhibitions of contemporary art as it is for the personal photographs we take of our recent encounters. The image reinforces the culture even when it attempts to comment upon it. Banksy is now mainstream, absorbed into the ocean of images, appropriated by the agendas of those who buy art. The most revolutionary thing an artist can do today is not to produce art. Not to engage in disposability, celebrity, the chauvinism of liberals who still want to engage in the fascism inherent in capitalism - that decision to put money-making first in the order of society's priorities because we have come to believe without money there is nothing. In fact all one needs is human energy to achieve anything.

Modern societies more and more, could not function without the image makers. As more and more people become inured to their original, imaginative impact, and sceptical as to their honesty, the heart of society itself will stop beating. Brexit is the heart-attack that should warn us to change our diet. ■

Daniel Nanavati
 UK Editor

Dear Editor,

The Post Office box we rented six months ago will expire at end of July.

Do you want to renew it for Derek? If not, I need to return the keys. You have one and I have one. Can I come by to pick it up next week or do you want to drop it off with Karin or me?

I see you have published a new issue and it looks pretty good. I think the letter by John Link was so extreme and uncalled for. We have never hurled insults at Cornwall.

Tom

(UK Editor Responds: Tom, I write to you, an ex-colleague and turncoat. Michael Ramstedt your chairman of your rogue board has said publicly I am mad, vain and left the US to set up a rival magazine. He also lies about the NAE's past. He is the Chairman, I assume you are a founding member. You and the others plotted and enforced a strategy to steal the New Art Examiner from the Publisher and make a rogue issue to fool the public. You are equivocating. Michael Ramstedt hurled insults at me and my colleague in Cornwall. You are deceitful I played an honest game and continue to do so. Stop avoiding the real issue of betrayal and attempted theft.

Dear Publisher,

Thank you Derek Guthrie for your editorial reminding us ever of yankee myopism in the Chicago artworld. Wasn't it the "British music invasion" we rightly needed to point the artistic value of U.S. rhythm and blues. US and GB has a long history of validating the points as well as errs in our respective societies. I want to see more of it.

Stephen Markovich

Dear Daniel

I have been meaning to drop you a line for some time, but things have been extraordinarily busy.

I am feeling the need to do a little late nipping in the bud as on numerous occasions I have been agitated a great deal by your approaches. I have not sent Derek this email out of respect for his age, recent upset and knowledge of past health difficulties, however if you feel it appropriate then by all means forward it. I'm not quite but almost beyond the point of compassion.

Over the years I have found myself being extraordinarily tolerant out of respect for Derek's stature as an elder, his achievements in the past with NAE and a certain agreement with some of his analysis of the workings of some aspects of the art world. However that in no way overshadows my intense and growing irritations at various presumptions that continue to be made and my belief that he has a huge number of blind spots. I was particularly but not exclusively angered by the recent posting: "...It is very difficult for us to see ourselves as meaningless to others but I would suggest the sight of May not comforting those who have lost everything is exactly the same as the

market makers in their dealings with the community" - I assume, deciphering a degree of incoherence, that this in some way refers to 'Grenfell Towers'? Is there any where off limits for Derek's self propagation? If this tragedy is going to be used as such, at least have the courtesy of clarifying it clearly. Personally I think it is clumsy at best, and I don't see it at best.

I understand that you have visited the gallery on a couple of occasions in my absence. The usual pushy tone has been adopted in terms of our stocking of NAE and advertising in it with accusations that we have a responsibility to support your magazine and its writers. Tell me - why do we have this responsibility?

On most of your visits Derek never looks at the work on show or makes comment, instead we are greeted with a barrage of diatribe concerning negative analysis of the art world. These negatives are ever growingly cliched, as summed up by the cover of your next issue 'Death of Damien Hirst at Venice'. What is good I wonder in the contemporary art world? I actually saw a lot of good in Venice, having participated in an event myself, but you don't seem to be in the business to champion. I wonder if you are connected enough to what is truly going on in the art world to be able to shout about the positive in fact? Perhaps it is merely a degree of ignorance that draws you to these obvious statements?

This observation of ignorance was further enhanced by your recent suggestions that Rose Hilton is the last remnant of the St Ives school. Firstly what is the St Ives school? second was she a part of it anyway (I think not), thirdly if she was a part of it then perhaps it still exists? and lastly if I understand this particular cliché correctly what about my close friend and internationally acknowledged Trevor Bell? There seems to be blind spots in the distance for you as well as under the nose. This is what I mean by 'stagnation' - I fear you are up to your knees in it.

On the rare occasion that Derek has commented on certain shows in the past, the response has generally been patronising - i.e. 'he is trying so hard'. Patronising has always been the strategic position however, I understood this from Derek's first declaration to me that 'some people were born great and others have greatness thrust upon them, and you my boy (me) belong to the latter'. Again I come back to the point of championing what is good, with that regard what have you ever done for me or the people I work with? We are gaining recognition far and wide, because we have 'defined' something. This has gone unnoticed by yourselves, as has much of the positive in the contemporary art world. In favour of the negative. I reiterate this is 'stagnation'. Because I have had to endure years of candour from Derek, I feel it is important for me to offer a little of my own. But first some context defining my approach. In order to amplify my message as a curator and arts venue my aim has been to attempt to do things better than my competition in terms of

aesthetics, contemporary relevance, timelessness, emotive quality and cerebral intent. I have addressed all these aspects and believe that our current successes are down to this achievement alongside hard work and determination from the artists that we work with. I have looked closely at your publication and the associated postings and I see either no attempt or ability at being able to claim the same. Posting are often poorly written, spelt incorrectly or incoherent, or as stated above ignorant, misguided and on occasion as cited above offensive. Vitally - aesthetically the publication leaves an enormous amount to be desired. Fair enough you are doing your best with limited resources and I applaud that, but I'm sorry you fall way short of competitors and it all counts if you want to be taken seriously in this day and age. I know that is patronising but take the pill that has been offered to me in the past. On the basis of the above why would I accept any of the insinuations that have been offered to me in the past, present or future? I am sick of being polite about it.

I was sorry to hear that Derek was manhandled from a gallery, not appropriate at all, but it is an indication of people having enough of the constant negative tone, supported in such a negative way.

I am sure you can see from my response above that I don't share your journey, and don't wish to be aligned with your venture. We no longer wish to stock the magazine, will not want to advertise with it, have no desire to be featured and I no longer want my colleagues or I to be drawn in to one sided negative diatribes that are, again, one sidedly heralded as debate.

To refer to your posting concerning the greatest tragedy in the art world. I would add that one of the greatest tragedies is that there are not enough champions or critics prepared to put their neck on the line in declaration of what is good and important - that is what defines our cultural achievements and accomplishments. We live in an art world that is complex but rich, where there is good and bad. All my conversation with Derek over the years has been focussed on what he sees as the sickness in favour of the cure. The truth is I just don't think you know what is going on. My own opinion is the good eventually overshadows the bad, but it has to find the streams to flow in rather than stagnate which means looking for those champions if and where they reside. I don't see that in your corner - you have another war to fight but I fear your guns are a little too rusty.

I wish you well and not malice, but as stated having finally decided to offer my side I leave this debate. If I am engaged again then you know my mind and I will enforce it without any hesitation in the future.

Regards
Joe

(Ed: The art world lacks candor. We are grateful for yours.)

Dear Derek,

The article you sent me, "How the New Queer Asian American Criticism Is Shifting the Way We See Art," has caused me to meditate on my place in the postmodern hell. It is a kind of Catholic exercise in confession as well as a profession of faith: in my case, my faith in beliefs that no longer have any adherents.

The avant-garde sealed its own fate when it destroyed the old beaux-arts system and tied its fortunes to revolutionary notions of progress. Great art demands rules developed over long periods of time through close contact with a refined aristocracy. The avant-garde degenerated into a free-for-all that was doomed to die from its excesses by rebelling against the bourgeoisie while lacking the patronage and restraints of an aristocracy. The current mess should not surprise anyone. As in France during the Terror, the revolution was destined to devour its children. The question is, why were artists drawn into a self-destructive rebellion they did not initiate?

My critique of the avant-garde is not a critique of the works themselves. On the contrary, I believe that modernism could have coexisted with the beaux-arts establishment with the latter supplying traditional skills that could have strengthened modern artists. The tragedy of the avant-garde lies not with the plastic arts but with the adoption of ideologies that were ultimately inimical to the arts and humanities: chief among them was Marxism.

Marxism will be remembered as one of the most savage and destructive forces in history: a philosophy so vile that it poisons everything and everyone it touches. Camus said that art could not be made with hate. I agree. Art cannot be made in a spirit of revolution and change that is itself built on a foundation of resentment and vengeance. Marxism is nothing but resentment and vengeance disguised as the pursuit of truth and justice. Such a lie can never be productive, much less creative. True creativity demands hierarchies of intelligence, insight, and ability. There can be no progress without inequality. The denial of human inequality as a key element in creative advancement forms the core of the Marxist fallacy. That is the reason why the avant-garde had no choice but to die from an overdose on the sofa of postmodernism. It was unsustainable because it had no reason for being beyond the establishment of a hive of human drones under the domination of a Platonic directorate. It was a twisted anomaly that emerged from the French Revolution and the socioeconomic dislocations of the Industrial Revolution. It seduced its practitioners with the false promise of artistic freedom, and for a while it appeared to deliver some form of creative liberty. In the end, however, the avant-garde would pave the way for Soviet Communism, Fascism, and the Marxist-Feminist travesty that dominates American art schools. Postmodernism is nothing more than a deformed child that survived a near abortion at the hands of

its already sick progenitors. The child is called Nihilism, and its parents were Karl Marx and the Avant-Garde. Capitalism and the Bourgeoisie were merely witnesses to the horror of its birth. Art historians, critics, and theoreticians served as midwives.

If the freak show of identity politics has taken over the art world, it is only because the avant-garde paved the way. The whole thing sickens me, and I hate myself for my cowardice. I hate myself for having betrayed my principles by playing in the sewage of the Left. I hate myself every time I compromise my beliefs for the sake of harmony in an art world I despise. How can I tell the world that I long for the Ancien Régime? Derek, there is no place for me in today's world. I don't belong in any political party or art movement. My views are out of step with the current mania for equality and rights for categories of people that have no bearing on civilization. My values belong to an Enlightenment that would have granted toleration without acceptance while respecting, but not empowering, all classes under the watchful eye of a benign aristocracy.

This is a disgustingly vulgar and inhuman time. We're dying from egalitarian prosperity. Everyone mourns the existence of poverty. I mourn the lack of class distinctions. How else could we account for Trump? His crime isn't wealth. His crime is attempting to rise above his station without the breeding necessary to govern. Populists always seem to rise from the lowest social ranks thanks to the vacuum left by a dying aristocracy. The rise of Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, Boris Johnson, Marine Le Pen, and Bernie Sanders parallel the death of art. Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin were all children of the avant-garde. The Left will never understand this.

Lastly, I am a bourgeois. I know my class, and I know my station in society. I will never be rich by American standards, but I'm unbelievably wealthy by world standards. I lack the breeding necessary for an aristocrat, but in an older system I would have risen as an intellectual servant of my superiors. Perhaps I would have joined the Church. I have never believed in equality because I try to be kind and compassionate on an individual basis, and equality is incompatible with kindness. Those who love the people tend to be murderously cruel. I don't love the people. I cannot love an abstraction. I believe in helping the disadvantaged on an individual basis not as a class. I am incapable of slumming, of pandering to a minority for the sake of massaging my ego. I believe in self-discipline, hard work, discretion, and privacy. I believe in the senses and in empiricism within reason. I respect logic without fetishizing it. I believe in the body as the key to all experience including intellectual and spiritual pleasures: there are no "perfect forms." There is no thought outside the body. Plato and Descartes were wrong. I love life without fearing death. I find freedom in absurdity, but I am not a

nihilist. Such is the context within which I understand the world. Is it right? I don't know. In any case, I would never impose it on anyone else. I prefer to live like Zarathustra: overcoming myself and no one else.

Jorge Benitez

Editor

It thrilled me to learn that the New Art Examiner was again blooming, and that they would like to have me as the acting editor in Chicago.

I started reading the New Art Examiner in the late 80's during my undergrad years. The magazine became even more impactful to me while working on my MFA and then beginning my career as an artist and photographer. The New Art Examiner separated itself from other art magazines by publishing honest reviews that never kowtow to the art community or worse, their advertisers. As a working artist, I can attest to the importance of a true critical voice with unbiased perspectives. Try to remember the last time you read a review that wasn't glowing; if every review is about how great something is, how will anyone grow?

When I first moved to Chicago, neighborhoods like Wicker Park were full of cheap spaces that a recent grad could rent out and start a gallery. Over time those cheap places have moved into new areas, but Chicago more than many cities has always had the advantage of inexpensive real estate for young galleries to plant their roots. While some of these disappear, others thrive and become major players in the local art scene. Western Exhibitions, for example, started with no home, moving from place to place for each exhibit, is now an established Chicago gallery in a permanent space. This bottom up scene is great for encouraging new and fresh art to emerge.

As a working artist and member of the community I look forward to looking for the good and sometimes the bad in what's out there. As acting editor of the New Art Examiner in Chicago, I look forward to providing honest and unbiased insights into what's happening in the city's art scene, from high-end galleries in the River North to start-up spaces in Bridgeport.

What questions do I ask when looking at work? Does it have a clear vision? Does the technique have a purpose? Is the viewer able to see the work fresh or is it overwhelmed with references to someone else's work? These are some of the things that are important to me and perspectives that I am excited to share with readers of the New Art Examiner.

Doug McGoldrick

SPEAKEASY

Allen Vandever

The art world as I have experienced it.

My journey into the arts has its beginnings in reading and watching documentaries on art history. In college I read every book and watched every video I could find concerning art and its history. I wanted to learn everything I could. The art world I had envisioned and the real art world are nothing like I thought it would be. After art school, I went in search of the art world. I found myself in New Orleans. New Orleans does have an art scene but it is not the art world I was looking for it was more dark and touristy than I thought it would be. Did you know it was illegal to draw or paint in the New Orleans French Quarter. I didn't find what was looking for, so, I went back to school to learn more about the Art World. Pertinent information was to be found in magazines, like the New Art Examiner. I learned things about the art world and industry I couldn't learn in textbooks. Armed with this new information, I came to Chicago and dove headfirst into the underground discovered the Chicago art scene. I experienced things that don't exist in print. The Chicago underground art scene at that time was inclusive, experimental, and weird but amazing fun. Unfortunately that art scene doesn't exist anymore. After this time in my life, I went to LA to make it big. I did in my own way. I started meeting celebrities and people with lots of money. I sold a ton of art work for big bucks. It was a crazy and fast-paced world. It was mix of yoga, prostitution, drugs, cults, celebs, and money. I made lots of



money and lived for free but it was one strange trip that might make a great movie some day. I had to escape. It was too much. I packed up my car and headed north with my partner. We wound up in Seattle. After house sitting for 30 days of non-stop rain, which was a Seattle record at the time, we took off for Hawaii. After being in sunny Hawaii for two days, my partner and I decided to stay. We had enough money to pay rent and live for the next year plus enough for me to get \$10,000 worth of art supplies. I went to the local art supply store and said: "Here is ten thousand Dollars I want set up an account and get 60% off every thing I buy from now on". I set up my new studio on the edge of Kilauea volcano in the rain forest on the big island of Hawaii. It was like a perfect dream in every way I was paradise. I made the decision to become the best painter I could be. I painted every day. Once I mastered the craft, I came back to Chicago. I was going to do it right. I built a foundation, and, then, I built a business. I hired an agent. I recruited interns and I started an artist group called Team Art! Chicago. I was invited to be part of Art Chicago's next program and I discovered the art world I was looking for. I was finally in the room. Things were changing fast. I started getting invited to shows, fairs, and galleries. Then I faced the pay to play, scams. People were telling

Each issue the New Art Examiner will invite a well-known, or not-so-well-known, art world personality to write a speakeasy essay on a topic of interest – whatever it may be.

me that they could make me famous or a great artist for \$\$\$ all your dreams can come true. I began believing the art world was like a fairy tale, a castle in the sky with unicorns and rainbows. But, I came to realize there are many art worlds or art kingdoms. And some art kingdoms are easy to become part of and others are extremely inclusive.

Currently, the art world is changing rapidly and seems different every year. There are too many artists to fit in the art world not enough kingdoms. Artists are getting run over and taking advantage of. The art worlds like a popularity contest. It isn't about great art anymore. It is about money and power. If you are lucky enough to get into one of the greater art kingdoms, there will always be people that want to kick you out or black list you always some trying to get a head and push you back words. No body wants their place to be taken. The user kingdoms of the art world art are more egocentric now than it has ever been. It truly is survival of the fittest.

My advice is to create your own art kingdom or join mine; together we are stronger together; we will conquer. ■

Allen Vandever is a Chicago contemporary artist, activist, entrepreneur, risk taker, story teller. Vandever lives life to the fullest incorporating art into every thing he does he truly makes art his life or would it be life his art

The following letter was released by Jimi Dams on the closure of his gallery, Envoy Enterprises, in New York and published by ArtSlant on 20th June 2017.

After talking with Jimi Dams he wrote a piece on Art Fairs with equal gusto for the New Art Examiner which is on the following page

Dear friends,

As of August 4th, envoy enterprises will close its gallery space.

While we will continue to exist, the time has come to take a step back and change the formula.

The reason for my decision is simple . it is not fun anymore.

In my opinion the art industry has developed into an uninteresting, boring entity.

I have no interest in mimicking innovation. I have no interest in any kind of short-termism and I do not wish to be a part of an art industry in which a four leaf clover gets stripped of its extra leaf to make it fit into the standard idea of a clover.

I have no interest in being part of an art industry where eyes have been replaced by dollar signs; an eagerness to experience and learn replaced by hiring personal shoppers; and ambition, which once used to push the quality of art, reduced to a hunger for being listed in whatever top ten du jour.

On top of that, I find the continuous focus on 'art fairs' incomprehensible and its vulgarity staggering.

Is there really any one out there who believes people visit art fairs from a desire to improve their perceptions?

We should be improving people's lives through art, we should be trying to create a world where art is living on every level, indivisible from life and for everyone to experience. Art should be about an attitude and about not being frightened of being thought of as uncool. It should be the antithesis of consumerism and aesthetic corruption that riddles the art world.

It should be about the idealization and aestheticization of daily life as opposed to guarding so-called critical high standards within the increasingly static art establishment and its ridiculous hierarchy.

It should be, but it is not.

Thank you to everyone who supported me over the years. I appreciate your loyalty and love more than you can imagine.

I wish all of you a lot of kindness and a wonderful summer.

Jimi Dams.

New Growth Needed from the Decay

Jimi Dams

The market driven art establishment and its complicit media are a catastrophe for the arts. That annoying hum you hear in the background, is being provided by the arts for the powers that be, and it is not just a hum. I have come to realize that the equivalent of the current state of the art world is, to state it plainly, gas (and it does not smell of "Soir de Paris!")

Literally everything is "up in the gas." Museums have become churches, galleries have become museums, museum curators and museum directors have become gallery directors and gallery owners have become museum directors. Welcome to the Merry go round. And then there is this gasbag in a bubble, who states that there's no epidemic. Can one say WTF?

Art's principal social role has come to be investment capital. The idea that art can morally influence the world has become an idea of the past; much like capitalists refer to socialism as an idea of the past, bluntly omitting that capitalism is the older of the two systems and therefore, in my opinion, more outdated.

Art now hangs on the wall or stands or lies on the ground in order to get more expensive while its actual value is bluntly being repressed in favor of a purely economic reason.

Collectors, those incredible patrons of the arts who used to display a vision, no longer make an effort to find artwork at its source. They –and I generalize– prefer to visit art fairs, the Ikea for the rich and famous with complimentary amusebouche (although my bouche is not amused). At those malls of preposterous vulgarity,

the artwork has already achieved sufficient commercial exposure, so there is less danger of buying something, which, God forbid, would not generate a financial return. It is a bad, but yet, very useful business.

To me, art fairs look like busloads of seasick people were

At the art fairs one also finds armies of personal shoppers, with 40,000 followers on Instagram. They replaced the once honorable business of art advisory services. Strutting along as if they just came out of that famous cave with JC himself, they actually represent several of the biblical plagues that descended upon earth to make sure art would be ruined by the business model.

dropped off and threw up all over the place without anyone there bothering to clean up. They were accompanied by another busload of people, those of the zombie variety. Up to seven years ago they used to come to shop. Mind you, not like they shop at Gucci, because they wouldn't dare to ask for a discount there, nor ask if that's the "right" price.

If one of them bought a work by Ai Wei Wei, they all wanted an Ai Wei Wei, if one bought a twelve foot turd, they all bought a twelve foot turd (hence that gas like odor). There is after all safety in numbers

These days they do not even buy anymore. They stick to being pampered and being catered to. They love all these little people snorkeling up their behinds. At the art fairs one also finds armies of personal shoppers, with 40,000 followers on Instagram. They replaced the once honorable business of art advisory services. Strutting along as if they just came out of that famous cave with JC himself, they actually represent several of the biblical plagues that descended upon earth to make sure art would be ruined by the business model.

If one has any doubt about the tragedy of it all, one has to simply refer to Andy Warhol, who claimed that "Business art" is the step that comes after art. No wonder so many collections now are a representation of unbearable dullness. In other words, first there was art, then came business art. I would prefer to stick with the first step. Thank you.

More than ever, art should be the collective dream of humanity. It should be the expression of a deep-seated feeling that our lives are not what they ought to be. It should be a passionate or even unconscious striving for something different.

Meanwhile, art fairs have to go, put them online, like everything else. It is after all more cost effective. ■

Jimi Dams is a contemporary artist, a native of Belgium and graduate of the Royal Academy in Antwerp. He ran the the Envoy Enterprises Gallery in New York for 10 years.

How to Act Ethically in Art

Andrew Berodini

Originally published in MOMUS on 28th July 2017

Don't fuck the curator. Or the artist, the gallerist, the writer, or their editor. Unless, of course, you really want to. And, it almost goes without saying, they also really want to. But it's best avoided, really, as the power dynamics are messy. But so is love. So is desire. So, it turns out, is art.

There is no guide for what's right and wrong in art. Occasionally professors or curators are given a handbook, but even these often miss much of the important stuff, subtle real-world quandaries. But many of us aren't employees, but free agents and independent professionals. We're on our own to suss out our own personal code of ethics, observing what others get away with, what we personally find honest or distasteful.

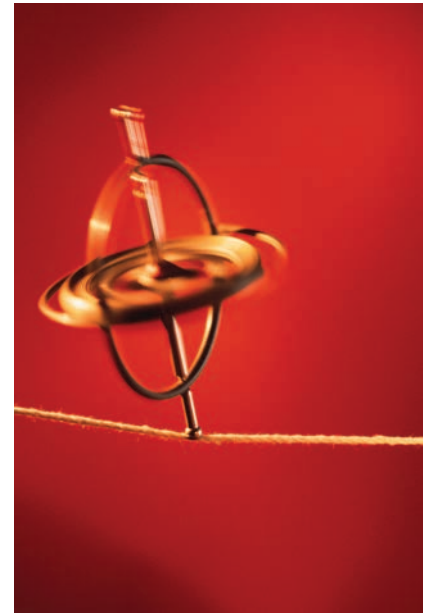
I knew one critic who reviewed a show at a gallery she worked for. A lecturer that wrote a long profile in a prominent magazine about an artist who was about to decide whether he got tenure. A wealthy artist that quietly funded his own shows at museums. The collector that donated the fluff of his collection to dodge taxes from an auction. Many scholars are pretty sure that the most significant artwork of the 20th century, *Fountain* (1917) attributed to Marcel Duchamp, was stolen from the female artist and poet, the Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, who died penniless in obscurity. One of the worst, least ethical people I've ever met in art literally wrote the book on contemporary art and ethics. Go figure.

Even when community standards around art might feel clear, already-blurry guidelines shift. It used to be seen as kind

of gross for curators and critics to work for art fairs; now it seems that high-level folks fight for the privilege. A few chief curators/museum directors quit to become art dealers and advisors. A few art dealers went the opposite direction. Museums lend works to commercial galleries. Non-profits have boards stuffed with art advisors. Many museums are overseen by at least a few speculators, oligarchs, criminals, or even the finest and highest level of the wealthy, those with money stolen so long ago it looks clean with age. Magazines knock on art dealers' doors for advertisements, but are also expected to operate without quid pro quo. And no, it's not okay to take money from young people who deeply indebted themselves to universities, but the work of teaching remains important. There isn't much virtue out there that still doesn't have just a little drop of poison.

It's so easy to get cynical: to see scoundrel after scoundrel achieve catastrophic success; to see the powerful prey on the weak; to watch those manipulators and double-dealers, cheaters and betrayers keep winning; and then to wonder when and if we will grow to resemble them if we don't simply quit. To be a great artist has never necessarily meant being a good person.

Let's say you advocate for an artist's work and then you become friends: is it a conflict to continue championing their work? What if they become your sweetheart? What if you owe them money? What amount is a conflict of interest? A drink? Twenty dollars? A thousand? Can institutional curators review shows at commercial galleries?



It's A Balancing Act

How about organize them? Can critics? Does love or money cloud judgment? Where does a sense of quality or taste enter into the conversation?

Some of these questions might get covered by institutional handbooks, but most of them don't. Is it okay for the director of a large public museum to go to a commercial gallery dinner? It would often seem so: donor cultivation apparently outweighs the seediness of a public employee receiving certain perks. In fact, I rarely see museum directors at art openings except blue chip galleries, where they can't afford not to be seen. Should the critic, curator, administrator refuse such invitations on ethical grounds? It's hard to say. As you move up the hierarchy of perceived power, how do the rules change? Those fancy dinners feel awfully clubby, but sharing a meal with others is part of being in a community, and one of the ways we honor those that have made important

contributions. And without them, there have been days when some of us might not have eaten.

It would be much less messy to neither fuck nor friend people we work with, to never take money or food, and to act only out of a rigid set of moral standards. But for those of us who don't come from wealth, we can't always afford to make the most righteous choice.

And even though we may feel an old-school reluctance to work with naked commerce, this is a false piety. Many non-profiters act unscrupulously and many art dealers act with fairness, grace, and generosity. So long as we toil under scarcity capitalism, why shouldn't we have kind, generous, principled people operating within it, and not just sharks? And maybe we might need a few sharks on behalf of the public trust. Who might be good or bad are hardly defined by their tax-filing status, but more by their honesty and care. Acting badly with another's trust has its consequences amongst equals, but so often we are not equals. One of the many ethical acts we can do is to help those who are not treated fairly to become so.

We do what we have to do to



There is no escaping the issues

survive. There are limits even to this, of course, but after we've secured the basic necessities, we have important moral choices about how to act towards others in art. Some general principles apply: Don't fuck people over; act with compassion, honesty, and kindness; reward talent and originality over connections and clichés; take the struggles of others into consideration; do your best to balance transparency and privacy. When granted power, employ it as best you can to make space and give resources to others, most especially those who need it most.

You'll make mistakes, many even, but that's okay, too. Life is messy. Even though we're so often called to be professional automatons, we're human and other humans will forgive and even celebrate this. Maybe they'll even love you for it. However ethical or unethical that might be.

Andrew Berodini is an American writer known for his work as a visual art critic and curator in Los Angeles. He works primarily between genres, which he describes as "quasi-essayistic prose poems on art and other vaguely lusty subjects."

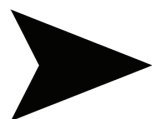
We are also grateful to Sky Godden at Momus for permission to republish this article.

We decry the loss of published manifestos and the increasing lack of courage among artists of all natures.

We will be publishing an occasional series of works from thinkers around the world whose words we consider resonate in the contemporary art scene.

Here we open with the writer Roland Romain whose words came out of the First World War, a time when thought itself was fractured and politics thrown into a turmoil that still swirls around our heads. His words were applauded by one of our own intellectual ancestors here at the New Art Examiner, The American Peace Prize winner Jane Addams.

FootSteps Press will be publishing the articles of her grand niece and co-founder of the New Art Examiner, Jane Addams Allen, in 2018.



DECLARATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE MIND

Rolland Romain 1919

Brain workers, comrades, scattered throughout the world, kept apart for five years by the armies, the censorship and the mutual hatred of the warring nations, now that barriers are falling and frontiers are being reopened, we issue to you a call to reconstitute our brotherly union, but to make of it a new union more firmly founded and more strongly built than that which previously existed.

The war has disordered our ranks. Most of the intellectuals placed their science, their art, their reason, at the service of the governments. We do not wish to formulate any accusations, to launch any reproaches. We know the weakness of the individual mind and the elemental strength of great collective currents. The latter, in a moment, swept the former away, for nothing had been prepared to help in the work of resistance. Let this experience, at least, be a lesson to us for the future!

First of all, let us point out the disasters that have resulted from the almost complete abdication of intelligence throughout the world, and from its voluntary enslavement to the unchained forces. Thinkers, artists, have added an incalculable quantity of envenomed hate to the plague which devours the flesh and the spirit of Europe. In the arsenal of their knowledge, their memory, their imagination, they have sought reasons for hatred, reasons old and new, reasons historical, scientific, logical, and poetical. They have worked to destroy mutual understanding and mutual love among men. So doing, they have disfigured, defiled, debased, degraded Thought, of which they were the representatives. They have made it an instrument of the passions; and (unwittingly, perchance) they have made it a tool of the selfish interests of a political or social clique, of a state, a country, or a class. Now, when, from the fierce conflict in which the nations have been at grips, the victors and the vanquished emerge equally stricken, impoverished, and at the bottom of their hearts (though they will not admit it) utterly ashamed of their access of mania—now, Thought, which has been entangled in their struggles, emerges, like them, fallen from her high estate.

Arise! Let us free the mind from these compromises, from these unworthy alliances, from these veiled slaveries! Mind is no one's servitor. It is we who are the servitors of mind. We have no other master. We exist to bear its light, to defend its light, to rally round it all the strayed sheep of mankind. Our role, our duty, is to be a centre of stability, to point out the pole star, amid the whirlwind of passions in the night. Among these passions of pride and mutual destruction, we make no choice; we reject them all. Truth only do we honour; truth that is free, frontierless, limitless; truth that knows nought of the prejudices of race or caste. Not that we lack interest in humanity. For humanity we work, but for humanity as a whole.

We know nothing of peoples. We know the People, unique and universal; the People which suffers, which struggles, which falls and rises to its feet once more, and which continues to advance along the rough road drenched with its sweat and its blood; the People, all men, all alike our brothers. In order that they may, like ourselves, realise this brotherhood, we raise above their blind struggles the Ark of the Covenant—Mind which is free, one and manifold, eternal.

VILLENEUVE, Spring, 1919.

Originally published in "L'Humanité," June 26, 1919

Amongst the many who signed this manifesto you will find leading names such as:-

Addams, Jane (U.S.A.). Alexandre, Raoul (on the staff of "L'Humanité," France), Barbusse, Henri (France), Baudouin, Charles (editor of "Le Carmel," France), Bazalgette, Léon (France), Besnard, Lucien (France), Biriukov, Paul (Russia), Bloch, Ernest (Switzerland), Chateaubriant, A. de (France), Dupin, Gustave (France), Einstein, Albert (Germany), George, Waldemar (on the staff of "La Forge," France), Georges-Bazille, G. (editor of "Cahiers Britanniques et Américains," France), Herzog, Wilhelm (Germany), Hesse, Hermann (Germany), Lefebvre, Raymond (France), Mann, Heinrich (Germany), Masters, Edgar Lee (U.S.A.), Matisse, Georges (France), Matisse, Madeline (France), Reuillard, Gabriel (France), Rolland, Romain (France), Russell, Bertrand (England), Sinclair, Upton (U.S.A.), Stieglitz, Alfred (U.S.A.), Tagore, Rabindranath (Hindustan), Thiessou, Gaston (France), Vaillant-Couturier, Paul (France), Zangwill, Israel (England), Zweig, Stefan (German-Austria) ■

The Curious Case of Marcel Duchamp

Miklos Legrady

A two part series on the emerging historical relevance of Duchamp in light of the fact he would never have had such an impact if he had remained in France

Part 1 – The Dark Side

This two part series differs from previous Duchamp studies in having no commitment to the belief that he made great art, a paradigm shift that opens up new interpretations of his place in art history and tears down the discreet veils that have been placed over his name by academia and other interests.

The good that Duchamp has done did not get interred with his bones. My oblique view provides a glimpse of his shadow which in turn proves that the darkness of one's shadow comes from the brightness of the light one walks in.

We sense Duchamp's disappointment, even though a disdain for status was part of his brand, for being virtually unknown in France. Perhaps he was making a virtue of necessity, "for Jesus himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country." (John ch4 v44) Richard Dorment wrote,

"Tate Modern's 2008 Duchamp exhibition demonstrates that he was not quite the isolated genius most of us had imagined. In placing his work beside that of his two friends, the Spaniard, Francis Picabia and the American, Man Ray, the show demonstrates that all three were operating on the same wavelength and pursuing similar goals".

The competition was intense, Donald Kuspit wrote of Matisse out-performing him,

"There are people who are born unlucky and who simply never 'make it'. They're not talked about. That was the case with me (till forty years later)."

Duchamp was twenty-eight years old in 1915 when he arrived in New York. Walter



Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray, ca 1950 -by Naomi Savage.

Pach introduced him to his principal American patron, Walter C. Arensberg. Duchamp stayed a month at Arensberg's; their friendship would last their lifetime.

At Arensberg's Duchamp met "everybody who was anybody in New York", and while Duchamp lived in relative obscurity until the 1960s, Arensberg and other patrons purchased enough work to pay his living. Duchamp's resurgent fame came in the late 1960s through Motherwell, John Cage, and Jasper Johns; George Segal remarked that "Marcel Duchamp had a revived life through John Cage."

Questioning the Readymade

Duchamp's best known statement was that Readymades found on the street were equivalent to months of work by an artist. Until his time the arts



Marcel Duchamp, Jacques Villon, Raymond Duchamp-Villon in the garden of Villon's studio, Puteaux, France, c.1913 (wikicommons)

were confined to a few media that took decades to master; Duchamp declared mastery irrelevant and painting dead. But another question posed by Duchamp is becoming important. A question that needs to be given consideration. Duchamp begs the question of whether the Readymade really is a work of art.

"The curious thing about the Readymade is that I've never been able to arrive at a definition or explanation that fully satisfies me."

We need to revise art history to show that for Duchamp the Readymade was a mirage and not real art

This allows me to investigate if some deeper meaning may yet be found tucked within the mainstream art historical narrative.

When asked how he came to choose the Readymade, Duchamp replied,

"Please note that I didn't want to make a work of art out of it ... when I put a bicycle wheel on a

stool ... it was just a distraction. I didn't have any special reason ... or any intention of showing it, or describing anything. The word 'Readymade' thrusts itself on me then. It seemed perfect for these things that weren't works of art, that weren't sketches, and to which no term of art applies."

Duchamp's refusal to have Readymades treated as works of art led him to claim that "for a period of thirty years nobody talked about them and neither did I."

The only definition of "readymade" is in Breton and Eluard's Dictionnaire abrégé du Surréalisme: "an ordinary object elevated to the dignity of a work of art by the mere choice of an artist."

The Museum of Modern Art's Duchamp page has an inaccurate version wrongly attributed; it is not his. While published under the name of Marcel Duchamp (or his initials, "MD," to be precise), André Gervais nevertheless asserts that Pierre Breton wrote this particular dictionary entry.

In Gamboni's 'The Destruction of Art', Duchamp "at the end of his life explained to Otto Hahn

Duchamp's contribution was to place concept at the core of art.

that his Readymades had aimed at drawing 'the attention of the people to the fact that art is a mirage' even if 'a solid one', and concluded from the vagaries of taste that history was to be doubted."

Calling art a mirage suggests there are qualities our art reflects, just as mirages do, which may have a 'false' sense to them. Duchamp denied art with a hint of what it could be were it to really exist. Peer-reviewed science contradicts Duchamp's assumptions as aesthetics were a crucial aspect of evolutionary development, and psychology says art is vital to our mental health. Art is not a mirage but an essential tangible process. It is the Readymade that's a mirage even if a solid one, whose history is to be doubted. The "vagaries of changing tastes" validate art history rather than raising doubt, history being the record of such changes. We need to revise art history to show that for Duchamp the Readymade was a mirage and not real art.

Duchamp's contribution was to place concept at the core of art. It's likely his denial of senses was a psychological necessity to lessen the power of aesthetics in art to place idea as its core; he'd complained the pendulum had swung too far. Things differ today. Structuralism reminds us that in a study of form a concept will eventually arise, just as a study of concept must eventually take form.

Notice in all these situations art is described as a 'doing'. As Goethe suggested, "Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do."

Sol Lewitt's later postulate



that an idea is art, is disproved in the etymology of the word itself. Wikipedia notes that an idea is science; a systematic enterprise that builds and organizes knowledge in the form of testable explanations and predictions about the universe. Art is defined as an activity of creating and a product. When Dada aims at an art that cannot be consumed, and conceptual art aims for art that is not a product, such contradictions prove the rule that art evolved as a biological urge to individuation and cultural identity. Some argue that cosmetic body art was the earliest form of ritual in human culture, dating over 100,000 years ago from the African Middle Stone Age. The evidence for this comes in the form of utilized red mineral pigments (red ochre) including crayons associated with the emergence of Homo Sapiens in Africa. There's also evidence of art as vital to evolutionary development. Which means denying art may have harmful consequences.

At the time, Walter Benjamin wrote that authorship and aesthetics were outmoded concepts and the only valid use for art was political.

A few years after denying art and self worth Benjamin killed himself in a moment of crisis from a failure of moral strength. Meanwhile, Dadaists with brilliant, revolutionary iconoclastic gestures rejected beauty and craftsmanship; what's more Dada than to declare every object a work of art? In a fit of revolutionary fervor we over-leap logic with

At a 1998 panel discussion entitled Vision and Visuality sponsored by the Dia Art Foundation, Rosalind Kraus mentioned that (except for Mondrian and Seurat) Duchamp despised optical art and disliked artisanal work. We would be surprised to read that Shakespeare despised grammar, or that Stravinsky loathed musical notes; these are things to respect, not to despise.

manifestos that prove we need work no more, everything is art, the bourgeoisie are confused! Epaté la bourgeoisie.

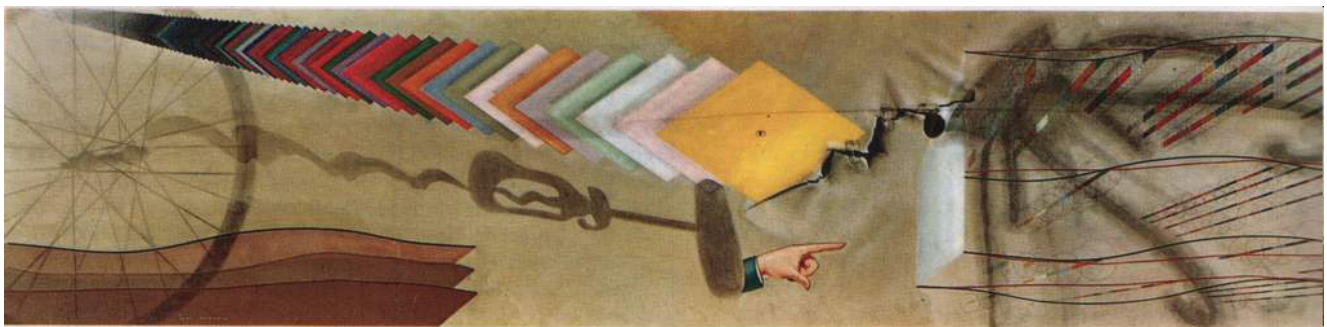
Assumptions, however, must stand the test of time as applied ideas. When Duchamp says the readymade is not an art object, then found objects are not art but remain the everyday items they were before, only "the artist elevated them to the dignity of art". While museums claim a pile of broken sticks as art, they remain in fact a sorry pile of broken sticks with curatorial pretensions. To claim them to be anything more and to call them art is a metacognitive insensitivity to the complex iteration of sensation and a failure to grasp a creative unconscious that psychology has

documented and peer-reviewed.

In a 1986 BBC interview with Joan Blackwell, Duchamp claimed the conceptual mantle when he said that until his time painting was retinal, what you could see, that he made it intellectual.

At a 1998 panel discussion entitled Vision and Visuality sponsored by the Dia Art Foundation, Rosalind Kraus mentioned that (except for Mondrian and Seurat) Duchamp despised optical art and disliked artisanal work. We would be surprised to read that Shakespeare despised grammar, or that Stravinsky loathed musical notes; these are things to respect, not to despise.

Marcel Duchamp created his brand as an intellectual position, rejecting sensuality, viscosity, and taste in order to focus on ideas. But ideas belong to literature, ideas are for writing down, whereas vision is for seeing. If you remove sensation from vision you have a sight no longer sensible. Jasper Johns wrote that Duchamp wanted to kill art "for himself" and we know that he destroyed his own ability to make art then retired to play chess. Rejecting one's sense is senseless, it's nonsense as it makes one insensible. By denying and disrupting his personal taste he harmed the motivational functions allowing personal creative choice. If you say art is not worth making and repeat it often enough, you will eventually believe yourself and lose interest in making art. Jasper Johns went on to say Duchamp tolerated,



T'um (oil)

even encouraged the mythology around that 'stopping', "but it was not like that ... He spoke of breaking a leg. 'You didn't mean to do it' he said".

And now history whispers that Plato reproached Pericles because he did not "make the citizen better" and because the Athenians were even worse at the end of his career than before. Art was the highest expression of a culture until Duchamp suggested iconoclasm, destruction, could be the highest expression of a culture ... since art was a mirage. Then he spent twenty years isolated in a small room behind his now empty studio, working on *Etant donnée*. His ideas had hurt him like a broken leg, and it took us a hundred years to notice.

Kristin Lee Dufour's school assignment at Oxford deconstructs Duchamp's philosophy.

"The pertinence of the artist is erased in favor of the pertinence of the concept. In Duchamp's readymades, the involvement of the artist as a generative source is minimal ... Thus, the value of the

Duchamp held himself at a distance from the mainstream.

His father's support meant that Duchamp did not face the financial anxiety most live with that restricts their options.

artist as a craftsman, mastering a particular media, is annihilated, as are values attached to any of these media."

Peter Bürger adds that "the central distinction between the art of 'bourgeois autonomy' and the avant-garde is that whereas bourgeois production is 'the act of an individual genius,' the avant-garde responds with the radical negation of the category of individual creation ... all

claims to individual creativity are to be mocked ... it radically questions the very principle of art in bourgeois society according to which the individual is considered the creator of the work of art."

Bürger's revolutionary language "radically questions bourgeois society" ... bourgeois, the B word, signals your revolutionary virtue and horror when "an individual is considered the creator of the work of art". Bürger fails to clarify what horror occurs when the individual is so considered, yet this abnegation would repeatedly infect the next hundred years. Quis custodiet ipsos custodes? is a Latin phrase found in the work of the Roman poet Juvenal from his *Satires* (*Satire VI*, lines 347, 8). It is literally translated as "Who will guard the guards themselves?" Hannah Arendt wrote as Goethe did, that "a life without speech and without action - and this is the only way of life that in earnest has renounced all appearance and all vanity in the biblical sense of the word - is literally dead to the world; it has ceased to be a human life because it is no longer lived among men and women."

The Dark Side

There's such admiration for Duchamp that criticism puts us on a defensive and threatens our intellectual investment. Yet when we can no longer explore and express ideas that are troubling and even transgressive, we are limited to approved doses of information in community-sanctioned packets. If everyone's an angel where do devils come from? If we fetishize heroes we lose sight of contextual influences; without that balance we become admiring acolytes, instead of scholars.

Duchamp held himself at a distance from the mainstream. His father's support meant that Duchamp did not face the financial anxiety most live with



Man Ray, 1920-21, Portrait of Marcel Duchamp, gelatin silver print, Yale University Art Gallery.

that restricts their options.

"Basically I've never worked for a living ... Also I haven't known the pain of producing, painting not having been an outlet for me, or having a pressing need to express myself. I've never had that kind of need - to draw morning, noon, and night ..."

Duchamp dreaded marriage, children, bourgeois servitude to social expectations; "It wasn't necessary to encumber one's life with too much weight, with too many things to do, with what is called a wife and children, a country house, an automobile. And I understood this, fortunately, rather early. This allowed me to live for a long time as a bachelor."

Duchamp's first marriage in 1927, lasted six months; *"because I saw that marriage was as boring as anything, I was really much more of a bachelor than I thought. So, after six months, my wife very kindly agreed to a divorce ... That's it. The family that forces you to abandon your real ideas, to swap them for the things family believes in, society and all that paraphernalia."* He spoke of "a negation of woman in the social sense of the word, of the woman-wife, the mother, the children, etc. I carefully avoided

all that, until I was sixty-seven. Then (1954) I married a woman (Alexina Teeny Sattler) who, because of her age, couldn't have children." Both were avid chess players.

The tale of Duchamp's first marriage tells that in 1927 Marcel Duchamp married a young heiress called Lydie Sarazin-Lavassor. The honeymoon did not go well; the artist's close friend Man Ray recalls that "Duchamp spent the one week they lived together studying chess problems and his bride, in desperate retaliation, got up one night when he was asleep and glued the chess pieces to the board." They were divorced three months later.

Duchamp was obviously open minded about sexuality in his response to Frank Lloyd Wright's question, posed to him at the Western Round Table on Modern Art in 1949. Wright,

"You would say that this

movement which we call modern art and painting has been greatly in debt to homosexuality [sic]?" Duchamp replied:

"I believe that the homosexual public has shown more interest for modern art than the heterosexual public."

A curious answer with a wink to Arensberg?

Duchamp may not have been ambisexual but he queered the arts creatively and personally. Alex Robertson Textor attests that Duchamp "posed for Man Ray in drag, displaying exaggerated feminine mannerisms, though not passing particularly well as a woman. Considered from a range of feminist perspectives, Duchamp's tendency to see Rose Sélavy as his 'muse' represents an assimilation of an abstract 'feminine' as a territory for the critically transgressive. But since he was openly disdainful of feminism, this move is clearly

problematic. ■"

[in part 2, **Aesthetics and the Meaning of Art** Legrady deals with Motherwell, Cabane and Duchamp's aim to tilt at the establishment and the title 'artist' at one and the same time]

A new voice in art criticism, Legrady is a visual artist, anti-hero and protagonist who's expecting trouble. He steps out of the art world's blind spot, deconstructing myths and fictions. Emerging as a hybrid between technical wizard, ad buster, and poli-sci commentator, he moves through a world of political, social, and cultural intrigue, trends, and events. Legrady disrupts patterns and shrugs off the status quo to forge art's future at the intersection of aesthetics, imagination and ingenuity. Like the Energizer Bunny, Legrady just keeps on going and going.

The new, art readers need more from an art publication than critical assessments of work. They need a professional publication, in print and online, with information on available jobs in visual art-related fields, exhibition opportunities, and spaces to rent or purchase.

They need information on who is doing what in the field and the state of the art market. Most of all they need a forum in which they can personally respond to events and issues in the art world.

Each issue of the Examiner contains feature articles on topics of major interest; coverage of metropolitan and regional areas across the world; and will contain informative and amusing art world snippets 'found online'; short reviews, classified ads, job and exhibition listings and regular columns of photography and books.

Each issue will print letters without editing and one Speakeasy.

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or

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Why I Had to Leave Chicago

Mark Staff Brandl

Paul Germanos: How old are you? Where are you from? When did you come here? Is Chicago one of many stops on your journey?

Mark Staff Brandl: I just turned 60! I am an artist of the venticento, was born, mid novecento, in 1955 in Peoria and went to high school in Pekin, Illinois. I visited Chicago a lot as a child and after my initial studies moved there in 1980. I immediately fell in love with the city; Chicago is my hometown in my heart till this day. I left in 1988. Since then I have lived with my Swiss wife Cornelia in several places around the world including Tortola in the Caribbean and have lived primarily in Switzerland. More about me: I am an associate professor of art history at the Kunsthochschule Liechtenstein and Schule für Gestaltung in St.Gallen, Switzerland. My shows include galleries and museums in the US, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Egypt, the Caribbean; specific cities include Paris, Moscow, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York. As a critic, I've been a contributor to London's The Art Book, Sharkforum on-line, a podcaster for Bad at Sports, a Theory Editor for Chicago's Proximity magazine and a Contributing Editor for New York's Art in America. I am also the curator of The the Kunstgrill and the Collapsible Kunsthalle. Works of mine have been acquired by the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Victoria and Albert Museum in London, The Whitney Museum in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the St. Gallen Art Museum,

The Thurgau Museum of Fine Art, The E.T.H. Graphic Collection in Zurich, The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, the International Museum of Cartoon Art, the Art Museum Olten and others.

PG: For what did you hope when you came to Chicago? A degree? A job? What did you think that you'd find here? What was your first impression of the city?

MSB: I began to have many possibilities to exhibit my work around 1980, so I left graduate school and moved to Chicago. I went to Chicago for the artworld. I also quickly got a job building exhibitions, dioramas and the like at the Field Museum of Natural History. Among other things there I was deeply involved in or built with my co-worker friends are the Eskimo house and the Egyptian hall, especially the Mastaba. At first the artworld was great, with N.A.M.E. Gallery, ARC/Raw Space, Artemisia, Randolph Street Gallery and on and on. Many Kunsthalle-like places to show experimental work. There was a real feeling of breakthrough in the air, the very beginnings of Postmodernism, with amazing artists like Raoul Dele, Wesley Kimler, Michael Paha, Tony Fitzpatrick, Gary Justis, Jeff Hoke and me getting lots of attention. That changed later and is one of the reasons I left.

PG: Did you attend a school here? Which school did you attend? How long were you in school here? Did you receive a degree here? When did you receive your degree?



Mark Staff Brandl.

MSB: I studied art, painting, art history, philosophy, literature and literary theory at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana (BFA), Illinois State University in Bloomington (MA), Columbia Pac. University in California (MA), and received my Ph.D. in Art History and Metaphor Theory magna cum laude from the University of Zurich in Switzerland. So, no, I did not directly study in Chicago. But I learned so much from Chicago's music, the museums, the artists. Like Phil Berkman and Edith Altmann.

PG: How long were you in practice here? Did you enjoy success on your own terms? Can you recall some peak experience? If you felt frustrated, what frustrated you? Poor sales? Lack of publicity? High rent? Crime? Inefficient transportation? Public apathy? Bad weather? What was the total amount of time that you spent as a resident?

MSB: My career as an artist began in Chicago. I must be a Chicago artist in my soul, for as Tony Fitzpatrick's daughter Gabrielle mentioned when we got together in Florence, Italy recently, I still have a Chicago accent in English. I got lots of media attention for my art, sold well, won some awards, was listed as best installation of the year (or something like that) in The New Art Examiner once for a Raw Space piece. And so on. It was going upward, but as you know art careers have ups and downs. I found Chicago's music, literature and comic art world's wonderful. I believe Chicago is a wonderful place to live; my wife loved it too in the year she lived there, and misses it: those amazing neighborhoods, the food, the various ethnic groups. Art too. The Artists. But not it's artworld.

PG: How does Chicago know you? Does Chicago know you? Have you been misunderstood?

MSB: I suspect that my rather wild lifestyle was more notorious than my art at the end of my "welcome" in Chicago (I have since settled a bit.) I think as an artist, especially pre Neo-Academicist-Conceptualist Chicago days, I was and am known as a somewhat too abrasive, rebellious intellectual. Someone who is insufficiently sophistically behaved. A highly critical conceptual painter, a mongrel addicted to art, personal freedom, philosophy, painting and several vernacular arts, including comics and sign-painting.

PG: Was there an event which precipitated your departure? For which other city did you leave? What was waiting for you in that other city?

MSB: I left at the end of the 80s, when it appeared that there was nothing more for me



*My Metaphor(m), detail Painting-Installation
detail 15 ft H x 30 ft W, 4.5 meters H x 9.3 meters W
whole 15 ft H x 150 ft W, 4.5 meters H x 45 meters W
2013*

Oil on canvas, acrylic on paper and wall

in Chicago's visual artworld. In one of my recurring, sporadic changes, I had abandoned my earlier Late Conceptual Art and began pursuing the painting-installation-vernacular-art mongrelization that I still engage in. (Although all my "directions" have dealt with the same core content and subject matter.) As I decided to abandon the Windy City, a brand of art was beginning to be enforced --- an exceedingly trendy, art magazine-derivative Neo-Conceptualism (then still linked to Neo-Geo). The SAIC Kirshner-Klan as we called it then. That, together with all the other aspects of Chicago's recurring provincialism, and a dreadful, dissolving love relationship, made me think, "Why the hell, then, don't you just go directly to that worshiped Mecca --- i.e. NYC?" I could see that Chicago was once again strangling its own creativity and would fade, as it indeed did, from Second City

to Third, as LA was up-and-coming --- believing in itself! I started on my way, yet then met my future wife (in the kitchen of my studio, strangely enough, due to a Maxtavern connection). She is Swiss, and after an unexpected further year in Chicago, and a later year in Tortola in the Caribbean, we headed off to Europe. I have now lived in one place or another in Europe for 27 years. Whenever I live for extended periods in the US, I never seem to make it out of NYC.

PG: (a) Does Chicago look different to you since your arrival to it and/or departure from it? Do you have advice for someone about to begin what you've finished? (b) Do you expect to maintain a connection to Chicago and its art world? What's your incentive to stay connected? Have you left friends or family here?

MSB: (answering both questions) Said a bit too roughly, Chicago is a great place to be from. To be FROM. Leave it. But keep up contacts. There are great, creative people there like Lynne Warren, Paul Klein, Bad at Sports, and so on. But Chicago is too provincial. Chances are better elsewhere. Provinciality is best construed as a state of mind, rather than one of geography. Once upon a time, provinciality consisted of knowing nothing of the world-at-large, only looking at local art and culture. Now that has inverted. The new provinciality is a form of consensus globalism, where you are always looking elsewhere, copying New York or the Biennale or documenta and never really looking at the great art occurring around your own corner. I stay connected because I know that outside of the boring consensus-correct art, there are always wonderful artists creating unique, original, personal work in our city. Think of Chicago's theatre scene, literary world, and rich music, especially Blues, history. The same is true for visual art. Or can be.

PG: By what means do you stay abreast of developments in the arts in Chicago? Print? Social media? Visits?

MSB: Internet! Visiting, etc. From Sharkforum to Bad at Sports to emailing and facebook.

PG: In the end, is place important? Is physical location a matter of consequence in 2015?

MSB: For your day-to-day life, yes. But not really for art. A curator of a Kunsthalle told me in discussion that I had forgotten that it is the duty of curators in provincial areas to educate the local artists through confrontation with influences from outside. This is completely idiotic. Such "instruction" is

totally unnecessary in our globally networked society. Most of us who live and work outside the few urban centers for culture immediately know everything that occurs in them. Normally, I have seen what is happening in New York City directly there, and Zurich, and Berlin, and London, and Florence and Istanbul, and more. And then 8 to 10 years later I am "instructed" about it? This teaching consists mainly in telling us which curatorially correct and momentarily accepted tendencies we should kow-tow before — something of a "Top o' the Pops" for the artworld, or even more banal, "Art World Star Search." As the artist Alex Meszmer opined, behind this lies the attempt to achieve "a little piece of Documenta, or New York, finally in every province." This thought process is what destroyed the originality of much of Chicago's art scene.

PG: Was some important subject omitted from this query? Please introduce any additional material which you believe to be relevant.

MSB: Artists in Chicago: if you do not leave, you can do something even more important. Start and maintain your own artworld, artvillages. Be antisophistic; stop being apparatchiks in your own "dissing." Cooperate with other artists. Ignore the current gatekeepers; they too shall pass. We will not. Art is a huge, millennium-

long discussion among artists. The others are listening in. We can welcome them, but stop letting them dominate. In the whole artworld, but clearly so in Chicago, we are in an academicist, mannerist situation that both artists and curators should rethink. Encourage self-reliance and the acceptance of responsibility on the part of artists, primarily, but also the rest of the Chicago artworld. ■

There are more interviews in the series and DEREK GUTHRIE will be interviewed in a future issue.

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Modernism, Postmodernism, Remodernism

Charles Thomson

Stuckism is not about being stuck in the past but about taking a different fork in the road. It's been called Re-modernism in the Stuckist Manifesto, and takes the stand that Modernism started off well, but took a wrong turn and disappeared into pure idea like a puff of smoke. So we're going back to take the untravelled fork-in-the-road to pursue art-making that's more concrete and accessible to more people, and find out where that leads us.

I have seen a resurgence of 19th century, classical style painting, but the Stuckists don't do that. We don't all work in the same style or use the same themes or subject matter. We all choose to be painters, but not as if rock & roll, television, cars, cinema, jazz, and the whole 20th century never happened. We're saying, "Let's use paint to describe our lives now." We're all interested in working representationally, but not necessarily with realism.

(Terry Marks, The New York Stuckists)

There is Modernism, Postmodernism and Remodernism. They are a continuum. Modernism is the great period of isms: Fauvism, Cubism, Expressionism, Surrealism, Abstractionism – those are the important ones. Then there is Minimalism which has the lack of importance its name suggests, and Conceptualism which, despite its name, has no idea at all.

Modernism was a period which valued ideals. Postmodernism

was a period which devalued ideals. Remodernism is a period which revalues ideals.

Modernism began its break from the rules of Renaissance art with the Post Impressionists, who inaugurated a few decades of astonishing invention with much potential, but unfortunately and inevitably – like most of the twentieth century – Modernism's obsession with progress succeeded in progressively losing the way and finally forgetting where it was trying to get to in the first place. This state of amnesia is called Postmodernism and is characterised by vacuous cynicism and relativism, based on underlying fear and confusion. The recovery process is called Remodernism which remembers that society in general and art in particular needs a spiritual vision of deeper meaning and genuine human values in order for people to live fulfilling lives. The focus is on art, but the principles apply universally.

The spiritual has shifted from conventional religion and is more easily understood through alternative routes, such as Carl Jung's ideas of individuation, which necessitates an honest confrontation and integration of all aspects of oneself, including the unacceptable or "shadow" aspects denied and repressed into the unconscious.

Remodernism is a development of the Stuckists art group, which I co-founded in 1999 with Billy Childish (who left after two years) to promote figurative painting with authenticity, depth and ideas. A number of people wanted to apply the basic ideas to their own



*The Marriage:
Eamon Everall*



*Zsa Zsa Cat-bor:
Jasmine Surreal*

painting activity, other related areas such as photography and architecture, or even non-art activities in business and society at large, so in 2000 Billy and I co-wrote the Remodernism manifesto as an umbrella to encompass this wider field. The Stuckists were then declared to be the first Remodernist art group.

The Defastenism group in Ireland declared themselves Remodernists, held gatherings, staged shows and put on cabarets. Gary Farrelly, Pádraic E. Moore and Liam Ryan were leading lights. Victoria Mary Clarke (partner of the Pogues' Shane MacGowan) was a member. Jesse Richards launched Remodernist Film. Online painting groups include ones founded on Deviant Art by Clay Martin (aka Laniru), on MySpace by Matt Bray, and on Red Bubble by Carson Collins. They mostly seem to have petered out, although members continue individually. In the meantime the Stuckists have grown from 13 founder members to 2,500 artists in 240 groups in 50 countries, and remain the most prominent exponents of Remodernist philosophy.

The Stuckists are known and promoted as a group of figurative painters, but individual members work in most established media, including poetry, fiction, film, video, photography, demonstrations and bands. Musical former Stuckists include Billy Childish, Sexton Ming and Wolf Howard (who still takes part in Stuckist shows). Current ones are Paul Harvey (Penetration), Ella Guru (Voodoo Queens), Holly Henderson (Sex Pissed Dolls) and Black Francis (Pixies). Admittedly, Stuckists don't then promote these other activities as art (though other people do from time to time – the Turner Prize demos earned me a conceptual art award from the proto-Mu group).

Nearly all Stuckists reject as art (though not as an odd hobby if that is what people want to do) so-called conceptual art, including – but not limited to – the display of dead animals, placards with a personal message, flea circuses, sliding doors, beds, potatoes, coat hangers, bear costumes, tins of excrement and films of people vomiting, all of which are in, or

have been lauded by, the Tate Gallery.

Stuckists do not dismiss such things out of blinkered ignorance, but from insight and experience. I staged multi-media "arts lab" events, including performance, music, and (blurry pornographic) art films in 1969 (at the somewhat precocious age of 16). Ten years later a tutor dubbed me a Postmodernist at Maidstone Art College, where my final show was a site-specific, participant-immersive enclosed maze, which included found objects, a tableau of model soldiers, and a shop with art images stuck on mundane items such as mirrors, postcards and a display of badges. (My paintings, however, were a form of punk pop art, which was highly unacceptable and I managed to be the first person to fail the degree in ten years.)

The novel ideas of conceptualism, which seemed exciting, stimulating, and provocative in theory turned out to be vacuous in practice. I returned to painting because of its expressive range and personal quality. As Black Francis has put it:

pigment on the end of my feather or finger and thrust onto the wall is ... connected to my brain in a way that photography can never be. I like photography. I love film. But ... The more something is processed the further away it is. Processed things can be very beautiful or interesting. Painting is RIGHT THERE.

I once posted on Jonathan Jones' blog on *The Guardian* website:

It is only since photography has removed from painting the need to function as documentation of the material that painting has come into its own as the true art form of expression. A photograph is a painting of the outer world. A painting is a photograph of the inner world.



Ford Anglia with Tent and Giotto Tree: Paul Harvey



The Job Club: Philip Absolon



The Devil Tarot: Ella Guru



The Priest and the Demon: Joe Machine

THIS  IS ART?



EXTRAVAGANZA

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An important tenet of the Remodernism manifesto is:

It should be noted that technique is dictated by, and only necessary to the extent to which it is commensurate with, the vision of the artist.

The astonishing phenomenon of Modernism meant that the artist could make up their own rules. The important qualification here is the last word of that sentence. This places a lot of responsibility on the artist and to be successful requires a high standard of unfashionable integrity and sensibility. What results is the statement of an individual soul. What emerges collectively in the Stuckists is a prodigious output in a wide range of styles, techniques and subjects united by an ethos.

Eamon Everall, who has an MA in Visual Theory, draws on Cubism and arcane systems of perspective. One of his paintings based on Van Eyck's *The Arnolfini Portrait*, replaces the groom with Picasso shown naturalistically in workmen's clothes, while the bride is rendered in a fragmented Cubist manner. Other paintings show their lineage from Cubism, but "not as we know it". It has its own qualities of judgment, colouration and precision which bring it into the present day. It is Remodernist Cubism in fact.

It will not come as a surprise that **Jasmine Surreal** makes use of the idioms of Surrealism, but not based on classic Surrealist irrationality, and what might appear at first glance to be random juxtapositions are in fact directed expositions, often deliberate reversals – a guitar playing a man or a toy cat coming to life as princess or film star. This is not without vituperation, particularly against the art world and the London tube system. Surrealism itself has been reversed so the seemingly meaninglessness has conceptual and emotional meaning.

Paul Harvey's paintings often feature intricate arabesques to form a frame within the picture and have an undisguised antecedent in Alphonse Mucha. Here is a formidable example of how an earlier artist's (commercial) work has been varied, elaborated and transformed with numerous other elements into a new visualisation, which both pays homage to and eclipses its precedent. Harvey's forte is quotation and juxtaposition, evidenced notably in the Giotto sky behind a foreground Ford Anglia car, telescoping the centuries.

Philip Absolon appears at first sight an artist with formulaic repetition. More scrutiny reveals this not to be the case. His ideas and preparation are both thorough. *The Job Club*, his best known work, consists not of six identikit skeletons, but six individual portraits of people he knew. His cats, rendered in a nouveau-Cubist manner, are likewise based on intense life studies, particularly the simultaneous depiction of numerous positions of a cat in motion, which builds on Futurist innovations with his own modifications.

There is often an exception in an art group: in the case of the Impressionists it was Degas who did not portray landscapes with dabs of paint, but worked more in the classical mode, his contemporary subject matter and compositions bringing him into the Impressionist fold. In the case of Stuckism it is **Ella Guru** with a reverence for Old Master technique, which she employs to depict her own demimonde of burlesque and carnival, with particular focus on the contemporary issue of (trans-) gender. (She and her husband were married in drag.) Her superb use of colour and form brings the image to life.

Joe Machine is self taught but quickly developed his own



Sailor Bar Fight:
Joe Machine



*God Is an Atheist: She Doesn't
Believe in Me:*
Bill Lewis



Aeroplane:
John Bourne

techniques for creating anguished images of viciously fighting sailors and seemingly soulless sex with prostitutes, based on his own disturbed and criminal youth. Egon Schiele's sexual imagery is intensified and amplified both in terms of subject and technique, but, even more interestingly, with a different potential, which Joe has realised by steadily evolving into other subjects to transcend his early obsessions. Subsequent series have shown the (failure of) the Russian Revolution, nature studies of trees and flowers, stories from the book of Genesis, and Britannic myths. It is hard to think of another artist who has moved so confidently and successfully through such disparate areas.

Bill Lewis is, and has always been, deeply immersed in mythology, particularly of South America and native American Indians, as well as western religion. He incorporates this in his poetry and also in his art, which expands the lyrical mysticism of Chagall with a wide range of symbolism. He is an explorer and has said he frequently does not know the real meaning of the images he is driven to paint, or, at least, that it can take a long time before meanings emerge for him. Animals such as dogs and foxes appear in their archetypal role as spirit guides. He often depicts himself as the protagonist.

John Bourne with an MPhil in Research on Solid State Theory "did a Gauguin" by leaving his lecturing job on physics for an attic studio. He describes his work as "figurative minimalism or minimal figuration", acknowledging a link to Morandi's endless permutations of flatly painted dun-coloured bottles. John's describes his work as "like bottles turned to figures: bottles have shoulders, head and neck!" His "flat" figures are produced from memories of specific occasions in real places. He uses a middle

range of restrained but varied subtle colour harmonies to create images of stillness and peace.

Wolf Howard transforms the example of Van Gogh's vigorous definitions and energised brushstrokes to state his own preoccupations, ranging from a dead bird next to a vase of flowers, and a blue-faced Russian woman in the snow, to the humour of a dog and cat underwater wearing a diving mask and goggles watching fish swim by. At first glance *The Firing Squad* shows a sunny garden opulent with pink blooms, until one notices at the bottom in front of a fence is a line-up of a hedgehog, a dog, a fox and three cats, at least one of the latter guilty of urinating in the artist's slippers...

Annie Zamero follows the example of Picasso, amongst others, to make a radical reinterpretation of earlier iconic works, but in her case substituting well known contemporary figures of society, politics and commerce, including David Cameron and Rupert Murdoch, for the original subjects. A typical explanatory title is *Tony Blair Turns Catholic after Portrait of Innocent X by Diego Velazquez, 1650*. She portrays faces and figures as if viewed in a distorting mirror, sometimes almost to the point of unrecognisability and abstraction, placing them amidst a similar background.

My own work draws from two conflicting schools – the clear defining outlines of Pop Art and the energised marks of Expressionism. I finally reached a synthesis of these after a couple of decades and call the result "Pop Figurative Abstract Expressionism". This is the best solution I have found for communicating both ideas and emotions, and I see myself as firmly in the Remodernist camp in doing this. The subjects and the means for depicting them have equal importance, as does



Russian Girl: Wolf Howard



The Royal Couple [Kate Middleton and Prince William] (after 'Peasant Turfing' by Van Gogh, 1885): Annie Zamero



Man in Top Hat 13: Charles Thomson



Stripping the Queen: Jonathan Xavier Coudrille

the primacy of pictures that can be understood in an immediate sense and, I trust, deepen over time.

Others on the roster of UK artists include **Jonathon Coudrille**, who displays superb technique for his own version of Surrealism-cum-Symbolism. Adam Crosland is the opposite end of the spectrum with crude art incarnate often on bits of wood or torn cardboard, unafraid of crude subjects to match, including a fight over a "rabbit" dildo, while Jenny Westbrook silhouettes a animal black rabbit on a beautiful, misty, abstracted landscape. Emma Pugmire depicts claustrophobic cityscapes. Remy Noe depicts luminous landscapes.

Jane Kelly asks if we can undo psychosis and shows Hitler in a red jumper as a middle aged tourist in front of the Eiffel Tower. Peter Murphy should really be called a Remedievalist, using tempera paint to set Jimi Hendrix in a gold leaf altarpiece pinnacle. **Mark D**, formerly an indie pop musician with Fat Tulips, rivals Adam Crosland with execrable but rollicking visual "punk" satires of knickerless celebrities, puking revellers and artists of all persuasions, including me. In contrast, Charles Williams was a top student at the Royal Academy. Urination was an early subject in his work, which then shuffled through colourful living rooms, cocaine parties and shoppers to still lifes with skulls.

Justin Piperger was trained at the Slade and creates witty quickly defined images such as a solitary vertical arm with fingers curled – to make yet another variation of rabbit. Andrew Galbratih uses the skills of Dutch masters on still lifes with disconcerting reflections on a polished kettle. Jacqueline Jones and Chris Yates are both Remodern Expressionists, the latter in particular exploiting a concoction of drips, splodges, streaks, circles and outlines to

the full.

Outside the UK, there is a strong Stuckist centre in Prague, notably with the work of **Jaroslav Valecka**, who views the anxious topography of Edvard Munch with serene transcendence, as if Munch had been able to take the step of curing himself of the neuroses which he nurtured as a creative font. The beauty of Valecka's landscapes is always present to be admired and enjoyed, but he is a realist not an escapist and is sometimes prepared, or compelled, to give witness to the darker events of humanity that can occur in such soothing settings, notably the destruction of churches and killings perpetrated, at one time by the Nazis, and in Jaroslav's own lifetime by the oppression of the former Communist government.

Jaroslav's compatriot is **Jiri Hauschka**, who also focuses on landscape with a compulsion to fuse figuration and abstract, the latter incorporated in areas of black and white liquidity that take various forms and change the security of what would otherwise be a normal landscape or interior, by implying there are other forces that demand to be acknowledge beyond the surface appearance.

Like Ella Guru, Odysseus Yakoumakis in Greece uses "traditional" art techniques, sometimes with distorted perspective to fuse an eclectic mix of images. The subject is the focus. Lupo Sol in Spain is the inventor of quirky human tales that vary from endearing to macabre in a rough style with appropriate accomplished colours. Also in Spain, Artista Eli makes exquisite paintings like jewels. Elsa Dax oscillates between homes in England and native France, her work depicting Greek myths in a simple style with complex compositions.

America is second only to the UK in the number of Stuckist artists. A key figure at the



*If We Could Undo Psychosis 1 :
Jane Kelly*



*Kate loves slugs, Kate Moss:
Mark D*



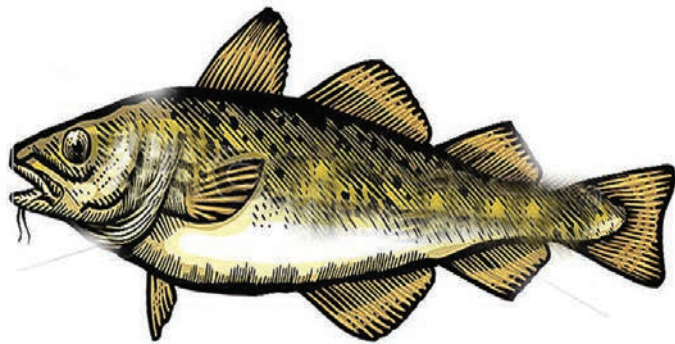
The Colony: Jaroslav Valecka



Fireplace: Jiri Hauschka



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(Please send us your quotes letters@newartexaminer.net)

moment is **Richard Bledsoe** in Arizona, who blogs art theory on a site called *The Remodern Review*, curates shows, and in his own work follows the example of many Modern (and Remodern) artists, who use a straightforward simplified figuration to express the conviction and variety of their ideas. Early examples of this mode are Gauguin, and the more straightforward works of Russians Larionov and Goncharova. The success is not in stylisation such as Expressionism, but the straightforwardness of the depiction of the subject. The interest is in the narration, though this has to be reinforced by a suitable aesthetic ability. Richard's *The Portrait of Emmeline Grangerford*, based on a spoof drawing in Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* (1885) makes the subject deliberately absurd, yet at the same time more dramatic and poignant.

Ron Throop in New York State is equally as active, publishing books, curating, and setting up a strong liaison with Alexey Stepanov and other Moscow Stuckists. He may not realise it, but he has an artistic foot firmly planted in the Lowbrow art movement, described by Wikipedia as:

an underground visual art movement that arose in the Los Angeles, California, area in the late 1970s. It is a populist art movement with its cultural roots in underground comix, punk music, and hot-rod cultures of the street. It is also often known by the name pop surrealism. Lowbrow art often has a sense of humor – sometimes the humor is gleeful, sometimes impish, and sometimes it is a sarcastic comment.

His painting titles include such gems as: *This Brazilian Frog Thinks His Life Chances Improve a Million-fold for Every patriotic CEO who Gives Up the Ghost and Out the East Window of My*

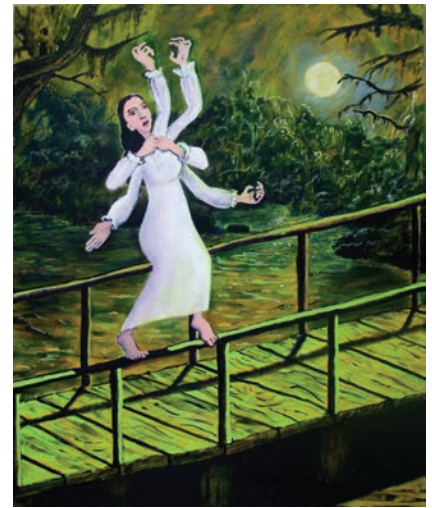
Basement Painter's Box. The Tetrahedron Mocks Me.

Terry Marks in New York describes herself as "a painter of oddball eccentricities" and is like Jasmine Surreal in using Surrealist approaches for story telling. She ranges from the whimsical to the threatening, with a penchant for robots. *Nightmare Mirror* is amongst the most straightforward of her works, but capable of multiple interpretations. In Massachusetts, Black Francis, renowned as the front man of rock group *Plixies* is also a Stuckist artist and has no inhibitions about delineating odd characters, piled up on abstract backgrounds of flattish colour.

Asia is represented by Shelley Li, who is Chinese, living in London and who quaintly combines images of fashionable and sometimes erotic ladies with the fabrics of opulent interiors. There is a committed group in Tehran, founded by Hamed Dehnavi and including Farsam Sangini: on one occasion a painting of three ducks was banned by the authorities for indecency. Australasia's foremost Stuckist is Godfrey Blow in Perth, a consummate professional in his approach to detailed landscape, selected in at least 25 art prizes, and in 2016 the official tour artist for the visit of Prince Charles and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall.

A new generation of Stuckists/Remodernists is emerging with **Holly Henderson**, born in 1995, who not only went to art college in Maidstone, as I did nearly 40 years earlier, but also, as I did, suffered opprobrium for not toeing the party line. Because she painted pictures instead of doing conceptual work she was castigated as amateurish, obsolete and with no future for her art. ■

Charles Thomson is an artist, writer, poet, curator, editor, photographer, promoter, publicist, and publisher. He lives in London.



*Emmeline Grangerford:
Richard Bledsoe*



*These Fishes Characters read
'Uncle, Uncle! Holy Crap, Uncle!
You Win Human Beings! You Win!':
Ron Throop*



*Bendable Posable:
Holly Henderson*

Todays Robots are Tomorrow's Artists

Scott Turri

In an attempt to bridge the gap, breakdown barriers and perhaps change culturally ingrained perceptions created by literature and the film industry about how humans and robots interact, artists Mathias Gommel, Marinta Haitz, and Jan Zapper of **robotlab**, have set up a sophisticated play date between humans and robots, in order to ease the transition into this inevitable partnering. Their exhibition featuring the work 'Bios and the Big Picture' continues through September 3, 2017 at Wood Street Galleries, Pittsburgh PA.

There is a lot of hoopla around the robotics industry here in Pittsburgh. Much attention is being placed on the development of self-driving cars and the rebranding of the city, rightfully so, as a global technological player. The work of these artists is a perfect reflection of this zeitgeist. The German based collective has partnered with KUKA, a German manufacturer of industrial robots, for their project.

They have created specialized writing/drawing instruments which they have attached to a KUKA robot. These attachments enable the robots to either write, using calligraphy in this case the Bible or draw in a continuous line a representation of panoramic photographs of the mars landscape taken by NASA's the Curiosity Rover. Of course all of this is only possible with the complex behind the scenes control systems and coding developed and put into place by Gommel, Haitz and Zapper. The machines operate on a 24/7 schedule.

Functioning like a minimalist performance piece the artists

have removed themselves physically from the making of the pieces, substituting the robots for their corporeal presence. The artists claim that the role of the machine is always defined as that of an autonomous creative agent. If the machine is capable of making its own decisions about the translation, hasn't this been programmed into its process? So, is it really autonomous? Is it like an automatic drawing? It is like a modern day circus, step right up to see the one armed robot recreate the bible by writing for six straight months, that spectacle alone is worth the price of admission. But what does it mean to be human and what is the role of all of this technology? Soon, at least we are told, humans will no longer drive their own cars, many manufacturing jobs have already been replaced by robots and now perhaps there will eventually be no need for artists -- they too will be replaced by robots.

One could look at the robot as a kind of prodigy. An analogy would be to compare it to the making of a virtuoso performer, someone who has been trained from an early age to technically master something. But no matter how technically proficient someone is at playing an instrument, what differentiates the best artist from just the master craftsman is the heart, soul and the emotional maturity at which one plays. If we can program a robot to play an instrument at a level beyond what a human can perform, without



Big Picture

the essential human components, will it move us? Can a robot have feelings?

There is an undeniable utopian narrative created and propagated by the makers of this relatively new developing technologically evolving world. This powerful narrative drives the economic juggernaut of technology and has really become the new opiate of the masses. It is easy to succumb. For some this new world generates a feeling of a loss of control and powerlessness perhaps the stripping away of what makes us human: the ability to work, create, love. Our future will be determined by an elite, highly trained and skilled specialized group of people who are the 'haves' and the rest of us just make up the sedated masses of 'have nots' who are hoping that the new god is a benevolent one. Perhaps having *Man Machine* by Kraftwerk playing in the background would make all of this an easier pill to swallow. ■

SCOTT TURRI lectures at the University of Pittsburgh. his practice has been inextricably linked to how the information age is shaping visual culture

The Last Bohemia

Terry Frost at the Belgrave St Ives

Derek Guthrie



*Study for 'summer collage' 1976.
Collage, acrylic and ink*

This exhibition of Terry Frost: A Book of Ideas with 32 works on paper from his scrapbook has an importance.

Terry Frost is a major painter from the post-war era when the St Ives school established itself as a major force in contemporary art. St Ives was the last Bohemia in which Artists and writers by practice could, and did, shape the form and course of the avant garde. St Ives is a spectacular but small town surrounded and immersed by the great beauty of Penwith on the edge of the Atlantic ocean.

The commitment to abstraction was a mantra, paramount and absolute to most senior artists of the St Ives School. This exhibition provides an insight into a very pure artist who took the promise of abstraction to the edge of artist practice. The work is bright, colorful, strong and precise through the definition of shape and forms juggled and made accessible in the selection of this exhibition titled 'The Book of Ideas'.

Expressive in feeling, though not an expression in the usual way of activated or tortured paint surface of fast moving energetic or overcharged gesturing. These works possess power for the discerning viewer.

Avant garde and in some respects formulaic each work presents its own unique problem of focus. It is possible to consider that a well-honed lesson or influence entered into Terry Frost's research. In the pioneering work of the Parisian abstract painter, Sonia Delauney (1885-1979) seems to be appreciated and Frost takes it forward as his contribution to the course of Modernism.

Terry Frost adds a dimension that Sonia Delaunay would not have considered. The inclusion of hand written poetic words, which read on a separate adjacent page

"Time and the
bell
have buried the
day
The black cloud carries
the Sun away.

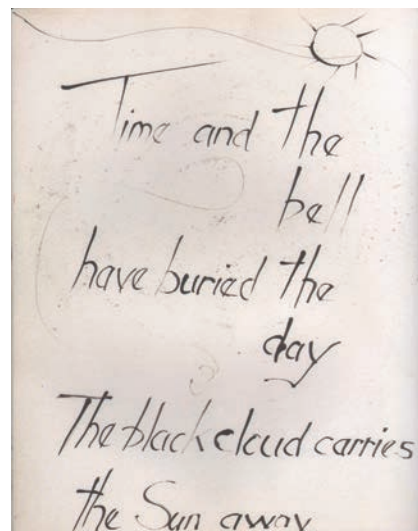
This work and a few others combine words and form into a unity which could be considered as a poetic tombstone, maybe an anticipation of death, certainly, a memorable visual experience. This work as some others in the show are collaged. Pointing to Frost's tactile, and aesthetic imagination. He can find a visual dynamic and explore aesthetic possibilities in the materials of the studio. This writer remembers Terry Frost's homilies, the one that is reawakened which is conjured up by this exhibition: "Life is a

bowl of cherries" Unfettered Zesty enthusiasm was the man which is evidenced in the artist.

The initial experience of the show is jolly bright colors in circles squares and triangles bouncing around on the wall. Suggesting a joy that manifests in children's art. Terry Frost has discovered or rediscovered and plays to the hilt the innocence of children's art. But he maintains and orchestrates these simple urges as is only possible by a master artist.

Given the dreadful dross of the tourist trade and the exhausted art that St Ives supports clinging on to the idea and recycling the remnants of yesterday's glory, this show is a welcome gleam of light from a time gone by.

Price range £3,000 - £5,000.



A ditty from Terry Frost's notebook

Derain, Balthus, Giacometti; An artistic friendship

Le Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville in Paris 2 June to 29 October 2017

George Care

This exhibition comprises some 350 works (including sculptures, prints, letters and photographs) which evolved from the friendship between these three artists. This friendship is demonstrated in their joint fascination for classical Italian masters, formal clarity, portraiture and experimentation with both still life and open air painting. They met in the early thirties whilst Paris was dominated by the surrealist milieu, situated between Saint-Germain and Montparnasse. The works on show are chiefly in the time frame from 1930 to 1960.

Derain, in particular, emerges as the significant and productive painter in this innovative and energetic period and naturally, a truly brilliant colourist. Here we see his later work and not his fauvist period. This exhibition shows their cross fertilisation between the three and their enthusiasms which clearly ricocheted off each other. In addition they shared models, friendships, collectors and in particular their interests in all aspects of contemporary drama. They were, until after the war, energetic in their correspondence, although without clear transcripts, their letters are not always easy to read even if the visitor is a fluent in French. An impressive self-portrait by Giacometti dominates the entrance, which calls to mind a certain likeness to Duncan Grant. Grant and Derain were post-impressionists deeply influenced by Matisse and Cezanne and indeed both were acquaintances of Gertrude Stein.

When comparing these three artists, each of whom are creative masters, it is worth



Giacometti

considering their dates:- Derain (1880-1954), Giacometti (1901-1966) and Balthus (1908-2001). Derain was then their guiding light and already very well-known. He was in recovery from his years of military service but ready to move beyond fauvism towards a new classicism. He found time however to design for Diaghilev and the Ballets Russe. He studied the masters of the early Renaissance and then Pompeian art. It was one particular still life that attracted the penetrating attention of Giacometti with one work- a sombre work from 1936 *Nature morte aux poires*.

Giacometti is currently on show at the Tate Modern until the 10th September and a few weeks later a new film appears with the Australian actor, Geoffrey Rush playing Giacometti. However, this Paris exhibition shows the cultural hinterland of this key modernist and his interest in working with Beckett, for example in the minimalist staging of *Waiting for Godot*.

The range of Balthus's work is illustrated including the disquieting suspense filled eroticism of his depiction of reading, languorous adolescents. Balthus's East-European ancestry has been the subject of much controversy but it seems that his mother was Jewish and romantically involved with the

poet, Rilke. His work shows a deep knowledge and interest in literature. He had moved to Paris in 1933 from Morocco and formed a circle of friends which included the foremost poets and playwrights of the period. The range of his work is shown here and it is unsurprising to learn that the controversial psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan was a major collector of his oeuvre.

The work on show includes some thought provoking portraits, sculptures, stage sets and photographs. It is not difficult to discern the disquieting political atmosphere of the times. As is well known, Derain stood accused on account of his visit to Berlin during the German Occupation. Nevertheless, Derain appears to have offered protection to members of Balthus's family. These works which include the magnificent etiolated sketches, almost carved into the background, by Giacometti, evidence the frenzied artistic activity situated between Saint-Germain and Montparnasse.

Their friendships included writers and poets like Artiste Arnaud, Max Jacob, Jean Cocteau together with Breton, Camus and Malraux. Surrealism was penetrating the dramatic experiments of the evolving "theatre of cruelty" with projects by Sartre and Jean-Louis Barrault. The world of fashion with Doucet and Dior, too was an occasional involvement.

This is an exciting exhibition and prospective visitors require a minimum of two hours to get their money's worth. ■

Answering the Wrong Questions

"What Is This Place?" At the Newlyn Art Gallery - 22 April – 15th July
An exhibition of paintings by eight artists

Ken Turner

Whenever I walk into the Newlyn Gallery I am reminded of my first, and the gallery's first, performance art piece, entitled *Doubtless* in 1994 put together by myself, Alaric Sumner, Rory McDermott, David Kemp, Rod Walker, Sandra Blow and Rose Hilton: the director of the gallery then being Emily Ash. I mention this event because it's me, walking up the stairs, to be faced by younger artists, (except for one) working in painting: myself also being a painter, but of a vastly different age, almost in a different time warp altogether, but perhaps not so different an art scene compared to my own involvement in trying to come to terms with an art world wrapped up in its socio/economics and political adumbrations of the time, That is, from the end of the war to the "outbreak" from the galleries of artists from the stranglehold of the then cultural system. Why does this information matter? Simply because I ask myself, has anything changed? That is, fundamentally changed in the manner of how artists see themselves today?

I am now in the gallery with artists asking *what is this place?* After a while I begin to sense some confusion, perhaps feeling the trap engineered by the past decades of modernism and its iconography, its social and aesthetic ideals and the feeling that the only way to proceed is to run, and run like hell, painting quickly, stumbling, hoping certainty in the image while attempting to make a significant mark on board or canvas. But what is the place they are running to or away from? It's not life or living, not feeling or sensibility, is it? Putting this mad race in a global context the arts seem to be expanding in many different ways of expression and the content itself diverging from one blind spot to another. While outside this fervent chase from kitsch to naivety and on occasion, sincerely made work, money laden art institutions and international art shows continue on their way enticing some 'unlucky' artists into their fold. Here in Newlyn we have but eight painters proclaiming their right to engage with a public, and, hopefully revealing a glimmer of

light or maybe to be beguiled by forces outside their 'control'.

In the brief paper catalogue of 'what is this place?' some words catch my eye: Memory and Truth, Commonplace and Cosmic and the idea of Questioning in Paint.

I would like to add, Life and Reality, and, in a sense all art is contained by the last word, *reality*. What is the reality of life? How do we see reality, how do we feel reality, can we get near to reality, how do we express reality? If painting can touch reality and make the audience aware of a new reality, surely something is achieved but how sure are we?

What is the place? For me, is answered by observing the closeness of the arts to philosophy: they are one and the same when viewed as a way of seeing and thinking.

Aesthetics has always been associated with the arts through investigations in perception, and perception is the way we humans see the world and our place in the world. Artists are in the business of seeing. However, a sense of quality and value are attached to seeing and what we see as objects in the world is how the world is, even as it changes from one light to another, from one perspective point to another, it is the same world but we can see it differently. Importantly, we have made the world; without us it doesn't exist. Painting however is a record of our existence and how we *have* seen the world. Obviously this is a truism as history demonstrates, that is if we believe history, but the present in which we live concerns us, and the eight painters in particular.



So, what do I look for in these eight painters? Before going into the work itself, I would like my readers to understand the premise I will be working to in my discussion. It is as you might have guessed; what is this place of *reality* (?) and it's precisely because all quality and values are in this simple and at the same time complex word and they are so constituted as being the reality of our existence as being human.

I have great reservations on the description of art as being expressive, personal expressive or expressiveness in general through the manipulation of the painted surface, they are two different things, but as Herbert Read has said, "The purpose of art is not to express a mood or state of mind, if so it's an illusion and not a reality" The fallacy of emotions is upheld by Igor Stravinsky "When we recognize our emotions, they are already cold, like lava" Humanity is more than our emotions or memory. It is only when we try to go beyond the idea of painting itself can there be found art as an object, as a thing in itself, but portrayed through its visual image. However, this 'view' of art is not definable. As an observer the object of art retreats as soon as we try to fathom its depths. It retreats from what we recognize as painting to some other place that is unobtainable, always out of reach. Though deep down we may be able to feel a touch of its essence. However, where a painting is pattern, surface manipulation, as some of the 'eight painters' reveal we are conscious of use of materials only. A comparison is easily made between frozen movement of paint and the sense of something free from form, colour, tone, texture and composition, away from material into essence. Derrida has a wonderful description: "Four times round the frame" he is speaking here of the frame of discourse and its movements, that is, from the outside to the inside



of the frame through to four kinds of understanding, experiencing the experience through poetry, philosophy and art. Art is as discursive as philosophy and is also concerned with the speculation of knowledge.

In the light of 'eight painters' let's turn to the question of the avant-garde. In this quest I would say it's pointless. Duchamp 'hung up is boots' on the ready-made as a way of saying, that's an end, finis. Since then what a tumbling and scrambling scene we have in art. I see that the avant-garde is catching itself by the tail. Let's face it there will be no avant-garde as such, only something different. The 'eight painters' in Newlyn Gallery most probably testify to this fact. But, alas, we will go on looking for it, won't we?

Would this mean to look again at the aspirations of modernism and its desire to be universally understood, perhaps seeing with fresh eyes what the socio/economic situation in the arts and the inhumanity in humanity are throughout the world? And perhaps a look at the vast gap we have between nature and technology, between art and science. Why not agree with Bruno Latour "We have never been Modern". Because there has, and still, is a distinction

between nature and society, between human and things, between us as human beings, and the nature of the world, there is just the chance that art could approach this dilemma. Don't we all feel the pressure of material life, its emphasis of material progress and that we are tending toward being part robot by not thinking through the real issues in education and the teaching of humanities of which art is an essential part? This exhibition of 'eight painters' at the Newlyn Gallery should be posing this vital question, who is? ■

Ken Turner

(The images came to us without titles. They are reproduced so as to reinforce the writer's sense of the exhibition.)

Mary and Ken Turner ran *Action Space* in central London. Available through Amazon: 'Crashing Culture' by Ken Turner and 'Action Space Mobile' by Mary Turner. Huw Wahl films on Herbert Read and *Action Space* are available. His last film entitled 'Everything Lives', on the life of an artist.

www.hctwahl.com

www.imaginativeeye.co.uk

DISENCHANTED

Susana Gómez Laín.

It happened to be, for the second time in my life, in beautiful Cornwall and happened to visit the current exhibition at Penwith Gallery in St. Ives. I could have turned away and not written this but I have a need to share my opinion with others.

“Art must discard nothing or no one, like Misericordia” is a beautiful concordia sentence recently said by Pope “Franciscus I” and “All men are born equal but it is the last time they are so” is an obvious reality long ago stated by USA president, Abraham Lincoln.

If we apply this philosophically diverse thinking to the present world of Art and make a perverse second reading of those two phrases, does it mean that we have to accept everything that comes out of the creativity of non equals as being Art on an equal level?

In the world of sports there are many different categories determined by physical constitution, age, dedication or disabilities and everyone plays, enjoys and some have their three minutes of glory in their own category and this is accepted and considered logical and proper because all of us have different gifts, different skills or are in different points of the process of acquiring an excellence in a particular field or technique. Why is it, nowadays, so hard to accept this in the contemporary Art circuit? We need to reflect on this.

I hate to say this, because my natural inclination is that of the Pope, but like in the morality tale,



Penwith Gallery window display June 2017

someone has to cry out that the Emperor is naked.

Nevertheless, seeing this exhibition dawned on me the immense importance of the figure of the curator. It is this expert who has to make a schedule for a fixed weight class and not put together the juniors with the seniors, the professionals with the amateurs, a flyweight with a heavyweight and besides display it all in a somewhat didactic and artistic way. Being an artist himself, they have to make the right frame for the artwork to glow. Otherwise, the rotten apples can damage the good ones ending all up in a “totum revolutum” where the highlights of some are diminished by the lowlights of others; where an accidental visitor can step out dizzy and disappointed.

Maybe, this was the reason why it was so difficult for me to glimpse something brilliant, more than only decorative, with a message or a story to tell, a new material or process to introduce or a heart or a brain to melt. Most I saw, not all, was confusion, imitation and dullness that even made me question my own artistic practice.

ART, with capital letters must be or intend to be sublime. Otherwise it is barely crafts and good will. In my opinion it is time to bring back the glam to St. Ives’ artistic community! ■

(Susana visited the Penwith Gallery, St Ives Society and two smaller galleries while in St Ives.)

Susana Gómez Laín is studying for her MA at Plymouth College of Art and lives in Madrid, Spain.

WASHINGTON

Al Jirikowic

Washington DC Editor



Download.

Rosemary Feit Covey's graphic, linear, prints on show at the Morton Fine Art are a confrontation with her demons and anxieties, very finely tuned. One cut begets the next in a hopeful trance. As she is working, she challenges herself to go on trusting the dervish, knowing full well her cutting tool may slip and her work be ruined. Her images are often strange and beautiful

creatures, self portraits, but DOWN TO IT!

The "stout" visuals hanging the room were larger, more color informed – painted impasto built up approach with layers of meaning applied over the original layering of prints. Her theme of the show was derived by a recent trip to Svalbard, Norway, the highest town north of the Arctic Circle. She has been engrossed with the destruction of the global eco-system. There she saw alarming scenes of the natural world in distress. These print paintings are rich, striking and very well crafted but Rosemary's problem is, perhaps, they are a tragic beauty, 'to convey the severity of our painful, changing natural world.'

Inspired by the Gulf of Mexico oil disaster, she created a swirl of countless fish, combined with the brown of the oil contrasted

with the Gulf's blue. This print, from across the room, looks highly patterned and colorful tornado of fish but upon further closer inspection, one foot away, it is compounded on countless prints of printed fish painted over and sealed deeply with other coverings, very complex, tiny, swarming "down to it" that escapes you if not viewed up close.

Can we romanticize the destruction of nature? Is there a "terrible beauty" we cannot tear ourselves away from? Are we so seduced so as to forgive the tyranny of the eye and forget what we cannot rescue or for that matter, know? Is this destruction of nature within us? Rosemary's prints-paintings will leave you hanging above this abyss. ■

In The Next Issue

Miklos Legrady studies a New York Art Critic

Daniel Nanavati on the Got Talent franchise

A renewed look at Midcult and its relevance today

Reviews from Chicago, Washington, Pittsburgh and Cornwall.

Letters, quote of the month and more

CHICAGO

ŠTO TE NEMA_ (Why Are You Not Here?) – July 11th, Daley Plaza Chicago 2017 Aida Šehović .

An installation / performance created to commemorate the murders of over 8,902 men, women and children in the Bosnian/Herzegovina War of 1992-1995. How to talk about genocide? How do we heal from genocide? How do we fight against genocide?

Šehović's response is a masterpiece of engineering. Imagine a formal presentation of

thousands of coffee cups, Turkish "filezani", small porcelain cups filled with coffee. Chicago is the 13th city to bear witness. No one drinks the coffee as this is a gesture of respect for those who are no longer here. Porcelain Turkish coffee cups are distributed to surrounding observers; friends, strangers, families, lovers to fill with Turkish coffee and then place in a circle which grows in diameter as the cups are filled. Participants kneel to pour coffee. An organizer for the event told this reviewer at 7 p.m. 7,300 cups were filled. "We expected to stay until 1 a.m. to

clean everything, but our 40 +volunteers and the public were so energetic and organized, we finished at 9 p.m. Everyone who wanted to, could pour a cup of coffee for the nomadic circle of remembrance. The combination of open participation honoring the deceased, expanding the circle to include all is a visual testament to bear witness for a collective catharsis while clouds reflected in the heavens moved seamlessly through a universe that contains both beauty and horror. ■

Annie Markovich

I recently headed down to the River North Gallery district to checkout the Gregory Jacobsen show "**Balm of Body, Spice of Flesh**" which is a pretty cool show well done and interesting; however when I looked into what was hanging in the office gallery my heart stopped for a second. It was work by Cleveland based artist Amy Casey, from a series she has been working on for over ten years, there's a great story that goes along with the series. In the story the earth has been taken

over by plants, in early pieces people start building houses on stilts to escape, then as time goes on the structures get higher and higher, piled on top of each other until there is no evidence of the ground in the work. The level of detail in these paintings is truly remarkable, kind of a Rodger Brown feeling about the execution of the buildings. All the buildings are based on real buildings in Cleveland but kind of have an any place USA feeling about them. The buildings in the most recent

work are stacked haphazardly on top of each other in impossible loops and twirls, kind of like Brazilian favelas meet M.C. Escher. The work is done in acrylic on paper, Amy's show will be the season opener at Zg Gallery and opens September 8th. I will for sure be back that evening to check out even more of her work on display. Prices start at \$2000. ■

Doug McGoldrick
Chicago Editor

Hannah Perry Saucier's recent show at the Matthew Rachman Gallery "**The Chip**" is an interesting one. She is showing two different series of paintings one series called "Mindscape" is fairly interesting bold colors and kind of hip Mid-Century vibe, like a blue record cover meets Stuart Davis thing, I really enjoyed them. I loved the use of color and general feel of the pieces piece's. The work is about how we remember the world in sort of abstract snippets of information. The world presented in the paintings is a complex one of

abstracted cubist landscapes. There are a few where a more traditionally painted area of landscape takes over part of the image, but these areas seem odd and out of place in the pieces. There are also several paintings from a series called "landscape" these are mainly grey paint worked on top of a surface made from something like "great stuff" foam spray. I found nothing at all interesting from these paintings. The whole thing just seemed contrived, with no point. It was such an interesting contrast to her other series which is so

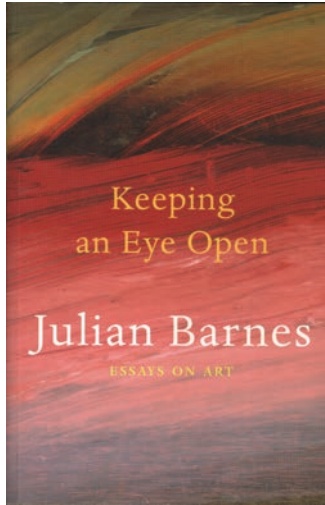
controlled with an almost paint by numbers feel and so well realized. The pieces from "landscape" just do not seem to be thought out or well executed. The "Landscape" pieces where smaller and more recently done than the "mindscape" works maybe as this series becomes more fleshed out it'll become more well realized. Prices ranged from 1400 to 12,000 for a very large piece from the "mindscape" series. ■

Doug McGoldrick
Chicago Editor

KEEPING AN EYE OPEN by JULIAN BARNES

A collection of essays on art and artists

Daniel Nanavati
UK Editor



"How far does an artist's individuality develop as a result of pursuing and refining the strengths of his or her talent, and how much from avoiding the weaknesses?"

Julian Barnes has written many articles about artists he admires or from whom he has received deep visual experiences. In this volume these previously published essays are brought together in historical sequence running from Théodore Géricault to Lucien Freud, with a last chapter on Hodgkins which is more like a series of diary notes because, as he says, being friends with 'HH' makes an objective analysis of his work impossible. The change of pace is welcome though out of place.

He has spent years just looking at artists' works, reading about the artists he admires, analysing their experiences, judging the conclusions of their biographers. He is the rarest of critics sharing insights rather than opinions. He describes the 'emotion become intellect' which is the sphere upon which artists live, and to which viewers aspire. He is also

unafraid to share his feelings, a courage all too lacking in today's writers.

He takes his subject's work and with clarity gives universal pointers that can be tools to examine many other works. Colours hold a painting together, large scale works often require more precision than smaller works to be effective, marriage may or may not hinder an artist, the first to see the painting may well have had a better evaluation of what it means being closer to the times and the subject, most art is not very good but it is still art, and so forth ...

He has a refreshing way of writing with little mention of the shorthand used by many other critics who mention movements such as, Romanticism or Realism in passing because they encapsulate a huge array of ideas and expressions the writer doesn't want to engage in. Julian Barnes gives a passing mention to the well known arguments between Courbet and Ingres over colour and line, a nod towards the term Nabi while writing about Bonnard, Vuillard and Vollotton.

He wants to share his own thoughts more than those of other art historians. And like John Berger he is worth reading for his perception and his thoughts on the 'possible'. He transcends the obvious in Fantin-Latour and Redon, argues against received opinion on Degas and women, and has read every word of Delacroix's journals. A Francophile he describes how the innovative Courbet was made into tradition by Manet in the next generation and how radical Manet

was dovetailed into tradition in his turn by Cezanne and asks, how then do we, as the inheritors of this tradition, now see Cezanne. As we look back in our turn, is he now the father of Modern Art?

His answer has all the intellectual rigour of his family – I was taught Philosophical Logic by his brother Jonathan at university. The eye is only the start of the journey into a painting, to progress one needs to read, ask questions and search for the answers that arise, and reflect.

Though Julian Barnes is not frightened to share his feelings for a painting or an artist apart from his friend Hodgkins, it is his willingness to reflect and build upon his instincts, that makes this volume so worth reading. Even the most learned will gain something from these essays and every writer of art criticism pointers on what makes for interesting writing for art readers.

It is this fearlessness mixed with clarity that we ask of our writers at the New Art Examiner. To share one's feelings for the visual experience.

Julian Barnes will write more articles – I hope he does – I will certainly read his next collection and wish he wrote for us. ■

Keeping an Eye Open

Julian Barnes

Jonathan Cape

£16.99

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- May 8th 2017** NEW HAVEN, Conn. — Yale graduate student teachers began a hunger strike to pressure the school to negotiate with their union. Eight committed to fasting, planning only to stop if a doctor says their health is at risk of permanent damage. If a student has to stop fasting, another union member takes his or her spot. Four of the students have had nothing but water for 14 days.
- June 10th 2017** **Speculative Investigations - a free and open discussion group in Cornwall to meet monthly. Please let us know by email why you would be interested to attend**
dq@newaretxaminer.net
- June 29th 2017** ArtNews: Art Tactic, issued a report on its Confidence Indicator, which found that confidence in the Postwar and Contemporary market was down by 13.4 percent in the last six months, in spite of hugely improved sales in the first quarter of this year. However, the pace of recovery slowed down in May, according to the report. The market may look to be in recovery, but clearly, it still has hurdles to overcome.
- July 2nd 2017** The new Arts Council grants program is the first to be announced since Serota, the former director of the Tate, became the Council's chairman in February. It consists of £409 million in annual National Portfolio grants, which will go to 831 local arts organizations, and an additional £213 million in other arts grants, for a total spending increase of 12% over the current financial year. The share of spending in the regions will rise over the next four years to 60% from 56% now. Of the annual £409 million in funding, £45m, or 11%, will go to the visual arts and £37 million, or 9%, to museums. The remainder is earmarked for theatre, music, dance, and other arts programming.
- July 15th 2017** Can you trade a smiley face for a Picasso? The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art has given you the chance to try. Over the last few weeks, the museum has invited people to text the number 57251 with the phrase "send me" followed by a word or an emoji — send me a robot, for instance. The museum texts back with a related image from its collection:
- July 18th 2017** The Leeds Art Gallery, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the Henry Moore Institute, and the Hepworth Wakefield—a grouping of institutions also known as the Yorkshire Sculpture Triangle—have secured nearly one million dollars for the launch of an international sculpture triennial that will be known as the Yorkshire Sculpture International, reports ArtDaily.
- July 21st 2017** Public Trust” Bust: Berkshire Museum to Jettison 40 Works (including 2 artist donated Rockwells) The \$50 million in anticipated proceeds from the 40 deaccessions, added to \$10 million being sought through a fundraising campaign, will go to endowment (“at least \$40 million”) and to “pay down existing debt and establish reserve funds for long-term capital maintenance and to mitigate unforeseen events,” according to the press release announcing the museum’s \$60-million reinvention plan.
- August 10th 2017** Met Bob Devereux in Penwith to talk and see his show. John Truscott arrived while Bob was drinking his tea and asked for Derek Guthrie. Bright, the lady in charge told us this was not a cafe and she didn't know we were coming. Bob asked her if she wanted us to leave. She said it was a bit of a cheek to think we could sit and talk. We left.
 Ten days earlier we took the new issue to Tremenhoe Sculpture Park, which were refused on the basis they do not sell. We were told we had said 'dirty and underhand' things about Newlyn Gallery. We quote: p26 vol.31. no 5: “
 RH: Yes and the poor old Newlyn Art Gallery has been taken over by two people who won't let us have shows there anyway you know? ... RH: But why? ...DG: Because (pause) ... RH: I'd love to know DG: People are mean, people want centre stage and there is a lust for power ... But the legal issues may not be settled, as I hear on the grapevine RH: Good, good I'm glad ... Because we'd like our gallery back to show in instead of having, I mean the Newlyn Society of artists now have to show in Tremenhoe ... anywhere they can get ... RH: Nobody goes in to visit the Newlyn Art Gallery anyway.”

AVAILABLE FROM :

UNITED KINGDOM

Arnolfini Books; Capital Books, London; Camden Arts Centre Bookshop; Charlotte Street News; Daily News; HOME; ICA Bookshop, London; Walter Koenig Books, Serpentine; White Cube Bookshop; Tate Modern.

Cornwall: Belgrave Gallery, St Ives; Cafe Arts, Truro; Falmouth Art Gallery, Falmouth; Redwing Gallery, Penzance; Terre Verte Gallery, Altarnun; STERTS Arts Centre, Cornwall; Art Shop, Penzance; Cornwall Contemporary, Penzance.

Banned from: The Exchange Gallery, Penzance, Newlyn Orion Gallery, Newlyn, Penwith Gallery, St Ives, Anima Mundi, St Ives, Tremenheere Sculpture Park, Penzance; Penlee House, Penzance.

CONTINENTAL EUROPE & ASIA

Athenaeum Boekhandel, Amsterdam; Do You Readme?! GbR, Berlin; Multi-Arts Corporation, Taipei; Pandora Ltd, Istanbul.

UNITED STATES

Chicago: Hilton I Asmus Contemporary, Corbett vs Dempsey Gallery, Firecat Projects, Kavi Gupta Gallery, Linda Warren Projects, Printworks, 57th Street Books, Martha Mae Art Supplies.

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