

NEW ART examiner

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OF THE VISUAL ARTS

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Lynda Green on Hopper
Al Jirikowic on Hopper's Legacy
Margaret Lanterman on the Chicago Expo
John Link on Teaching Art
Derek Guthrie's Lecture in Washington DC
Alexander Stanfield on Krasner in London

NEW WAYS OF SEEING EDWARD HOPPER



Partnered with

**THE ST. IVES
TIMES & ECHO**

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.

You can participate directly by sending letters to the editor which are published unedited.

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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.

Museum of Modern Women

Editor,

I completely agree with you Kathryn about "the complex and interconnected narrative of female experience", which by far surpasses the superficial male experience. In that "these bodies are also full of desire, power, and humanity" is what our fundamental core message is here, something all women can well relate to. I find it amazing that 50 women, perhaps also converted women, showed their works.

We need to redefine what is female, especially considering our role in the art world and the importance shown so far. More!

Isolde Matthews 06/11/2019

Hi Kathryn,

What is the contemporary notion of beauty in Polish society? Is it different from the contemporary notion of beauty in American society?

Adrian Connard 05/11/2019

Hi Kathryn,

I wish you could write more on the "terrifyingly thin skin of shame" you write about in your conclusion. It highlights one of the hidden issues women face today; sometimes it takes a lot of courage to go out there and partake in what's rightfully ours. Is the catalog of this exhibition available anywhere? I searched for it online, but didn't find anything.

Eugenia Tattersall 25/10/2019

Open Letter to James Green

Editor,

Last evening I attended the opening reception of the Italian Embassy in D.C., commemorating Leonardo's 500 years of Italian Genius-Leading the Way in Technology, Culture and Innovation.

Ha, chatting with a Chinese physicist, I learned Leonardo is the name for an international aero-space and defense industry, a kind of a military organization, a

few generals were present. An absurd replica of Leonardo's flying machine was installed in the reception area, a wooden stage, unclear reproductions of Leonardo's drawings and a unaesthetic representation of the real Leonardo sculpture.

Annie Markovich 23/10/2019 10

Editor,

Well the heart and soul of Washington DC's ethos was right before your very eyes... everything from the military industrial complex appropriation of Leonardo's name to all the money that it is meant to be... all that money.

Al Jirikowic in Washington D.C.
01/11/2019

Hi Al,

It all sounds a bit scary to me. Can you write more about this?

Thor Galloway 02/11/2019

Editor,

Just a question about Ken Turner who writes here; is he the Ken Turner that BBC Spotlight interviewed this week? If so, could we possibly have a link to the interview?

Catherine Smithfield 13/10/2019

Hi Catherine,

Thank you for your inquiry. Yes, it's the one and the same person, Ken Turner. You may be interested to see on video his celebrated performance in St Ives. This performance has given extended meaning to the word "Codswallop."

An added postscript to the above discussion. Why is the media in Cornwall oblivious to this

important issue; are they ignorant? Probably keeping their heads down or buried in the sand. Oh, to be living in such dynamic times.

Derek Guthrie 10/10/2019

Editor,

The breadth of thinking in this small corner of the world needs to be widened to allow people to critique these very structures you write about Mr. Guthrie. The illusions of power undercut truth.

Rob Daley 12/10/2019

Rob,

We will see shortly whether thinking people can turn the situation around. The St Ives and the Penzance writers' groups will be holding meetings. I do not know where you live, and if it is in Cornwall please attend, as your voice needs to be heard.

Derek Guthrie 12/10/2019

Editorial 33.no 6

Editor,

The X Musuem of Y has named Z as its new deputy director and chief curator.

Z is the one who said "no one knows what art is anymore", and is a major promoter of artists who cut pictures out of art magazines or who destroy furniture and claim it's a masterpiece.

Z may occupy that position for decades. Z also hates my guts because of what I wrote, articles trashing A and B, two of its favorite artists.

I'm ashamed for my country.

Ernest 31/10/2019

ARTIST and GALLERY ADS

New Art Examiner has readers in the Americas, in Africa, Europe, Asia,

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Ernest,

For sure the spirit of generosity is fleeing American cultural discourse. The great contribution of Trump is his banality. He has made it clear the low life is not only with the low life, it is with the high life. So what is to be done if anything?

Derek Guthrie 31/10/2019

Ernest,

You have written something I can clearly relate to, as we all can from wide and far. I think Thomas McEvilley covers this very well in the debate in the New York Times (October 12, 1997) led by Amei Wallach: ART; Is It Art? Is It Good? And Who Says So?

Thomas, McEvilley, then Professor of art history, Rice University; contributing editor at the Artforum magazine wrote:

The last time I was in Houston, I went to a place called Media Center, where someone had set up posts as in a back yard with laundry hung all over. I immediately knew it was an artwork because of where it was. If I had seen it hanging in someone's yard, I would not have known whether it was art, though it might have been. It is art if it is called art, written about in an art magazine, exhibited in a museum or bought by a private collector.

It seems pretty clear by now that more or less anything can be designated as art. The question is, Has it been called art by the so-called "art system?" In our century, that's all that makes it art. As this century draws to a close, it looks ever more Duchampian. But suppose Duchamp didn't have Andre Breton as his flack; most of his work could be dismissed as trash left behind by some crank.

What's hard for people to accept is that issues of art are just as difficult as issues of molecular biology; you cannot expect to open up a page on molecular biology and understand it. This is the hard news about art that irritates the public. if people are

going to be irritated by that, they just have to be irritated by that.

<https://www.nytimes.com/1997/10/12/arts/art-is-it-art-is-it-good-and-who-says-so.html>

Alan Peterson 31/10/2019

Genderless Faces

Hello Patricia,

Just as the images you wrote about were "full of contradictions and ambiguities, but this is their attraction", so in our society today which is full of contradictions and ambiguities. Frankly, I am fed up with not being able to call a she a she and a he a he, but have to go about delicately like walking on eggs for fear of offending, or worse, losing my job because I might possibly mix up a he with a she and an ex-she with a he and vs. I find it all so pathetic. However, your review was well written, so please don't take offense from my comment in this world of undefined sexes.

Corey Davidson 08/11/2019

Venice 2019

Hello Liviana,

You wrote a very good review of the Venice Biennale, but I had hoped to also read about the Chinese pavilion with its powerful message about connecting. The city of Venice is about bridges, about connecting people who would otherwise be isolated on individual islands, like we are all over the world, while it's the machine or the internet that is connecting us all. Fei Jun's installation "Re-Search" through an app leads people on a search for the bridges in Venice that are similar to the antique bridges in China.

Just as the artist Chen Qi said at the opening ceremony of the Venice Biennale, "Art is a form of wisdom to resolve social conflicts and contradictions." We need more wisdom (and art!) today in

these ever more frightening times

Rose Bennett 17/09/2019

Daxiliu Art Musuem Gets a Shock

Lily,

The response the New Art Examiner is gathering is significant The numbers are good, but more important the New Art Examiner is driven by individuals who care for art outside the political/cultural box, the Museums' academia and investors who work through these institutions. The New Art Examiner has relied on people power or the natural intelligence of committed individuals; the official art world is well known for lying down to PR. See the recent article on Bernays:

<http://www.newartexaminer.net/cultural-conspiracy/>

This is not to say there are individuals who work in Museums who do struggle for integrity and freedom, who defy the trendy art fashion. The New Art Examiner has tried to steer a course of independence; we think art criticism has to be free. Therefore we are regarded by some as dangerous. We invite all free-thinking individuals to share their views irrespective of location.

Derek Guthrie 10/10/2019

Hi Lily,

We have all been pretty amazed at the number of readers your review has had to date, at this moment over 14,000! Only Ken Turner received a similar number with his Speakeasy over a course of a few months. We wish to welcome our numerous Chinese readers, as we look forward to a series of articles and reviews in Chinese that will also be in English, starting with the November/December issue of the New Art Examiner.

Pendery Weekes 10/10/2019

Editor,

It's so fantastic that the New Art Examiner has published an article in Chinese; I hope this trend continues. It would be interesting to read about what it is to be an artist in New York, Miami, San Francisco, Stockholm, Shanghai, Tokyo, Singapore, Cape Town, Paris, Madrid, and so on. I'm in Iceland, literally and figuratively, but it's through this magazine that I feel I am connecting to the rest of the art world.

Jon Olafur 23/09/2019

Editor,

非常好用中文写关于艺术世界。中国有13亿以英语为母语，但只有3.79亿母语为英语。我不是中国人，而是来自韩国。我试着用你的语言给你写信。

(translation)

It is very good to write about the art world in Chinese. There are 1.3 billion native English speakers in China, but only 379 million native speakers of English. I am not Chinese, but from South Korea. I tried to write to you in your language.

Michael Jeong 03/09/2019

Editor,

谢谢你的中文文章。我希望将来会有更多

(translation)

Thank you for your Chinese article. I hope there will be more in the future.

Sandy Zhao 02/09/2019

Cultural Conspiracy

Hi Al,

The fact that one decides to become an artist and not a plumber, a gardener, a lawyer or a doctor for example, is due to the fact that most artists don't fit, nor do they accept, the pre-formed mold that society expects of them. They are a less manipulative category of individuals, even though many do sell out in order to survive.

Inside they remain independent creatures, somewhat uncomfortable for society to manage and live with. I disagree with you on your saying that artists have always accepted this "drubbing", as you call it. They always remain different from your local pharmacist, newsagent, restaurant manager, and so on. Vive la différence!

Caroline Daniels 15/09/2019

Caroline,

When artists sell out they are no longer independent creatures and have lost authenticity. Identity politics is the great issue of today. Race and gender have entered into the mainstream discussion with some urgency, art has not. I do not see much comfort in the fact that artists are oddballs and natural eccentrics.

Derek Guthrie 15/09/2019

Raquel,

Thanks for the questions. DIFFERENTIATION: I am definitely an odd ball. I think art history has little if anything to do with weeing art. For that reason I avoid reading labels when I am in a museum. Of course, some things are immediately recognizable because of what I know about history, but I still distance myself from everything I can, except the art itself, situating myself in a "cloud of unknowing", a timeout from life zone, where taste and aesthetics can best thrive (I have found). I don't "differentiate" the good from the bad, the art does that for itself. All I do is notice it. AVANT GARDE: Art history is relevant here, but on an elemental basis. If there is a huge contingent of artists employing the same codec at once (which is a matter of fact and therefore subject to art history), then they can't legitimately be called "avant garde", or "leading edge". Instead they are a "herd" that is plowing and replowing the same old ground that dominates the "temper" of their own time –

contemporary art, in other words. Curiously, few art historians appear to recognize this. I remain mystified why. COONSKINISM: Rosenberg used this term to cast light on what is quite specific about the New York School, namely, that there is little the various artists have in common stylistically. Like the colonists, they each sat in a place outside the regular designated battlefields and picked away at the massive British armies as the Brits marched toward what they regarded as the proper place to do battle. I certainly prize such individualism, both in the making and the appreciating of art. Art, as art, is experienced directly, without mediation from the intellect or memory of the past, in an eternity of the present. To get its gift, if it is good enough to offer a gift, you must do it for yourself. The moment you tie your taste to what someone else tells you that you should or should not like, you are losing part or all of your connection to the art itself, which eats at the "validity" of your experience.

Like I said, I am an odd ball. I'm comfortable with antiquated terms like "beauty". In fact, I am uncomfortable with discussions about art that do not use it or one of its equivalents. Without beauty having its place, it would be like discussing food and deliberately leaving out any reference to its flavor.

But that discomfort seldom prevents me from enjoying the argument itself. It is one of the best ways to grow.

John Link 20/09/2019

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EDITORIAL

Apathy

Are you one of the many visitors on our planet who suffers from apathy, without even knowing what this popular malady is? Do you drag yourself around, day after day, going to bed fighting sleepless nights, while searching for meaning in your life?

Sounds like something out of the preacher on horseback's message in the early years of the United States. Did you know that John Wesley (1703-1791) rode over 250,000 miles, rain or shine, as a saddlebag preacher? Now that is passion and fervour. Did you know that the whole New Art Examiner team is made up of volunteers? Only with the September/October 2019 issue have we been able to pay our writers £25 per print issue, not much, but something (Jody Cutler told me it came to \$20 in the US, sad to hear). All these volunteers, over 30 of them, work passionately to bring you reviews and articles of what's going on in their corner of the world.

Apathy is not a commonly used word in the English language, though it means a lack of feeling, a lack of emotion towards something, with various forms of passivity. It comes from the Greek "pathos"; however, with the negative alpha "a" in front of it, it becomes the opposite of pathos – it's a dangerous condition of our times though, which is increasing, as people become less and less engaged with their physical world and more engaged with their virtual reality. Becoming the norm, I wonder why we don't hear this word more often. A-P-A-T-H-Y, apathy.

The Alzheimer's Society says that "Apathy, depression and anxiety are common conditions experienced by people with dementia". Are we all going down the drain towards dementia, since most of us suffer from one of these? It's a worrisome thought, but it might help to start lighting a fire in our lives, to wake up from the fog of antidepressants, alcohol, drugs, social media and over-working. Have we really stopped caring about what goes on around us? Has it become too much to bear, too much to hear about? Who wants the daily diet of hypocrisy, lies and wars, etc.?

Apathy is kind of like hibernation. We skip the news, at least the hot news. Who wants it anyway? The same for art; who cares who won the Turner Prize, or who's exhibiting in the Hirshhorn, at the Tate, at the MoMA, or at the local gallery down the street? And who cares about the community artists or even the rich and famous ones? Is the artworld all one mess of junk, 'canned' as Andy Warhol told us? Is this what it's all become? Has it all been done before?

As we condition ourselves to the tune of (cont.p36)



CiC

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QUOTE of the Month:

As my artist's statement explains, my work is utterly incomprehensible and is therefore full of deep significance."

Calvin

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. Annie Markovich joined the New Art Examiner editorial team in 1974 and has since assisted the NAE through all its phases and changes.



Why Speakeasy?

Believe it or not, there was space for a new feature in the early days of the NAE. Jane Allen & Derek Guthrie had the idea to open up the pages to different voices of the artworld,

preferably unknown and known personalities. Jane asked me for a suggestion. We had a brainstorm about the title, and shortly Speakeasy came to mind. As the NAE was born and bred in Chicago, where gambling casinos and booze provided a distraction during prohibition, the name had a familiar ring. The New Art Examiner is an instrument of change, an arena where opinions are discussed, argued and dismissed. Artists learn how to write about their work even if they are not celebrities or famous, two words boldfaced today. What's important to you as an artist? Or a curator? Since 1973 five hundred artworld personalities have decorated these pages with their thoughts on how the artworld works or doesn't.

Forty-six years later, after a 15 year hiatus, it appears Speakeasy is still a popular read. Artists lead in the cultural arena, guide, teach and are respected in examining ideas. Artists are allowed to dream, to look out the window and notice the quality of light, all the miracles of nature and last but not least, human life and all the emotional components that make up a people. After college, I had a gig as "art specialist" for Model Cities in Chicago. A position funded by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, and didn't last long.....allowed me to teach art to teens after school and work with Headstart, the 70's federally funded program for 2-6 year old children. I will never forget the image of a 4 year old standing in front of an easel with a paintbrush in his hand! During that time, Derek Guthrie was my painting teacher in an evening class at Northwestern University. He taught his students about the New Art Examiner. Volunteers were needed! My duties aside from typesetting 24 pages, included selling 8 pages of advertising, answering the phone and later, last but not least, learning how to write about Art. Throughout the 70's and early 80's, thousands of artists, curators and gallery owners streamed through the doors of 230 E. Ohio in Chicago's Gold Coast. The office was directly located behind the Museum of Contemporary Art, near alternative feminist galleries, Artemisia, ARC, and gallerist Dorothy Rosenthal, dealers

Michael Wyman, Walter Kelly, Fairweather Hardin and others. Those were heady days of Friday night openings, below zero temperatures and this continual labor of love, month after month. After 10 years, Allen & Guthrie decided the New Art Examiner had reached its apex in sweet home Chicago and headed East, to Washington, D.C. Guthrie says the District of Columbia welcomed the New Art Examiner with open arms. Home to the National Endowment of the Humanities, D.C. Commission on the Arts, here it was possible to attend the decision making processes around funding organizations and individual artists. Culture, always a defining symbol of a society and a hot buzzword in the USA 80's when CIA agents came out of the woodwork when it was discovered that the CIA secretly funded abstract expressionism, while beer flowed freely in Chief Ike's (read Eisenhower) Mambo Room was a Washington hotspot for intellectuals, Al Jiricowic's one of many haunts. By the way, Al happens to be the current Washington, D.C. Editor. Here then, the atmosphere was electric; galleries and artist co-ops sprung up in DuPont Circle, a far cry from today's gentrified haven, where in 1969 I experienced teargas while demonstrating against the War in Vietnam with thousands of others. In 1980 feathers ruffled when Derek examined and Jane wrote about the New Art Examiner, the D.C. Commission on the Arts, but then the NAE was never the kind of art magazine that bored.

Last year in D.C. Derek, Al and I began the work of renewing the efforts of the NAE while Daniel Nanavati, Pendery Weekes, Stephen & Carrie Lee, Miklos LeGrady in Canada, John Link, Lily Kostrzewa, Melanie Manos in Michigan, Margaret Lanterman & Stephen Luecking from Chicago and many others in Cornwall, England began the work of sowing the seeds of a revival.

Somehow the sheen of respectability around things artistic have worn thin. Politics and Culture are enmeshed in a codependent relationship that undermines the authenticity of the artist's voice. I get the sense everyone is pushing uphill. Creativity has gone underground. Today it takes a different kind of research even outside the domain of digital media, we have to dig deeper to reveal the layers of critical thinking that contribute to a more sophisticated, grounded strength in the importance and value of Art. I welcome any response to these ideas.

Annie Markovich

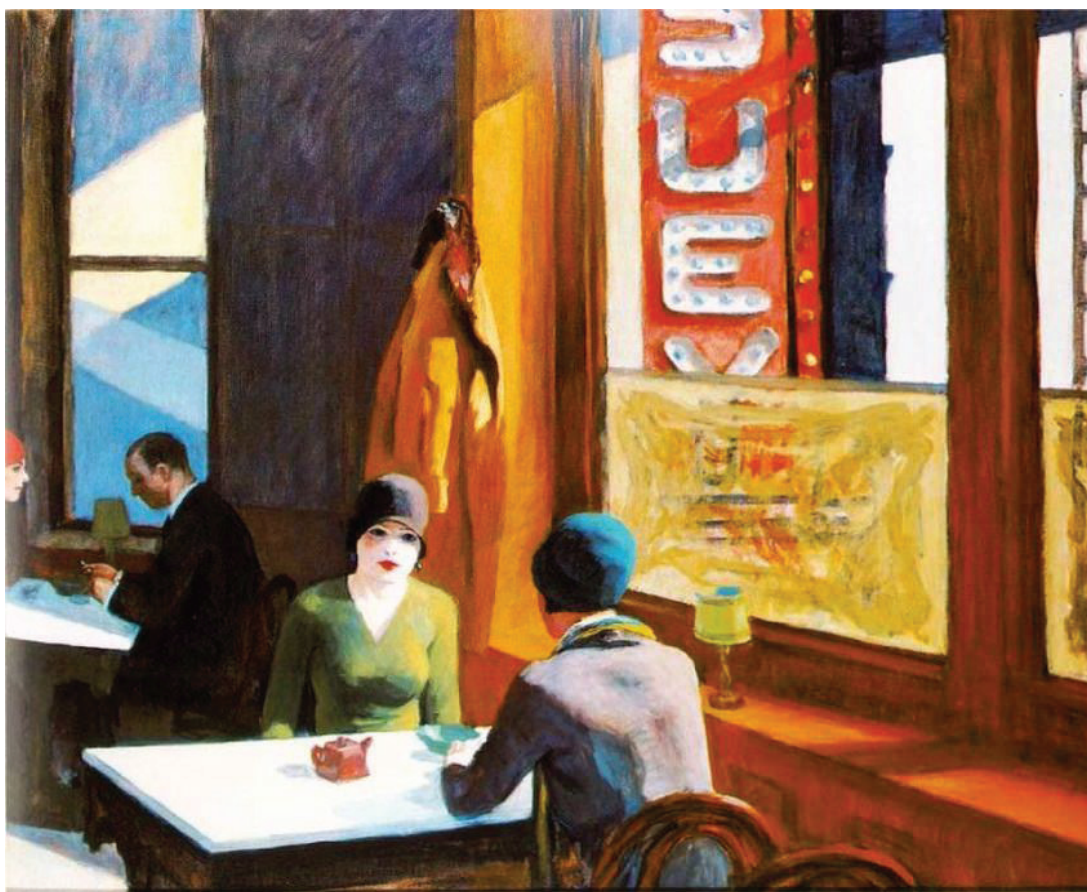
LIVING WITH HOPPER

Edward Hopper has been one of my favourite artists since I started taking an interest in art. Along the wall leading to the cafeteria at school, we had a frieze of Seurat's pointillist painting, 'A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte'. Queuing for lunch I lazily examined it and, knowing nothing of pointillism, even the term, I was intrigued. Was it allowed, painting in this manner? Dots?

I don't suppose Edward Hopper was so surprised when he came across Seurat; as an artist he would know there were no rules, only one's own interpretation. He once said, "My aim in painting has always been the most exact transcription possible of my most intimate expressions of nature."

He has also been quoted as saying that he always thought of himself as an Impressionist and admitted to being influenced by some, using a lighter palette and freer brush strokes whilst in Paris, where he met with Albert Marquet. Was he fleetingly influenced by the Fauvist movement? Looking at 'Gas', painted in 1940 with its bright gas pumps and dark green woods bordered with orange grasses one can almost think so). At the same time he encountered Sickert, a post impressionist, and Felix Vallotton, whose indoor scenes may well have influenced Hopper's work. He admired Courbet's style; though in later years confessed to thinking Cezanne's work was 'rather thin'.

Hopper was a young and impressionable twenty-four year old when he first went to Paris after completing his training, not to study but to paint and observe. Looking at 'Gloucester Beach Bass Rocks', a watercolour painted in 1924, there is a hint of Impressionism. Scratchy definition, the hints of shade and the languid poses give us a sense of the heat of the day. The backs of a faltering row of people sitting on the beach, some holding gaily coloured umbrellas, two on deckchairs, and a solitary figure at one end are seen on almost white sand, the collar of sea beyond is a deep blue,



Chop Suey, 1929 recently sold at auction for \$93m

and the big open sky ranges from near white to summer blue. Beyond the lone figure the tip of another umbrella peaks into the picture, hinting at things going on just beyond our sight.

Interestingly, in 1913 his first sale was at the Amory Show, the International Exhibition of Modern Art, in which the 1300 pieces included work by Van Gogh, Matisse, Marcel Duchamp, Degas and Seurat. The painting was entitled 'Sailing', a dark green sea, a lemony sail; the boat reflecting both colours scurries across the surface of the ocean, two indistinct figures at the helm. Perhaps looking at this painting, though, he is more Post Impressionist, as we have come to consider Van Gogh, and as his art progresses he seems to swerve into American Realism. But, ultimately, he developed his own unmistakable style, just as a musician can be recognized by his style of playing.

At his parents' behest he began training as an illustrator, in order to secure a living, but quickly incorporated painting into his courses. He always saw illustrating as a way of paying the bills and as soon as his paintings began to sell he abandoned it, but at the time, illustrating taught him to

watch people, for his editors wanted people, people depicted in a myriad of situations.

After Paris came trips to London, Amsterdam, Brussels and Berlin, always seeking out the art the cities had to offer. In Amsterdam he saw Rembrandt's 'Night Watch' and declared that it was the most wonderful thing of his he had ever seen. Back in New York he took another job as an illustrator with an advertising agency. His recognition at this time was as such; winning first prize in a war poster competition. He also became a self taught etcher and between 1915 and 1924 created around 70 etchings, garnering much praise from the New York Times, and The Evening Sun, which wrote that 'Edward Hopper's sincerity carries well in black and white.' Two good examples of his etchings are 'Night on the El Train' (1918) and 'Night in the Park' (1921).

In 1923 he met Jo Nivison. Nivison also painted, though her day job was teaching. It was she who brought Hopper to the attention of the curator and director of the Brooklyn Museum; they had invited Nivison to show 6 of her watercolours in an exhibition of drawings and watercolours

by American and European artists. Hopper was known to them as an etcher but not as a watercolourist.

Hopper attracted great praise from the critics, most of whom ignored Nivison, (though she was in good company, among others; Georgia O'Keefe and John Singer Sargent were dismissed as 'other Americans'), and it clearly did not affect their relationship, as a year later they were married. The museum bought 'The Mansard Roof' a picture Hopper later described as one of his good early watercolours, for \$100; it was his second sale. Later that year he had his first one man exhibition, 11 watercolours, all sold, \$100 dollars each. He was 42 and was finally able to give up commercial art and follow his heart.

Hopper's success in the art world waxed, his wife's waned, she continued to paint, sometimes the same subjects as her husband, but mostly she deferred to him and dealt with his correspondence, keeping the records of his work and exhibitions. He did not encourage her in her art, 'a pleasant little talent' was how he referred to it. Perhaps he could have phrased it a little better, though he was the better



Sun on Prospect Street, Gloucester, Massachusetts

artist, after all, she was not unknown in the art world in New York. He clearly didn't undermine her greatly, she became the model for most of the figures; he admitted to feeling uncomfortable with models and had often worked from photographs. The couple gave the impression of being perfectly self contained.

Edward Hopper's paintings are eclectic, he had a different way of looking at even the most ordinary of subjects; he said he hoped there was something in his paintings which words could not convey.

Rural America, gentle bucolic scenes of dwellings in harmony with the land, lone figures looking into the middle distance, a scantily dressed lady in her doorway, surrounded by endless space. They have integrated themselves in the romantic view Americans have of their own, far more bloody history.

'Railroad Train' from 1908, catches the last carriage and a half as the train steams off. Typically, Hopper leaves us to imagine the rest.

'House by the Railroad', painted in 1925, is a tall gothic house with a railway line running directly in front of it, obscuring the very bottom of the building. Alfred Hitchcock was inspired by this painting when creating the Bates' house in Psycho. Hopper's work caught the imagination of directors. Ridley Scott's Blade Runner was influenced by one of Hopper's most famous paintings, 'Nighthawks', in which three seemingly disconsolate people can be seen through the wide glass window leaning at a bar; outside is the night. Wim Wender, a German director admitted to paying homage to Hopper in his films, 'The American Friend' and 'Paris Texas', the latter being particularly full of 'Hopperesque' scenes.

Urban America is portrayed in hotel rooms and cafes, roof tops, tenement buildings and lonely travellers on trains. Some of his domestic scenes, for example 'Hotel by a Railroad' in which a man stands smoking looking out of a window whilst his half dressed woman seems to be reading, are so intimate it is almost voyeuristic to stand looking.

'Eleven A.M.' depicts a girl, naked apart from her shoes, sitting looking forward out of the window of an apartment. Her face is hidden from view by her lustrous hair; a table lamp with a large red shade dominates the corner of the picture.

'Two on the Aisle' is set in a theatre, before the show, as the first few people arrive. The Hoppers enjoyed both the cinema and the theatre; Jo had trained as an actor. As an aside, it is interesting to note that Hopper was less impressed by Jean Cocteau's 'Orpheus' instead much preferred films by Carol Reed, 'The Third Man' with Orson Welles and 'The Fallen Idol' with Ralph Richardson. He was clearly not

taken with fantasy.

Between 1943 and 1955 Edward Hopper and Jo made several trips to Mexico. though he was not always happy there, complaining about the food, the heat, the rain, and on their first visit the lack of a car, he did manage, with his wife's encouragement to paint, producing scenes of Mexico which conveyed the arid heat and strong light of the country.

'El Pacio' is a watercolour from 1946, a view of the top halves of a streets' flat roofed buildings, one of them the movie house, Palacio. The streaky sky has a look of dawn or dusk, quiet and serene.

Hopper's oil paintings are usually in sharp focus, light and shade play big parts in many scenes, sunlight streaming through windows, an odd lighted window in a row of apartments.

His seascapes are sunny and colourful, lighthouses and seaside houses set against feathery blue skies, sailing boats with full sails riding the waves. Hopper's hometown was a seaport and he loved sailing; he and Jo regularly sailed on Cape Cod.

'The Lee Shore' from 1941 is full of movement. The boats' sails are full; one small boat leaning at a daring angle and the clouds seem to race across the sky.

Edward Hopper was a quiet man, not given to self aggrandizing, though he was awarded many gold medals and won prizes for his art. Not, it seems the easiest man to live with, from some of his wife's diary entries, but they were together for over forty years and his last painting 'Comedians' is of himself and his wife, on a dark stage, both dressed Pierrot fashion, taking a bow. The couple had spent most of their lives in a top floor apartment with few amenities, (74 steps up to their apartment) though they did build a house in South Truro, Massachusetts, where they spent most summer months.

When he died in 1967 at the age of almost 85, all his work, over 3000 paintings, drawings and prints were left to his wife, and on her death all of it went to the Whitney Museum of American Art. (see the reprint of Jane Allen Adams' and Derek Guthrie's Chicago Tribune review of the first exhibition of this bequest in Milwaukee (next page.)



Edward Hopper (wiki)

Lynda Green

Two Exhibits Tied to Tradition

Chicago Tribune: Sunday 3rd December 1972

Jane Addams Allen & Derek Guthrie were the art correspondents for the Chicago Tribune for nearly two years. It was only when one of their articles was pulled from the galleys that Jane suggested they publish themselves and start the New Art Examiner in 1974. Their thirst for freedom of speech is our inheritance.

The return is realism, frequently cited, carries the moral overtones of runaway children returning to the family fold after a disastrous summer on the road. Along with the Russians, countless conservative academics and anti-modernist critics and painters have been predicting the collapse of abstraction as a decadent fad for the last 50 years or so. As a result, "realism" has become a very loaded word. It suggests, among others, such wide-ranging features as feet-on-the-ground, common sense; a return to humanism; and the re-establishment of good craftsmanship. These solid bourgeois virtues, so often decried by the elitist avant-garde, are willy-nilly brought out and brushed up every time a realist, new or old, goes on view in the galleries.

As a result it is often overlooked that there are three quite different strains of realism currently being practised in America, each with its own locale and heritage. Two of these are closely tied to art events of the last decade. We refer here to the romantic West Coast realism which dramatises the beauties of nature with slightly sinister ecological overtones – William Allen and Joseph Raffael come to mind – and in the urban intellectual "sharp focus" or "photo" realism – Richard Estes, Duane Hanson, Chuck Close Malcolm Morley – which is definitely post-pop in its picture postcard, advertising sources.

The third strain of realism is one which has been a consistent force on the American scene since the late 19th century. Unlike other American movements, the realist tradition that one can trace from Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer, thru Edward Hopper and Charles Sheeler, to such current realists as Fairfield Porter and Philip Pearlstein never completely lost its following, even among



Edward Hopper - New York Restaurant, 1922

artists and critics who are anti-realist in their outlook. In the most avant-garde glossies, periodic articles on Sheila, Hopper, and Eakins were trotted out with frequency during the 1950s and 1960s. These artists' contention with the realities of their time, their strong powers of concentration and reduction, their relationship with the photographic medium prevented their painting and graphic work from acquiring the dated look of the American Impressionists, the Ashcan school, and the early American abstractionists. Two exhibitions currently on view in this area suggests the continuity and strength of this tradition. The most important of the two is clearly the show of paintings, drawings, and prints from the Hopper bequest to the Whitney Museum of American Art which opened November 17 in the Milwaukee Art Centre and will continue thru December 17.

The Hoppers left their entire artistic estate to the Whitney – an estate which was, in the words of John I Baur, director of the museum, "probably the most important bequest of

an American artist work to a museum." The collection contains more than 2000 oils, watercolours, drawings, and prints, ranging from Hoppers student days to his later years.

Hopper gets his strength from a direct confrontation with the world as he finds it. His paintings exude a rare confidence in what the eye sees as a meaningful pictorial statement. As a result his paintings can be clearly pinned down in their locale and date.

Within the East Coast environment, however, no aspect was alien to him. He painted movie theatre interiors, rural gas stations, city offices, old country houses, and suburban bedrooms with the same attention and respect. Best known for his paintings of old New England, some of his finest works are cityscapes. "Early Sunday Morning" and "The Nighthawks" are examples.

Although lonely and often isolated, Hopper's paintings are always peopled with human feelings. Building façades, empty chairs take on an almost anthropomorphic impress of the people who were recently there. His subject is not nature but the environment built and inhabited by his fellows.

The second exhibition – paintings by George Bentley Nick at the Gray Gallery 620 N. Michigan Ave., thru next Sunday – is strikingly akin to certain aspects of Hoppers work. Nick has concentrated on the façades of New England houses and the configuration of New England streets, painting them with the sharp distinctions between light and shade, the attention to architectural detail, and the sunlit effect that Hopper favoured. One is reminded of Hoppers often repeated quote, "maybe I am not very human. What I wanted to do was to paint sunlight on the side of a house." The statement, in fact, seems much more applicable to Nick's painting than to Hopper's. While the contemporary painter thrives on man-made painted surfaces, his efforts to represent nature are painfully uneven. Trees, shrubbery, grass, any of that green stuff, tends to cause a complete breakdown in his paint surface and accuracy of colour. Perhaps he should avoid excursions into the country until he finds an antidote to his allergy. People fare little better. Nick's real forte lies in his ability to resolve an urban jungle (as in "small East Coast City on a Summers Day") into a totally coherent pictorial composition. He is able to peer down and across streets, up and across complicated buildings, façades, taking the viewers on a visual guided tour and bringing them back without a single spatial misstep.



George Bentley Nick - Waltham 20 Sept. 1970

It is his handling of colour which allows him to do this. He pitches it with unnerving accuracy within a high keyed range. Inside an overall harsh brightness which gives Kodachrome a run for its money, it is full of subtle touches. Comparing Nick's work to Hopper's, one feels keenly that much has been lost. The art climate of the 1960s has pushed latter-day realist into a fake objectivity which owes as much to magazine colour photography as it does to philosophical position. The contention with all aspects of society has gone too. No one would speculate about the kind of people who live inside Nick's houses. Their function as habitats is irrelevant. Finally Nick's painting suffers from occasional total lapses of sensitivity to place, material, and subject matter. Perhaps he has not placed a high enough value on his own eye.

Jane Addams Allen and Derek Guthrie

**Great art is the outward
expression of an inner life of
the artist, and this innerlife
will result in his personal
vision of the world.**

Edward Hopper

A slight look into Edward Hopper —



House by the Railroad, 1925

I think we now have a certain advantage of “time” in respect to our viewing of Edward Hopper’s work. It is how he came into his “own” that I wish to discuss. I am taken by the life of Hopper’s “own”, a “resplendent” throughout his life’s work.

Hopper is usually discussed for his take on the lonesome American city or land/seascapes, his singular objects of contemplation. His seemingly, pointlessly, “wondering people” as lonely human beings like inserted characters into still, introspective dramas. Or a dullness in his stretched paint light as a dappled sun, often stark midday or late afternoon or his sense of impending dusk. His



New York Movie, 1939

landscapes often present themselves as a quiet churning presence and a “suspension of moment”, as if something will happen, the suggestion of full “filament” of living but not quite there yet.

Apart from the pop cultural approach to Hopper as an illustrator of his times, we need to understand what he actually said about himself in respect to art and living. Hopper’s most systematic declaration of his philosophy as an artist was given in a handwritten note, entitled “Statement”, submitted in 1953 to the journal, *Reality*:

“Great art is the outward expression of an inner life in the artist, and this inner life will result in his personal vision of the world. No amount of skillful invention can replace the essential element of imagination. One of the weaknesses of much abstract painting is the attempt to substitute the inventions of the human intellect for a private imaginative conception. The inner life of a human being is a vast and varied realm and does not concern itself alone with stimulating arrangements of color, form and design. The term life used in art is something not to be held in contempt, for it implies all of existence and the province of art is to react to it and not to shun it. Painting will have to deal more fully and less obliquely with life and nature’s phenomena before it can again become great...”

Though Hopper claimed that he didn’t consciously embed psychological meaning in his paintings, he was deeply interested in Freud and the power of the subconscious mind. He wrote in 1939, “So much of every art is an expression of the subconscious that it seems to me most of all the important qualities are put there unconsciously, and little of importance by the conscious intellect.”

The quiet consciousness of this artist is powerful in an extremely refined manner. Hopper did not wish to be associated with any school, although his early training was with Robert Henri, who is associated with the Hudson Valley and Ashcan school. He vehemently cast off any notion of being called an illustrator, even if he had made a living as a young man doing exactly that. Hopper’s work successfully never becomes “bland pretty” or sentimental or decorative or for that matter un-nostalgic, despite many attempts to interpret his images as a pop theme. No, Hopper has dodged all the populous bullets and has remained an American iconic artist of the highest degree. What do we see in Edward Hopper today?

To me, there is a pondering ill-resolution in Hopper’s work that is both daunting and fierce, but in a very still and quiet way. Hopper’s work has the irreducible touch of

humility that is so secret it flits in and out of his canvas like a shiver to your soul. This is not a comfortable feeling, but it is undeniable and difficult to reckon yet it is pervasive in all his work, whether of people or nature or architecture or idea. This is a humane-alienation. He achieves this again and again to the extent his work is bewitching and strange and oh, so familiar. This is never an “effect” but substance and a driven vision. We cling to the beauty and truth and eschew it simultaneously. This is the restless unfinished worry of our American life, a hurry and ponder, a glimpse but not a vision, a revealed secret that flies off into the wind. This is hard to grasp about Hopper, hence his genius that befuddles us - he is so plain yet so un-there in terms of eclipsing moments of anxiety. To the extent he was ever conscious of this quality or power of deep beauty remains his mystery to us. His legacy presses forward in time and it is hard to “aesthetically admit”, but his “humility that haunts” is there, nonetheless. This is the shift of modernism from humanism, the track of human scent, taking us we do not not know where.

Look at *Early Sunday Morning*, at first we may be taken by the eventuality of a sunny morning awakening a street. The painting is very well laid out symmetrically, as the barber pole and the fire hydrant are characters greeting the

morning, and then we look above the shops.. are there people about to arrive from sleep and dreams of morning of day coming to what? There is a hint of anxiety of eventuality implied in a very subtle way via the angle of sunlight, the escaping shadows, the drawn window shades, but the sun as a character as much as the barber pole and fire hydrant waking them and to what? This picture implies a process of consciousness awakening behind the beautiful green, red and brown city block that will unfold into day, but we are right here at that moment unfolding before us, frozen or held still with humility—for the picture is about people, whether we know it or not. And what do we decide? In many ways this picture is about a certain innocence of our America gone by. But there is an implied foreboding as well as there is with most of Hopper's work. His use of brush, paint, light, composition, his unconsciousness employed, his sense of territory and his eye, his wife Jo, the fact he never left New York but travelled to Paris and around the country to paint, all these factors combine in unexplainable ways that haunt this quiet man's work. We are lucky he harnessed them to his “own”, but do we pay attention to what he implies?

Al Jirikowic



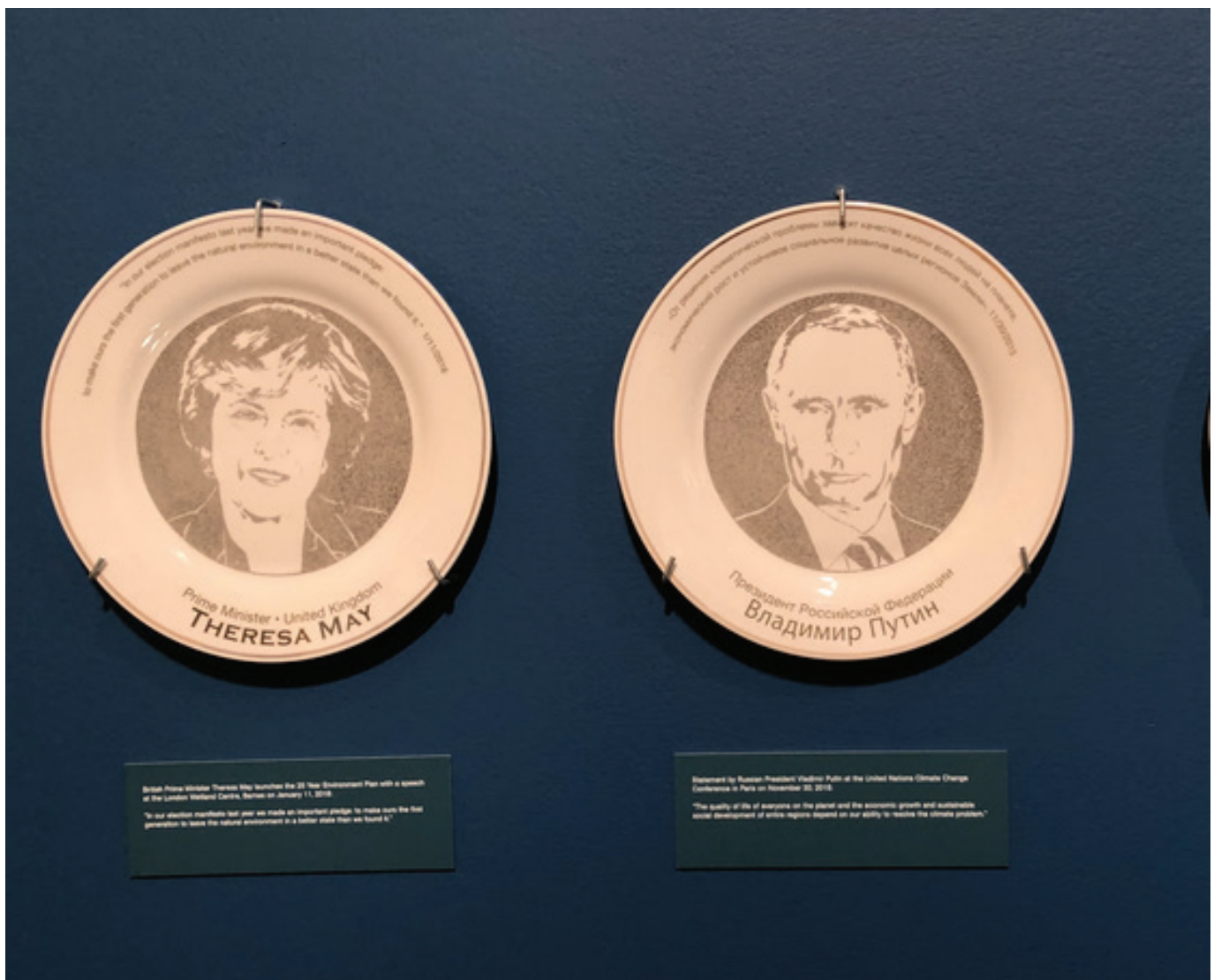
Gas 1940

Underlying Questions Abound at Chicago Art Expo 2019

Each fall we look forward to Art Expo, and every time it has a new personality. This is what you would expect, as one of the prominent purposes of art is to reflect the current cultural milieu. This makes attendance at the Expo all the more interesting and enjoyable.

Last year 'social conscience' and 'interactive content' were prevalent. Artwork reflected a world conscience of wrongs that needed to be righted and the environment that needed immediate assistance. This year, that kind of passion and awareness was not as visually present. The show had a strong decorative twist, an interest in bright colors and pulsing surfaces. Not beauty, really, but attractive stylishness. Color and texture dripped off of the

walls in reliefs of many materials and paintings of very thick texture applications. Sculptures were seldom sleek but more often mixed media and painterly. One is compelled to wonder, why this interest in decoration over content? Perhaps artists are mentally exhausted from the blatant selfish and unethical actions of our governments, or in the rapid decline of our planet that too many people refuse to promptly and emphatically address? Perhaps artists struggling with these too-weighty issues is just not a tenable proposition, in terms of forcing the rate of change. For many attendees, the lack of solid content was disconcerting. Whatever the reason (and don't stop thinking about that) it's certain that



Kim Ables, *Smog Collectors*, *The Coming World Exhibit* Smog (particulate matter) on porcelain dinner plates, 2019

many of the attendees did breathe a sigh of relief that they would be able to view art that didn't pummel them or cause exhaustive thought.

Yet, thoughtful content was there. Often in the sidelines, in the work of newer galleries to the venue and in the solo exhibits, or exhibits by non-gallery groups. In this international presentation there were around 100 established galleries, but also 32 newer galleries and quite a few organizations, institutions and museums. IN/SITU was a display of mostly sculptural installations that were integrated into the side display areas, ceilings and addendum spaces. Curated by the artistic director of the Kunsthall Aarhus in Denmark, Jacob Fabricius had an eye to earth issues when he selected the library of recycled plastic waste by Dan Peterman, which was a large grey colored walk-in space that looked and functioned very much like an actual library with books and seating. The exception to ordinary was the use of recycled plastic as the construction material. There were also informative booths by the Artist's Rights Society and the Human Rights Watch.

A notable presence in a side exhibition space was the American organization, Natural Resources Defense Council, which was partnered with the Garage Museum of Contemporary Art in Moscow. NRDF is a veteran exhibitor from past Expos which engages with artists to promote awareness and action on ecological issues. Its exhibition partner group this year, the Garage, was founded in 2008 and is impressively the first and currently only philanthropic institution in Russia concerned with a comprehensive public mandate for cultural history and contemporary art. Cultural heritage is not the only item in their mandate. Thinking globally, they are also actively engaged in preserving our environment. This action is not only evident in their art programing, but also in the production of their sustainable development program which recognizes the use and output required to sustain a large institution that aims to significantly reduce their ecological impact and footprint. Currently on view at the Garage is the public program For the Coming World: Ecology as the New Politics 2030-2100, which coincides with the Expo panel presentation, No PLAN (et): Ecology as the New Politics. Romanian artist Dan Perjovschi created a mural and poster for the discussion. Alongside Dan's mural was a display of ceramic plates by Kim Abeles, a Los Angeles based artist. Kim invented a unique method to create ten portrait images of world leaders immediately on the plates as well as a quote from each on environmental issues. The portraits were actually "glazed" with captured smog from the air. For The Coming World Exhibit Kim created a set with the smog from Moscow, while the set presented here contained smog from Los Angeles. These plates looked a little slick and bland until one realized the chilling facts of smog as a tangible, permanent presence - attainable easily as an art medium. Kim Abeles states that her art can provide "a viewer with meaningful portrayals of nature and society... in service to



Adrienne Elyse Meyers *In Various Forms of Disguise, 2019*
Oil and house paint on canvas 28x24 inches

re-engage a person with the physical world." One can only think that mass awareness and engagement of this kind would possibly give humanity a fighting chance.

Adrienne Elyse Meyers, a recent graduate of the University of Chicago MFA program (2018) was part of a display at the University booth, and brought work of a more private note. Two delicate paintings achieved through a wash-like effect with oil and house paint could have been easily overlooked in their understated imagery. Closer investigation revealed a subtle sense of seeking, of misplacement or loss in an environment represented by symbols of what should be home, love and belonging. They spoke of youth but also of sophistication of thought and empathy. These small paintings were marked by a sense of poetry and transcendence. Oddly, they were displayed on a wall covered with clothing designed wallpaper and ceramic cabbages produced by Derek Ernster. The green glazed, realistic cabbages unraveled and climbed the wall around the paintings and over the shirts, creating a fun and surreal environment. Everyday items become part of your architecture in this installation that is modular and can be varied to meet unique architectural situations. This melded presentation was not planned or even perpetrated with consent, yet the genial preposterousness of it all caused one to examine each work carefully and further. If it weren't for Ernster's cabbages, which could not be denied, Meyer's quiet paintings may have been missed, which would have been a misfortune.

Gallery Momo presented, among others, the work of Stephan'e E. Conradie, who was born in Namibia and centers her art around

the history of colonialism and creolization in South Africa. Everyday objects found in local homes are used in her art to establish a sense of local identity. Displacement, prejudice and an exploration of what speaks of home are apparent in these lavishly decorative and yet compelling collages, which are often accompanied by a richly painted, traditional portrait. Through the lens of objects, Meyers speaks of her roots and also of where she has grown to, currently a candidate for a PhD in Visual Arts at the U. of Stellenbosch, South Africa. The decorative aspect in her work goes beyond style to illuminate and translate the life of working class, mostly ethnic society.

From Cameroon, Africa, and Galleriacontinua came Pascale Marthine Tayou. Landscape Cote d'Ivoire is the name of a small sculpture of glass and mixed media. A Janis figure staring into a mirror, this sculpture seemed too derivative until the source was realized as an honest and true inheritance. At that point it became a more powerful yet contemporary translation of culture and heritage.

From Chicago we found a loud statement from Nick Cave, director of the graduate fashion program at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, but more famously the irrepressible fabric sculptor, dancer, and performance artist. Cave's presence was large at the Expo, with included a display of his Hustle Coat, selling for \$110,000. But if that was too pricey for you, you could have grabbed a yard of his wallpaper for \$50. Lots of flash and pretty here, but it comes with a solid provenance. If you are chaffing at the dollars rolling into his wallet, be mollified by the fact that Cave's rough early years gives him the understanding that what goes around comes around. His new home/work space, The Facility, located at Milwaukee Ave. and Addison St. in an underserved section of Chicago, now serves also as an instigator for collaboration with emerging artists and young people. Some portion of the money that he makes from Expo will go towards his scholarship fund for young artists.

There was a breath of classic-looking art that came from Gregory Van Strydonck of the Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Belgium. Long white



Stephane E. Conradie, Oliver John 2019. Mixed media relief sculpture, 68.5 x 98.5 x 19 cm.

triangulated geometry, high-relief shaped canvas with bulging, abstracted eye-like protrusions were reminiscent of work from another decade, and put one in mind of the flowing shapes of Antoine Poncet. They spoke of the truth, dignity and serenity of thought translated into pure form. They spoke of reassurance and peace in a nervous and non-trusting world.

Margaret Lanterman

EXPO Chicago 2019 Sets the Bar for Autumn Fair Season

EXPO Chicago Director Tony Karman has finally made the leap from organizing a Chicago art fair to facilitating a Chicago Art Week. This year, his main event coincided with the first ever NADA (New Art Dealers Alliance) fair in

Chicago, along with dozens of museum and gallery openings around the city and the opening of the 3rd Chicago Architectural Biennial.

What made EXPO 2019 extraordinary, however, was not

what else went on around town but the democratic curation of the fair itself, which somehow represented not only the giants of the art world but also the giantness of the art field. Yes, of course there were plenty of heavy hitters among the 138 dealers in the show, which together showed 3000 artists from 24 nations—otherwise, it would not be worth going. But despite gems like the tiny Calder and Louise Bourgeois drawing at Tina Kim Gallery, the terrific Bernar Venet sculpture at Kasmin, and a perfectly representative Ugo Rondinone rock stack sitting beside a delectable John Chamberlain at Timothy Taylor's booth, such discoveries were not the stars.

My highlights instead came courtesy of a smattering of works occupying that rare-yet-instantly relatable-position somewhere between fine art, outsider art, folk art, social practice art, political art, absurdist art, and something else that makes people forget they are looking at art altogether. For example, the glazed ceramic Tittypots (2019) and, excuse the pun, fantastically hung Hangbrüst installation by the almost unknown artist LETO in the booth of West Hollywood's Nino Mier Gallery both amused and wowed me with their simultaneous humor, self-awareness, and depth of method. Similarly, three bombastic, garish, LCD sculptures by Italian-born, Brooklyn-based artist Federico Solmi hanging in the booth of Luis De Jesus, another Los Angeles-area dealer, held my gaze until my retinas burned. I enjoyed multiple encounters returning again and again to watch all types of people taking selfies in front of Good Times, a painting by New York artist Deborah Kass hanging

in Kavi Gupta's booth. The simple black and blue canvas festooned with the words good times in white neon was easily the most selfied thing at the fair, in fact, but nary a single, bouncing giggler seemed to realize the somber undertone of the glowing message: black and blue, symbolizing police violence against people of color, overshadowed by a neon spectacle. Good times for whom? The best work at EXPO 2019, however, was not in a dealer's booth, nor was it by only one artist.

It was an uncanny-looking European advertising kiosk plopped at the end of a line of media booths across from Hannah's Bretzel. Organized by Detroit-based artist Scott Reeder, the kiosk was covered with hundreds of handmade paper advertisements, offering everything from spiritual advice to real estate services, each made by other artists Reeder invited to participate.

Inside the kiosk, donning a top hat, was Reeder, selling arbitrarily-priced strips of colored vinyl—bumper stickers without messages. Despite the money and vanity that so often overshadows authentic aesthetic experiences at these fairs, EXPO Chicago 2019 managed to bring together some dealers and works that reached all types of viewers—from museum directors to aging millionaires to new money to small children to event staff to resentful artists only there to sneer—and keep them interested from VIP afternoon until the final hours of the fair. Such an accomplishment is undeniable.

Phillip Barcio

The Legacy of Apathy—Derek Guthrie in DC

The New Art Examiner is difficult to explain, as it does not fit into convenient categories. I refer to our Statement of Purpose, printed in every issue since the first one. These profound words were written by a forgotten hero, Edward Fry, the Curator and Art Historian who defied the Trustees of the Guggenheim Museum in New York. He lost his job as the Trustees decided to dismantle an exhibition of Hans Haacke, a pioneer and important conceptual artist exhibit, on the grounds it was not art. The exhibition included photographs of slum property of which some of the trustees had a financial interest. Hans Haacke made his point; hypocrisy was rife and dominant in the upper echelons of society. It still is. Conceptual artists have made similar points, most noteworthy Marcel Duchamp, but he chose a different target: artists. The arrival of Donald Trump has made so much so clear.

The Elephant in the Art World room is the issue of patronage.

Our political crisis is also a cultural crisis, corruption. The story of Trump can be reduced to the simple fact that he got elected riding on the resentment of the electorate who believe that Washington as the seat of government is not responsive to their plight. He called Washington a swamp. I agree. But Donald has made his own swamp, which looks more toxic than Hillary's result in the loss of leadership that the USA once enjoyed.

Art criticism is only words written by those who have a love of art. Critics are not different from artists, in that they come in all sorts of shapes and guises, with opinions

sometimes informed and sometimes not. Art critics can be profound and banal, modest and arrogant and sensitive to art. Artists resent critics when they do not praise their art. Critics are seen as authoritative figures. The critic differs from the artist in that his practice is in the public domain, while the artist can retreat, enjoy the space, calm and even the sanctuary of the studio.

The Elephant in the Art World room is the issue of patronage. Or better still can today's market find informed patronage? Artists need patrons.

There are creative, sensitive patrons and there are also not so clever, patrons. Today artists have to rely on the rigged market and it is declining.

The role and purpose of critical discourse has been relegated to obscurity. In part, mass culture is more effective at gaining votes, money and celebrity. Here I cite Jeff Koons as a banal superstar, who recently announced he was not making art any more. Artists should understand they are disposable as financial items; this is the fate of modernism. Since the Academies fell, artists have nothing to sell but an idea of art. The 19th century Academies were very confident in sharing their taste of acceptance or rejection. Academies

and Museums are secretive and not transparent in the selecting and making of shows, as was the CIA when it underwrote Abstract Expression. Nobody makes the final definition of Art. Art is like pornography; we can recognize it when we see it but cannot define it.

Fashionable, contemporary art can fetch ridiculous prices as did the mania for tulips. Culture is not based on trade, though trade facilitates culture.

It encompasses something else. It is a manifestation of human values. It is quite possible when our forefathers took certain steps of evolution that art and language seeped into their being and thinking, arguably the dawn of religion, which cannot be quantified. Art is the icon or material presence of belief systems.

Bourgeoisie culture has the choice to be informed or not informed; to be progressive or retrenched is the question. Washington is the apex of bourgeoisie culture. Politicians, like Wall Street, are allergic to uncertainty. Art deals with uncertainty. It explores uncertainty. It finds form for uncertainty. This is the magic of art.

Derek Guthrie



Image: Kat Johnson

John Link in Art Teaching

John Link, retired Professor of Art, Western Michigan University, painter, and contributor to the New Art Examiner, Interview with Lily Lihting Li Kostrzewa – From Philosophy to Art to Writing:

When I was in philosophy, my fellow grad students agreed that we were in philosophy because we couldn't do anything else. But the same can be said of art. My problem with philosophy was that it requires you to stay still to read, and that bothered me a lot. I also found art to be the antithesis of philosophy. I was told I should study all the great aestheticians because I made a lot of paintings. I told the department head that those people were talking about something other than making art. I did not exactly know what, but art has a kinaesthetic element, both mental and physical, that philosophy does not. Nor is art all that contemplative. You must work your way through a murky soup of possibilities, and all that stuff. Then I flunked the draft physical and did not have to stay in philosophy, so I started taking art classes. Philosophy, understood as wonderment, is a good place to begin, certainly.

English was my worst subject in high school and grade school, math and science my best. When I went to college I was supposed to be an engineer. But I took up English because I thought college was a place where you worked on your weaknesses. Actually have a double BA in Philosophy and English. So that's how I got going, reading great writers in both disciplines.

Derek Guthrie:

Derek Guthrie came to Southern Illinois University during the early years of the Examiner, just to see what was going on in academia. One of the Examiner's "things" is the examination of the transmission of culture and universities are one of the places where that takes place. I was teaching there and met him on the screened-in porch of Jim Sullivan, who was his contact at SIU. I just liked the guy. He was tuned into things at a more honest level than most of the people I had met - especially in the writing world. And we got along ever since.

My Writing:

Initially I liked writing diatribes. They would just scream bloody murder at whatever I was against. But I've decided not to write that way anymore. They never go anywhere. They are about dead ends and everybody knows there are a lot of dead ends. So, what's the use? The last thing I wrote



John Link sitting in his home in Michigan.

is more what I like, the article about Darby Bannard, which was positive. It pointed at someone who has something to offer. I also like writing "general takes", though they border on diatribes at times. There is one I wrote, "Hardness of Art", which was written for Arts Magazine and was positive in a negative way. It was about how art is hard on artists, that it isn't the glorious life some people think. So I write within a narrow field.

Greenberg Should be Read before you Condemn:

One of the greatest problems with Greenberg is that everybody thinks he told artists what to paint, that he was the king of New York, this that and the other. But if you read his writings you will see a whole different person. He was one of the last critics who took a chance on unknown artists. He went to studios as well as galleries, and seemed to prefer the former. The critics working now tend to look only at whatever galleries and museums are showing. They stick with the known. Everyone associates Greenberg with Pollock. Pollock was a virtual unknown when Greenberg began touting his work in Partisan Review and The Nation. The thing that's missing from current writing is that no one is out there looking, except at stuff that's provided to them by someone else. That doesn't mean there are no good artists being provided, but it is more exciting when you're writing about someone who is not that well-known.

Advice to Art Writers:

Go to the studios. Go to the studios that are outside the trends.

The Trends:

Do I see trends? Academia is infected with trends. It is an



Walter Darby Bannard (1939 -2016)

outcome of the thirst for prestige that drives universities. There is a peer review system for math and science in which faculty work is objectively verified by peers, both before it is published and after. Art is about subjective opinion. I maintain that it is about real stuff, but you don't get to art by measuring or in any other way except by directly experiencing it. And everybody's experience is a little different. So how do you work that into a university system that insists its faculty be measured? The administrators who make the final decisions know little or nothing about art. Quite correctly, they want someone else to do the measuring for them. If you're off the beaten path you are not going to get much "peer review". If you go back to the 60s when art started getting big in universities there were wild and crazy people in the arts that gave it life. But as it has evolved, to satisfy the needs of promotion, tenure, raises, not getting fired, prestige, and all that, the natural tendency for many faculty has been to get hooked up with a trend. Not everybody does that but the people who do are more likely to get shows and other forms of acceptance That is probably not the best way to do art if you want it to be good, but if you want academic success it IS the best way. Universities don't really care if the art is good, as long as

someone outside their walls says it is good.

Advice to Students:

It is a confusing system for students. Some of the stuff that goes on is pretty strange. There is a guy at the University of Chicago by the name of Pope.L who dressed up in a skirt made from dollar bills and attached himself to a bank door with a long piece of sausage – stuff like that goes on everywhere. If that's what your professor is saying you should be doing and then you go into a museum and look at Titian or Rembrandt, I too would be confused. It isn't crazy creative - it is actually predictable, thousands do that sort of thing.

On the positive side, be honest, that's what counts. Don't listen to your profs (smile). Actually, listening to your profs is part of it but not every professor is going to make sense. You are probably going to find one or two. Soak up everything you can from those people. Then see where you go, see what happens.

Advice to Readers:

You really can't believe everything you read, including my stuff. Think for yourself. That is one of the great things about the Examiner, it supports many points of view. Most of the art mags have their own take and if you're not part of that take, you don't write for them. They remain well homogenized. I used to take art mags and found that I didn't read them. I kept them in the stack to read later, until I realised that I wasn't reading them, ever. So I quit taking them. They don't take chances with viewpoints that differ from their own. Artforum, New Criterion - I guess people do read them but I'm not sure I know who, or why. To the readers of the Examiner I'd say don't think the life of an artist is easy. It's really hard, the odds are against you. But that doesn't mean you don't make the bet anyway. There it is.

PUBLISHING

CHRISTMAS

2019

An Eye On Washington

THE CRITICAL REVIEWS OF THE ART HISTORIAN AND PUBLISHER OF
THE NEW ART EXAMINER, JANE ADDAMS ALLEN,
FROM THE WASHINGTON TIMES 1982-1989

FOREWORD BY DANIEL NISWALT, EUROPEAN EDITOR NEW ART EXAMINER
APPRECIATION BY DEREK GUTHRIE, CO-PUBLISHER OF NEW ART EXAMINER
INTRODUCTION BY PROFESSOR RICHARD SIEGSMUND

A selection of the critical reviews of Jane Addams Allen, one of the leading art critics of her generation and co-publisher of the New Art Examiner

With an Introduction by Professor Richard Siegesmund and an Appreciation by fellow co-publisher of the New Art Examiner, Derek Guthrie.



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FOOTSTEPS
PRESS

Fame and Death are Equals

In 1936 Henry Luce kick-started the field of photojournalism with the launch of Life Magazine, which by 1940 became the leading magazine in the nation. Those same few years saw another visual revolution that rankled Luce. With the leading lights of European art arriving in the US to escape the growing influence of fascism in their native countries the course of Modernist art streamed across the Atlantic into New York City. Luce countered what he perceived as the Europeanizing of American culture by using Life Magazine to propagate the works of the American Scene painters – Rockwell, Wood, Benton, Curry, Burchfield and others. Luce's attempt failed.

The intensity of flow of history through New York left these records of America to wallow in the backwash of that flow: American Scene art downgraded to regionalist art. The aesthetics of the American Scene was not confined to the hinterlands – it had an urban component as well. Urban scene painters such as Robert Henri, George Bellows and John Sloane saw themselves to be in accord with their rural compatriots, although they remained at the geographic, if not the aesthetic, center of art history. These artists painted the city as if it were a landscape of canyons and wasted fields.

The iconic moment of change came in 1949 when Luce relented and published an article on Jackson Pollock headlined: "Is he the greatest living painter in the United States?" Just 15 years earlier it was Thomas Hart Benton, Pollock's mentor in the early 1930s, who became the first artist to grace the cover of Time. At the time Luce, who also published Time, considered Benton to be "the greatest living painter in the United States".

Pollack had put his brand on Modernism, corralling it as American art. Benton, who was privately a friend, but publicly a critic of Pollock (Benton once stated at a private gathering that: "Jack can't make a bad painting."), had been shunted to the regions and the sidelines of history, usurped by a younger generation's embrace of the cutting edges of Modernism.

This is understandable. New York was the center where art history was being made. Everywhere else was – well—everywhere else. However should the mainstream of art history peter out and slow to a trickle, or should art criticism grow fallow with barren ideology, then that center no longer holds. This seems to have become the case in the 21st century. A dose of regional values, properly applied, might be what the doctor ordered.

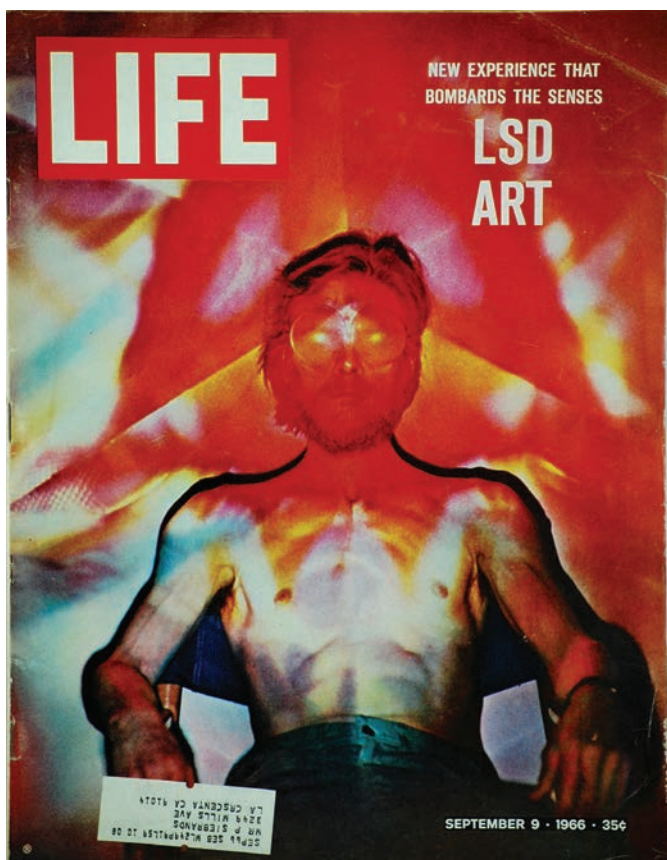
The urge for America to attain cultural parity with Europe



Time Magazine 1923, started by Henry Luce and two Yale colleagues

stretches back to just before the Civil War when American industrialists began exhibiting their wares at international expositions. Americans proved less than competitive, as Europeans respected their innovative methods but not their output. As part of rebuilding the nation after the war, Congress set a goal of equaling and even surpassing the industrial status of Europe. To do this they turned to education, concentrated in what today would be termed STEAM: science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics.

Prompted by Massachusetts's successful innovations in technological education during the 1870s and Europe's impressive showing at the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, the US Senate asked the Department of Interior's Education Office to conduct a nationwide study to develop educational strategies for matching Europe's industrial lead. In 1885, after 5 years of study, the Office released an 1100 page report advocating that all high school students learn descriptive geometry, figure drawing and art history. (The purpose of art history was to heighten the public's appreciation of quality and thus to exert pressure on industry to heighten standards.)



Life Magazine 1966

This period of the early 1880s also saw the founding of art museums and art institutes in all the major industrial centers of the Midwest. By the turn of the century American industrial innovation outpaced that of Europe with the philanthropic largesse of the barons of that industry building new “palaces” to house the museums. Part of that largesse went to stocking these palaces with important European art, especially French landscapes. Students who visited and studied at these institutions – most especially the Art Institute of Chicago and the Kansas City Art Institute -- became the rural painters of the American Scene.

Midwest artists such as Thomas Hart Benton, Grant Wood, Marvin Cone and Francis Chapin studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Further east Charles Burchfield attended the Cleveland Institute of Art, as had Marsden Hartley. Further west John Steuart Curry attended the Kansas City Art Institute. At such institutions the primary visual models were paintings by the French realists.

One contemporary museum that has over the years offered insight into the flourishing of regionalism, most notably in the fields of Iowa, is Davenport’s Figge Museum. Two recent exhibits there threw considerable light on the nature of the Regionalist legacy. The major exhibit of the two had travelled from the Brooklyn Museum and had been assembled from that museum’s collection of French art,

acquired at the turn of the century, as had the collections of the Midwest museums. The second exhibit was a retrospective of John Bloom, a protégé of Grant Wood. These exhibits together demonstrated the sources and breadth of Midwest regionalist art.

The Figge is a great white cube overlooking the Mississippi River and sighting on the far horizon of the Illinois prairie. Just an hour’s drive northwest and tucked into a bend of the Wapsipinicon River rests the hamlet of Stone City, Iowa which in 1932 and 1933 hosted the Stone City Art Colony. There artists could reside for the summer under the tutelage of Grant Wood and a team of noted Midwest painters, Marvin Cone and Francis Chapin among them.

One exceptional “student” was Bloom, who was already an accomplished artist. He had won first prize for his painting at the Iowa State Fair, garnering him an invitation from Grant Wood to join the colony. From there Bloom went on to collaborate with Wood on mural projects at the University of Iowa. In addition to his collaborations with Wood, the Figge exhibit mounted works spanning Bloom’s career from his study at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago to his career in industrial design for firms in Davenport, and to his long retirement dedicated to painting. In a thoughtful nod to the French exhibit, Bloom’s student art included two works mimicking Derain and Cezanne.

Previewing Bloom’s work online yields a poor presentation of his abilities. A disproportionate number of reproductions depict paintings such as of community groups milling outside of church or celebrating in a town park. In these, the faces in the crowd are mostly blank. The point was to paint the community as a unit rather than to identify individuals in the crowd. A noble motive with cartoonish results. Bloom was nevertheless a superb portraitist as proved by exquisite drawings of himself and of his mother. Other online images leave the impression of bleached colors, which in reality is a consequence of subtleties not retained under .jpeg compression. Bloom had adopted the palette of Swedish painter Anders Zorn: vermilion, yellow ochre, white and black. Landscapes required the inclusion of blue to portray the green vegetation, the endless prairie sky and the ubiquitous bib overalls worn by his characters. This palette was especially suited for harvest scenes situated in the warm cast of autumn.

Of these was a late masterpiece entitled “Shocking Oats”. Bloom left a vast background by pushing the space to the foreground. There a group of workers cut swathes from a field and clustered these into shocks. Stooped in labor and wearing broad-brimmed hats to counter an intense sun, the worker’s faces remain hidden, making the harvest crew

and not its separate members into Bloom's subject. Immediately behind the crew the farmhouse holds the middle-ground. This scenario of crew and farm home plays against a vast background of farmed prairie. There golden pastels of ripened crops spread to a distant horizon obscured by airborne dust.

Bloom's anonymous group seems tasked to harvest a near infinity of fields. Space then becomes a paean to the everyday heroics of laborers. A singular virtue of American scene painting was developing spaces iconic of the humans inhabiting them. For Bloom it was the endless dead flat prairie surrounding his hometown of Dewitt, IA. While for Wood it was also the landscape of his upbringing: open hilltops punctuated by hidden dells. Similarly Benton painted sequestered valleys deep in the Ozarks.

These pictures use the land to reflect deeply human values, uniquely portrayed. Such values and the means of portraying them are worthy of a more widespread critical attention that is lacking from national art writing.* To achieve this would require less emphasis on games of style in art and on presumptions about the rules of these games, and more emphasis into the legacies of the regionalists and into cataloguing those values still emanating from people's interaction with the land.

This would mean adopting an attitude and a language that

meets the need to express the qualities of regional work. In his column *Inland Art* published in Peoria's *Community Word*, the painter and writer Paul Krainak, a transplant from Chicago to Peoria, has for some time now given thought and penned ideas about criticism applied to the Midwest:

"....critics have to figure in all of the conventions of inland culture, just as one is required to be fluent in all of the conventions of urban and coastal culture, to do it justice..."

Krainak adopts this stance in contextualizing artist Michael Paxton's 2019 exhibit, "Pillars of Dust", at Bradley University:

"Painted forms pool like sludge in a dry creek bed or drift like dust across deer-paths.... Other pieces are scaled up to reveal cavernous interiors that appear to expose generations of land degradation. This is Paxton's homage to one of the most beautiful, mineral rich places on the planet."

The language is instated, the attitude applies respect and the parity is served. Regionalism rises to the same level of scrutiny that is non-judgmentally applied to New York art. This is attention, properly paid.

Stephen Luecking

**Darren Jones, Art in America: The Critical Dustbowl, New Art Examiner, Volume 33 no 5 May / June 2019*

A Resounding Beast at the Prado

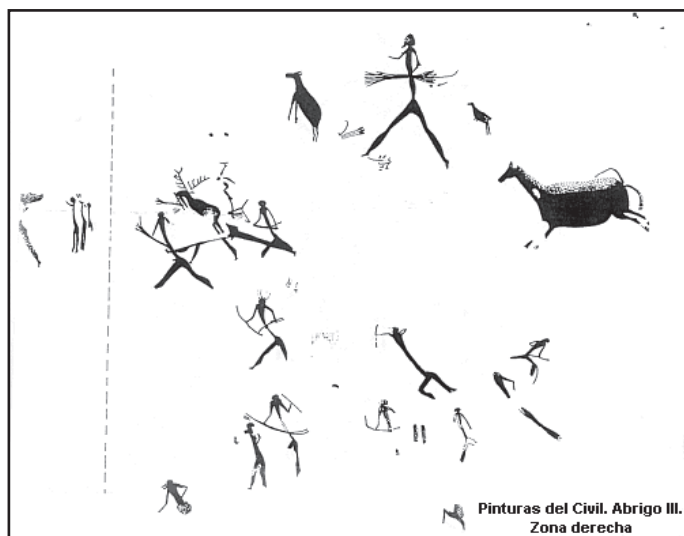
Madrid

Giacometti Visits the Prado Museum

When I entered the Prado Museum to see the contemporary Giacometti exhibition, I felt echoes of the exhibition in Paris, the Autumn Salle 1905, that launched the Fauvist movement, nicknamed by art critic Louis Vauxcelles as "Donatello among the beasts"- referring to those new bold paintings full of challenging colours placed near a classical Renaissance sculpture of Donatello.

"The beasts among the masters", I thought. This time, the elongated beasts referring to Giacometti's breaking style. It took one century for Donatello to have his vengeance at last and some decades for Giacometti to finally visit the Prado, something he always longed for in life and that inexplicably he did not do, though he could see many of the paintings when they were sent for protection to the Nation Society in Geneva during the Civil War in 1936.

There has not been a better place to exhibit his slim figures than in the long corridors and parlours of the museum surrounded by the masterpieces of Titian - whom



Giacometti worshipped, Rubens, Velazquez, Mengs, El Greco, Zurbarán, Goya The contrast is strong. What a change in art and mentality between them. What a change



Giacometti photo: the author

in times. Giacometti who admired the masters and took up their legacy would have been very happy to see his works among them.

I realize that it is an extremely interesting way of curating, to exhibit contemporary art among classical pieces or to place the new artwork next to the old one that inspired the artist. I have already seen it done twice: in the Francis Bacon retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao in January 2017 and also in the current iconic fashion designer Balenciaga exhibition at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid. This way of exhibiting makes you

think not only of the value and the scent of the piece of art itself but also of the evolution of art and humanity. It brings together art, history and philosophy.

"The Walking Man" and the "Women of Venice" in la Piazza, surrounded by Velazquez masterpieces, watched closely by the "Meninas" and other Royal characters were in an awkward interaction between them and with the public, seeming to remind us that we are all human in spite of our differences. "The Chariot" in front of Titian's

"Charles V, the Battle of Mühlberg". War to war. Giacometti's busts in conversation with the Romans busts. An impossible leg next to the bare leg of Christ in Zurbaran's "Crucifixion with Saint Luke". The most elongated piece placed in "The Greco" Salle, like saying "I can go further than you". Congratulations to the curator, to the Museum and to everybody who had a part in this. It was impressive.

Art historians and critics said that the Fauvists- the beasts - wanted to go back to the primitive forms, to the dawn of art, and in that spirit Giacometti is a beast too, because his figures strongly resound with the primitive warriors and hunters painted in many caves around the world.

Susana Gómez Laín

Ontario

Cultural Appreciation is the Answer to Professional Justice Warrior

Know thyself. Harder than it seems.

Know thy place. Another order of magnitude.

As I write I check my place on the privilege spectrum, so that we're not guilty of what we accuse others.

Karen K. Ho is an Asian-Canadian writer who lives in New York. In a recent CBC article she spoke of "How the AGO should move forward in the wake of their racial sensitivity fiasco".(1) Karen says that "they've apologized for an artist's racist costumes. Now they need to back it up by making meaningful change". Karen wrote how "seeing this choice of clothing — the most basic cliché example of casual racism and decades-old caricature of what East Asian people dress and look like..." made her feel depressed. Karen accused the designer of racism, of insulting and demeaning Asian people.

However, not all is at it seems. At times victimhood is abused as a moral currency, used in policing the boundaries

of human identity.(2) Roger Scruton wrote "we have encountered a new type of predatory censorship, a desire to take offense that patrols the world for opportunities. As with the puritans of the 17th century, there is the need to humiliate and to punish."

A senior liberal Canadian art administrator writes

"There's...extensive and long-standing commentary on Yellowface and the need to consider the pain caused by stereotypical depictions of Asians in western culture and media given the historically racist roots of such depictions, regardless of genuine ignorance or absence of malignant intent. We have similar concerns around your understanding of cultural appropriation. Regardless of whether you are already aware of such commentary, it is my sincere hope that you will make the effort to look further into these discussions in good faith and with an open heart and mind, and that in retrospect, you will be



able to say that we did, in fact, end up supporting you and provide good advice”.

As artists we will not reinforce this oppressor-oppressed binary through which justice warriors see the world. We're not slaves to the past, and we can create a better future. As artists we can and we need to change the world's reactions. Ian Leslie in *The New Statement* explains that we know a lot less than we think about the world – which explains the allure of “simplism”. “The right likes to explain as much as possible with reference to the perfidy of foreigners. The left's preferred strain of simplism is conspiracy: every social ill can be explained by the existence of a self-serving elite. Liberals assume everyone else is less intelligent.”

As immigrants we have all experienced dislike, prejudice, and racism, and most of us have rebounded. Often such prejudice spurs us to act better than those people who only see race as conflict. But we do need to consider the pain caused by stereotypical depictions.

The guests at the AGO Massive Party consisted of woke people from the Toronto art world, like most people reading this, perhaps including yourself. One would think the Asians arts community would have walked out that night, followed by the other guests, had they seen or felt racism or stereotypical depictions, but this was a dreamy surrealist fashion show, it was beautiful. And everyone had fun but we heard that among 2000 guests, someone later complained. So the AGO publicly apologised and Karen branded the fashion designer as racist, but not the 1999 socially conscious guests who did not object, enjoyed the party, danced till dawn.

The fashion designer was Pedram Karimi, a young golden-brown POC immigrant, born in Iran, raised in Austria, now living in Montreal, who chose Asian dress for it's stylish beauty. The article shading Pedram was written by

Karen K. Ho, an Asian-Canadian author living in New York, who at the time was wearing jeans for comfort... even though she's not from “de Nimes”, France. There's no excuse for such insensitivity, even if Karen's unaware of the history of depredation French coastal people endured for centuries at the hands of the British. Karen in New York was paid by the CBC to write in English of her feelings at seeing a photograph. The feet on the street, who were the Asian guests actually at the party in Toronto, later wrote on the AGO Facebook page that there was no racism, no offense.

I think about the feelings of that guest who complained. I'd like to meet with them to say we do not have to embed past hatred in today's culture; we can change that and see this show for what it was, Asian appreciation by another immigrant in a land of immigrants. We can stop the anguish of the past from branding the present; artists can create a positive space where there was pain before, we no longer have to see the world as racist at those times when it is not.

And seriously, at the AGO it was not; some common sense is required, the AGO is not overrun by obtuse bigots, an argument Jamie Kirchick also used in a similar case at Yale, *Reflections on the Revolution at Yale*.⁽³⁾ The *I CHING* or *Book of Changes*, one of the five books of Confucianism, writes that correcting injustice starts with self-criticism so that we're not guilty of what we accuse others. And obviously if you stayed and danced all night then complained later, it looks like you're a survivor.

Photographs that evening show expensive fabrics in a surrealist design by a youthful fashionista; no one felt prejudice directed against someone of a different race, no discrimination or antagonism based on the belief that one's own race is superior. Will you spend your life seeking

bigotry where there is none? Let's be friends instead of talking trash, when there's real bigotry out there we have to vanquish. We need to beware of the fascist right, we must also beware of the fascist left, and the professional justice warrior fuelled by anger with benefits.

We need to care for the weaker among us, to heal the souls who need healing, but that does not mean bossing, shaming and blaming the 1999, or silencing artists and poets. Helen Pluckrose writes in *Areo* that "If most people are now working on an understanding of fairness, equality, and reciprocity as individual, this mentality can be incomprehensible and alienating."

Because you're hurting innocent artists like Pedram. You silence their song. We forget the harm done to the skinny Iranian kid with bronze skin, whose POC workmates would laugh at the idea he's racist. Margaret Atwood writes of the

Puritan Right in *The Handmaid's Tale*; are we not also creating a Puritan Left of flawed ethics ... fuelled by a craving for power, status, and identity?

On the AGO apology page, some concur but many shame the AGO for apologizing, including those Asians who wrote no racism, no insult.⁽⁴⁾ A talented young designer's career and creativity were used as a punching bag by Ms. Karen to get a writer's paycheck and take a victory lap; Pedram deserves more than an apology.

First, they came for the others ... and someday it will be your turn, so when it's your turn let's hope we made a world where your voice can be heard instead of silenced, where people seek cooperation not conflict. For there has to be a solution, and one is proposed here.

Miklos Legrady

Cornwall

Otobong Nkanga and Mikhail Karikis at Tate St Ives

21st September 2019 to 5th January 2020

My heart sinks as I walk into the preview.

It's a big room and the work doesn't really visually dominate it. It reminds me of a town planning exhibit. Lots of photos, information, diagrams. The themes are very worthy, mining, colonialism, exploitation. There are some impressive tapestries in glowing colours with some glitter woven in and bold patterns.

I have read of occasions years ago when audiences derided Impressionism or rioted at the first performance of Stravinsky's 'Rite of Spring' Now the audience at a preview at Tate St.Ives are so quiet, respectful and loth to react spontaneously that they stand motionless, politely uncomplaining whilst the director and the artist Otobong Nkanga speak in a room so acoustically unsuited to enable people to hear that no one can have understood anything of what has been uttered.

Then they circulate examining everything quite carefully, not willing to commit themselves to an opinion other than that it's very interesting.

The artist has created something to do with the place and the mining of tin. It's not the first time we in St.Ives find the latest visiting artist has seized on this theme.

Otobong Nkanga has exhibited in prestigious places and does a lot of research. I feel she wants to say something heartfelt but her mode of expression is so dry, so unpoetic,

so dull, that I can't stomach it. She is there, looking beautiful, wearing a sort of work person's jumpsuit and in bare feet, talking earnestly. Her tapestries are remarkable, substantial and much the most enjoyable part of her show. Maybe as she goes on, now having got onto the global success circuit, she will find her way and make work that is not simply worthy but that sings.

On the way out I encounter the much less publicised work, a film 'Children of Unquiet' by Mikhail Karikis. It's 15 minutes long and shown in a room with only one short bench so I sit on the floor to get the back support of the wall. Despite these very unfavourable cinematic conditions



Preview at Tate St Ives, UK

people are watching rapt with attention. It's about a disused geothermal energy plant in an Italian village. This doesn't sound that promising a theme for poetic treatment but it turns out that every frame is beautiful and eloquent, every word of subtitle counts. There are lovely shots of steaming ground, dripping machinery, cooling towers and orchids. Children are choreographed to shout and stamp or they read out statements about bees or wasps and about love. I am so very pleased to find something so visually stunning, so all of a piece, so full of meaning and contrasts, so worth rewatching.

Mary Fletcher

*Artwork of Otobong Nkanga at Tate St Ives
by Mary Fletcher*



London

The Comic Abyss

I was invited to the live screening of Phoebe Waller-Bridges' one woman show, 'Fleabag' (loosely based on her series). I knew nothing of Waller-Bridges, except that she wrote the brilliant script for the first series of 'Killing Eve'. So I knew she could write.... I kept telling myself this through the virtual monologue, delivered in the first person, apart from a man's voice at the beginning and end. I kept telling myself, through all the jokes about sexual congress, all the jokes about sexual proclivities, all the jokes about casual



The women behind the Fleabag monologue interviewed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2013. Performer Phoebe Waller-Bridge is in the centre (wiki)

sex and even more casual relationships, all the face pulling and meaningful silences, all the jokes about drunken behaviour. I smiled several times, once when she said that a man behind her at a bar grabbed her vagina, but he bought her a drink afterwards so it was ok, yes I know it's sexist but it was very funny, the punch line was delivered with wit and an endearing smirk.....and wit always makes me laugh. I felt it was a pity there wasn't more sparkling wit and less fairly predictable material. I know from 'Killing Eve' that Waller-Bridges is incredibly witty and makes us jump with lines we didn't see coming, hence my disappointment.

Threaded amongst all the sexual shenanigans we were introduced to Hilary the guinea pig. We were drawn an exquisite verbal picture of her, from her lively character to the bad-ass crest of fur on her forehead which edgily drooped forward. Waller-Bridges' description made me want to keep guinea pigs all over again. Sadly, the story of Hilary ended badly and I really hoped that wasn't drawn from life. I was at one with the audience, as we all gave a thought to poor Hilary.

But, on the whole it was clearly me who was out of sync, both the audience which could be heard on the screen and the audience in the cinema were laughing uproariously. A couple in front of me guffawed every few minutes. The girl behind me even stopped banging the back of my seat with her long legs. I saw one woman so engrossed, she put her popcorn down. Redruth Cinema had devoted three screens

to 'Fleabag', and filled two and a half. I have never seen the cinema at Redruth so busy. We'd tried to get in at Newlyn, but were told it had been booked for weeks - see, it's definitely me.

I admit, I'm not a great lover of female comedians; they used to be known as comediennes, which I thought was rather charming, it has a more melodious ring, it sashays. With some exceptions, the lamented Victoria Wood, Julia Walters, Jennifer Saunders, to name a few, I find them strident and usually with an axe to grind, an axe that grinds slowly and dully, in my opinion. Men, I find are more all round comedy creatures.

Apparently Waller-Bridges' show took The Edinburgh Festival by storm. One line which puzzled me, and which did not get a big laugh, was, having referred to her best friend's accidental suicide, (best friend's partner had confessed to having had sex with someone else, she wanted to end up in hospital to make him feel guilty, alas, she

botched it and died) all through the show, ultimately she confesses that it was she who had sex with her best friend's partner. She faces the audience, and says, earnestly, 'but he wanted me, he wanted me'.

I wasn't sure what the response should be, were we to laugh at her naivety, were we to find it funny that she had betrayed her friend?

Maybe, as a taxi driver for several years, I have seen too much of the underbelly of life. I am reminded of Nietzsche's words, 'When you look into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you.'

Later, I caught a little of the series 'Fleabag' on Youtube and it's better, partly because as a sitcom it has some very fine actors portraying the characters.

Yet, with me she still grates, and I'm not sure whether it's her or her character or just me.

Lynda Green

ALIENS IN OUR OWN WORLD

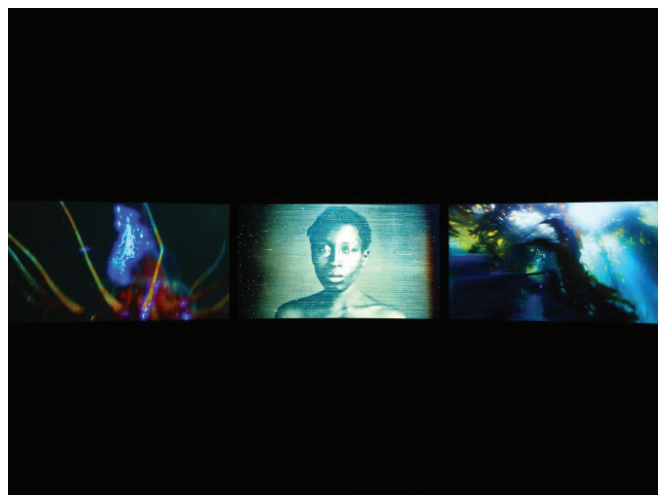
Warsaw

Alienations or the Fire Next Time, Zacheta National Gallery of Art

Walking inside the casual maze of rooms, each hosting an individual sound and video work, separated by a double layer of plastic noise-reduction curtains and heavy, black velvet fabric; the body becomes fiercely present. The works here are framed thematically by the concept of alienation—contemporary discord between the body and mind and our human needs not being met as a result of increasingly capitalistic values and systems, referring to this state specifically as a 'collective disease.' Darkness frames each space, facilitating both intimacy and solitude, and in this environment what really becomes the focal point is the complexity, the failings and frustrations, the architecture and symbols of, and deep need for human communication. John Akomfrah's 3-channel video *Vertigo Sea* (2015) opens the exhibition. Three massive screens cycle through birds-eye sweeps over luscious forests and mountains, untouched ice caps, infinite oceans. Slowly, both historic and contemporary scenes of animals being hunted and slaughtered get folded into the cycle, introducing a violence that feels cruel and gratuitous. The brutality then becomes human as we face still images and video of black and brown bodies being forced to walk off of ships or jump to their deaths from planes flying over the ocean. But, this deeply emotional experience becomes severed by the introduction

of constructed scenes—actors in period costume casting forlorn gazes, or slow, cinematic pans of clocks nested on a shoreline—completely gutting the poignant tension that Akomfrah so naturally achieved.

The next piece, Arthur Jafa's *APEX* (2013), unquestionably sets the critical, essential tone of this exhibition. A series of 800 images sourced from the internet blip onto the screen



John Akomfrah, Vertigo Sea, 2015, three channel HD colour video installation, 7.1 sound, video still. © Smoking Dogs Films; courtesy Lisson Gallery



Jennifer Allora & Guillermo Calzadilla, The Great Silence, 2014, installation view from Allora & Calzadilla: Intervals exhibition, Philadelphia Museum of Art; The Fabric Workshop and Museum, 2014, courtesy the artists, The Fabric Workshop and Museum

just long enough to focus but not long enough to dwell. The sequence is set against a backdrop of an unrelenting beat that is somewhere between nightclub and hospital monitor, the rhythm paced in a way that is both hypnotic and haunting, like a heartbeat. Like much of Jafa's work, this piece is centered on the experience of blackness and black cultural production, the images forming a collective body of violence, pain, pleasure, fetish; they tell a story of being consumed. It's the perfect pitch to elicit maximum anxiety and urgency, framing these images of macerated, severed, splayed people transformed into flesh, interspersed with images of microscopic organisms, cosmic space, pop stars, movie clips, and fashion ads. Black culture and fetishism, objectification and appropriation, images estranged from their context, it's a contemplation on consumption. Consuming the consumed, we are being exploited ourselves as we exploit the abstracted, disembodied content that is the endless cycle of image production in the 21st century.

We find solace from that anticipated beat drop that never arrives in the next room with Angelika Markul's *Land of Departure* (2014). This acute pulse, now set deep within the bodies' physical memory, is suddenly bathed in white noise-like static which for many is used to soothe, linking back to that pre-conscious time in the womb, calming the anxieties and unsettledness both sub- and consciously intuited. But while gazing at the night sky as it transitions from dusk to dawn, paced and resonant like a lullaby, it also becomes quite a strikingly lonely moment. The time and space scale-shift creates a deep point of intimate

contemplation as we look to the night sky for answers, for some kind of knowing. And as the light from the sun begins to sneak into the horizon, the film slides backwards and we reverse back into the night. There is a terror in this infinitude.

The exhibition closes with Clément Cogitore's short *Les Indes galantes* (2017), featuring a staged krump battle set against the libretto "Les sauvages" (The Savages) from the fourth act of the aforementioned opera. My first impression of the piece is one of absolute hypnosis; the baroque instrumentation sounding out primal rhythm chains immediately settles into the bones in a similar manner to that of the machine-like pulse from APEX. The lighting and ambiguity of context works with the operatic score to create maximum

drama. But, after the initial romance, a heavy question settles in, one that is also posed by Madison Mainwaring for the *New York Times International*: can this re-staging truly subvert the operas' historic ideologies? Cogitore's piece, actually only a small segment of the full stage enactment currently being performed at the Paris Opera, suddenly becomes uncomfortable. The objectifying white viewer becomes distressed by her own voyeuristic position on the other side of the screen, as these dancers perform this deeply intimate conversation while she idly watches them for her pleasure. And while there is no clear answer to this question, the employment of dance as both a language and pedagogical tool in this work creates the opportunity to both observe and question power structures, historically and contemporary, and how they're either engaged or overthrown through sound and form.

This exhibition reconnects us to the human experience, to palpable performances of privilege and ritual, through time and both lived and imagined reality. And, despite the cruelties enacted, we still maintain this primal urge to connect, to belong, to communicate and to be reflected, our existence validated. Community affords certain assurances, but, what is a world without alienation?

Katie Zazenski

Washington DC

Flower Power is the Push to Procreate Beauty

"This exhibition was organized by the Archives of American Art in collaboration with Smithsonian Gardens. The labels were written by archivists, horticulturalists, artists, curators, educators and gardeners to articulate the many facets of flora and adds to the richness of interpretation found here.

The exhibition is in a small room by comparison to the rest of SAM's (Smithsonian American Museum of Art) holdings. Unpretentious, humble, old and sometimes yellow, drawings hark back to the early 20th Century. Polly Thayer's watercolor, "Flower arrangement" captured my imagination with abstract color form and intensity. The artist developed glaucoma and as her vision deteriorated, she emphasized feeling in her work rather than seeing. Underneath the caption, archivist Rihoko Ueno, "a curator who worked closely with Thayer wrote, 'They are not flower portraits or organic designs, but energies beckoning beyond themselves.'"

Emilio Sanchez, an architectural painter, sketched a "Blue Sky" Petunia with colored pencil. This is a delightful although unfinished drawing; fresh and "naked" to the eye which shows the artist's thinking.

Darka Vulic belongs to the network of mail artists, who create outside the confines of the art market and use the postal service as a method to exchange with other artists. In a small plastic packet are dandelion seeds sent to artist John Held, Jr. Vulic typed a letter for Dandelion "seeds of Peace", a prayer for hope for those who stayed behind in Bosnia; he trusts seeds of the dandelion will travel and bring good luck to his brother and friend who are still in



Sarajevo.

Drawings of Fairfield Porter, Louise Nevelson and Marisol lie next to artists who have persevered without acclaim or notoriety and the only brashness present was in the wall size flower painting which unfortunately shouted loudly in the midst of such quiet presence. Adaptation Nocturne by Ouizi, convincingly realistic, may be more appreciated in a hospital mural setting as the bucolic mood was out of tune with the rest of the show.

Annie Markovich

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The Adaptive Artist - Lee Krasner

30 May - 1 September 2019, Barbican Art Gallery, London

"At seventy-five, Krasner is finally getting her due." These words were written by art critic Robert Hughes in his 1990 Times article about Krasner's first retrospective at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts. Krasner had been a practising artist since the 1930s, so why weren't more art institutions jumping at the opportunity to display the work of a pioneering American abstract painter? Female artists struggle to get the credit and representation they deserve. To help amend past actions and attempt to heal deep wounds, the Barbican's 'Lee Krasner: Living Colour' places Krasner centre stage with one of the largest ever retrospective showings of her work. The exhibition includes photography, mosaics, oil on canvas, collages, mixed media, and a fantastic short film about Krasner at the end of the show. Whether you are well versed in Krasner's ability, or have never heard of her before, this exhibition provides an in-depth look at her as an artist, woman, and human.

The exhibition begins by highlighting specific periods of Krasner's career rather than taking a linear approach. The first vignette, albeit a puzzling choice, is Krasner's Little Images from the 1940s. Little Images, a collection of mosaics, was an important junction in Krasner's career, but you don't fully grasp that until later in the show. The curatorial team relies heavily on printed literature and posted information to guide the viewer, which is not always going to be utilized effectively. As you progress further into the show, more information about Krasner's early career is presented and you become aware she had prestigious artistic training, even attending a school led by Hans Hoffman. Unfortunately, Hoffman's reception of Krasner's work adhered to a common perception of the time that female artists were not as good as their male counterparts, saying of her profound skill as an artist that her work was "so good you wouldn't know it was done by a woman." After her schooling Krasner was employed as the head of an artistic team under the Public Works of Art Project 1933

(part of Roosevelt's New Deal). From there she would pioneer her own path as an artist. A prominently featured section is the space given to Prophecy, Birth Three in Two, and Embrace, three of Krasner's most prominent works. These act as haunting reminders of Krasner's need for reinvention, adaptation, and change.

To Krasner, Matisse and Picasso were the artists to revere, "Gods" of the art world (an unfortunate, yet understandable belief, given Picasso's own opinions on female artists). This reverence is apparent in her work as you progress through the rest of the exhibition, which is grouped by decades as her style changed. As you walk among Krasner's pieces, you begin to compile a long list of genres she learned from, including cubism, formalism, abstraction, and of course abstract expressionism. From her first solo exhibition in 1951 to taking over Pollock's studio in the barn at Springs in 1957, showing at Whitechapel in 1956, the exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1973, and now the Barbican's exhibition, a fitting word to describe



Desert Moon 1955 © The Pollock Krasner Foundation 2018

Krasner as an artist is 'adaptive'. She was an artist who was willing, if not consumed by, the desire to recharge, rework, and even destroy her own work for the sake of continuity in her career. She constantly went back to her past work, rebuilt it, repurposed it to create a new practice and progress. A leading figure in her field, art history has perhaps not given her enough credit. Krasner was a vocal vanguard for American Artists. There is a 'now' factor to Krasner's work; she is an artist who should be looked to by creators today who are struggling with what it means to be an artist. Rebirth, change, growth: all ideas that Krasner exemplified and displayed in her practice. These concepts have not run the course of their usefulness, and artists today should follow in Krasner's footsteps to repurpose them for their own generation.

Alexander Stanfield

EXCLUSIVE DISASTERS – A Website

AUTHOR'S NOTE FOR EXCLUSIVE DISASTERS

MY LATE HUSBAND REMARKED, ALREADY DECADES AGO, THAT YOU CAN NO LONGER WRITE SATIRE AS HUMANITY SATIRIZES ITSELF. STILL, THE TEMPTATION REMAINS TO COMMENT ON OUR INCREASINGLY DEGENERATE AND CHAOTIC CULTURE IN THAT PARTICULAR FORM, AND THOUGH NOTHING COULD TOP THE TRUTH OF PENDERY WEEKES' ARTICLE ON EMBRYO JEWELLERY I CANNOT RESIST ADDING SOME PERSIFLAGE ON OUR MODERN TASTE FOR THE MORBID. THIS INTERNET AD, UNLIKE THE EMBRYO JEWELS, IS NOT YET REAL – BUT I SUSPECT IT SOON WILL BE.

We are the only tour company devoted exclusively to disaster tourism of the uncommon variety.

Disaster tourism is now mainstream. We, like you, the seasoned and discerning traveller, are bored by the mainstream. We know you want something special. We know you want something more.

You may have been to Chernobyl, Auschwitz, etc. and of course Pompeii, a favourite location centuries ago, long before disaster tourism was even recognised, and always part of everyone's Italian trip. We know that once you have exhausted the usual itineraries and developed your taste for this most exciting form of travel you will want to get to places that are not mentioned in all the history books. You will crave something extra. You will demand pictures that are not on everybody else's smartphones.

And that's what only we can provide.

We have a superb research team who find not only what's been lost in the ancient chronicles but something even better – more contemporary disasters that authorities wanted to play down or cover up, to get out of the papers or off the internet as quickly as they could.

Everyone's been to Montségur, where the last Albigensians were burnt alive – everyone knows about the French Revolution's Terror, the guillotine and the huge numbers of bloody heads that rolled down into baskets while 'les Tricoteuses', the women in the audience, watched, cheered and knitted. But how many people know about the rebellion against the brutal new Republic, the rebellion of the Royalist and Catholic region of Vendée? When the rebellion was finally put down, after atrocities on both sides, thousands were massacred, in what Reynald Secher, the prominent historian, called a French genocide.

We take you to the Vendée.

Only a score of years ago a Greek ferry, whose crew were all watching a football game, sailed head-on into a rock – the one and only obstacle in a huge empty bay. Not every shipwreck is a Titanic, but still, the drowning of two hundred people is not a mean total. The news went as



quickly as it appeared, but not for us.

We take you to that rock.

Everyone's been to Rwanda and Cambodia – we can take you to other killing fields that governments hoped would never be marked as such, to the sites of atrocities whose perpetrators will never be tried.

Everyone you know has probably been whale-watching – but how many of your 'green' friends, now switching to jute shopping bags and paper straws, have actually cruised among those giant islands of plastic floating in the Pacific and been able to snap them from the prow of a ship?

You can be the first.

The beauty of some of the landscapes we take you to is just an added bonus, but we know that beauty is not the object of your holiday and you will get your fill of industrial wasteland, ghost towns, bomb sites, abandoned shafts where hundreds of miners died.

We need hardly mention that you will stay in only the best hotels and eat in excellent restaurants, and on any excursion far from food outlets you'll be provided with a splendid picnic lunch of your choice.

When our tours involve camping, as do some for the hardier traveller, we offer luxurious tents and an elaborate camp cuisine.

Best of all, whatever tour you choose, we never give you a whole itinerary in advance. We aim always to provide at least one surprise, a recent discovery that

your group may be the first to share.

For the fit and really enterprising traveller, or one with a streak of Sherlock Holmes, we now have something more incredible yet.

You or your friends may have been on a volunteer holiday, counted birds from an endangered species on a Hebridean island, participated in an archaeological dig or even, closer to home, ladled out soup at Christmas for the homeless. Well, we too now have a volunteer holiday programme. You can help register buildings condemned after an earthquake, look for bodies buried in an avalanche, chart the route followed by a serial killer, or even, if that is your preference, hunt for the grave of a murder victim when the police have given up.

We should add that this is done with the agreement of local authorities, who usually welcome the funds our presence brings to local businesses. The unfortunate incident when after last year's major radioactive spill some of our group,

indistinguishable from the professionals because of the excellent protective gear we provide, got in the way of scientists and surveyors, will not be repeated. The courier for that particular group has now been dismissed, and the case has been happily settled out of court. As for the other unfortunate incident, when one of our tourists was buried in a recurrence of a mudslide he was photographing, that courier has also been dismissed. We have always stressed that the volunteer's tours are only for the really fit and no one under the age of eighteen is permitted to join them.

So – fit or unfit, daring or timid, even if you're visually impaired or in a wheelchair, we have a tour for you.

So don't hesitate.

CONTACT US TODAY.

Frances Oliver

Milan

Reale Light, Milan

From July 29th to September 29th, the Palazzo Reale has been hosting the "Light Project" exhibition, which is the very first retrospective dedicated to Nanda Vigo, a multifaceted artist and architect from Milan, who was involved in multiple projects ranging from design to architecture and art. She has exhibited her work across the world, from New York, Berlin and Shanghai to Amsterdam, Milan and Moscow. Since the 60s, she has been a key figure in the cultural scene in Milan, collaborating with the most significant people of our time: in 1963 she becomes a member of "Zero", a group that includes artists from all over Europe, and starts to develop her first "Chronotopes", which describe the different ways of conceiving the dimensions. In 1965, she edits the legendary exposition "Zero Avantgarde", which took place in Lucio Fontana's studio. After his death, she organised an exhibition illuminating, for the first time, the back of the artist's creations, giving an evocative and fascinating insight into the work.

There are about 80 art pieces in the Milan exhibition, among which installations, sculptures and projects; it narrates the extraordinary path followed by the artist while continuously researching and elaborating her studies



"Genesis Light" (2007) installation view, Palazzo Crivelli, Galleria Calvi-Volpi, photo Gabriele Tocchio

regarding light and the transparency and immateriality of art. Many artists focused on the structure of light but only Nanda Vigo was actually able to comprehend and handle the essence of light itself and how its transparency expands in space. The exhibition is developed in eight rooms; the first three are dedicated to the chronotopes: glass and metal structures, whose shapes are simple and geometrical. They are illuminated by neon and radiant lights, through

which one can perceive lightness and immateriality. These artworks develop through space in the interesting installation “Global Chronotopic Experience”, a room covered in mirrors where the viewer enters and experiences the change that occurs in the spatial dimension.

The art pieces, dating from the 80s up to 2000, are exhibited in the other rooms. The glass installations “Light Progression”, “Trilogia” and “Deep Space” are real puzzles, made by geometric figures, different both in size and shape. The artwork is illuminated from the inside with tricks of light, which radiates a glow that appears almost mystical in light blue and green tones. The viewer lives a sensorial experience as the pieces change shape and dimension depending on the viewing angle. A meaningful example displays three small installations lit by a red light and

enclosed in a black frame. As the spectators move, they expand and contract in size.

The “Stimolatori di Spazio” or “Trigger Off” are rising polyhedrons made of mirrors and steel with a faceted surface that reflects labyrinthian light systems where people lose and find themselves. These creations cause a sensation of boundless spaces wherein the human soul can live.

This exhibition is conceptual, interesting, elegant and expresses the essence of how Nanda Vigo intended art: “an existential situation which allows one to live and perceive, even physically, a higher reality, through contemplation and communion with everything”.

Loretta Pettinato

Trash People in Matera

In the evening, Matera is like a Christmas creche; when the sun sets and many small lights come on in the “Sassi”, cave dwellings that have existed since the Paleolithic period. The effect is striking. Matera, in the Basilicata region

(proclaimed European Capital of Culture for 2019) has been renewed today. It was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1993, but has experienced alternate phases in its history. Until 1950 for about two centuries it was



considered the national disgrace of Italy, symbol of the backwardness of southern Italy. Men and animals (the valuable donkey was always present) lived in dark caves, illuminated by a single chink of light that came in from the opening of the caves in a bleak promiscuity. Today, rehabilitated thanks to intelligent integration policies in the area, it is experiencing a period of great fervor; many tourists from all over the world visit it every year, attracted by its particular geological conformation (it rises on a "gravina", a high cliff on a ravine) and by its cave churches, dug into the rock and with many ancient frescoes.

In August, when I visited it, the city throbbed with energy and had numerous exhibitions all over. Among the events I attended, the most original was the "Trash People" installation by the German artist HA Schult. One thousand anthropomorphic statues, placed during the night, surprisingly appeared on a clearing in front of the Sassi and the ravine. The "men" of this army, made of pieces of rubbish, looked like sentinels guarding an unchanging and ancient place, soldiers protecting the natural beauty of the territory.

Their bodies are made of trash: old tin cans, pieces of rubbish, plastic, car parts, computer components or electrical equipment. Each sentinel is different from each other, but they are all made of un noble materials, the trash produced by man.

HA Schult (Hans-Jurgen Schult), conceptual artist, has brought his army made of trash around the world since 1996, from the Great Wall of China to Moscow, from the Pyramids in Giza to New York, all the way to the Antarctic. His message could not be clearer: trash has reached even the most remote corners of the Earth, its elimination requires increasingly more investments if we do not want to be submerged by 2,503 million tons per year (2014

figure) produced by economic and domestic activities in the EU.

The care of the place where we live, of which we are not the owners but only the custodians, must be tackled immediately and from an early age, as the youth of the "Fridays for future" movement started by Greta Thunberg remind us. If we continue to wait, the environmental crisis will be past the point of no return.


This is also the task of art and of the artists most sensitive to this problem today. HA Schult, bringing the installation to Matera, wants to enhance the beauty of an enchanting place, warning us against possible contaminations.

The trash men, 1.80m tall, who stand impassively and colorfully in front of us, are the symbol of our inability to live on Earth in a lighter, less cumbersome way. Looking at them, the Chinese terracotta army in the Qinshihuang Mausoleum comes to mind, but in our case the material is quite different.

From the place where they were initially placed, the Trash People will move to various parts of the city, in groups or all together, to raise awareness of the spectators, captured by the colorful and playful, but at the same time disturbing presence, of the statues. They are travelers, tourists who move from one place to another on the planet, silent but implacable messengers of human and environmental discomfort.

At the end of October, when most of them will go directly to other destinations, twenty of them, called "Matera People", made by HA Schult with local stone and tuff dust, will remain in the city, bearing witness to the beauty of art and nature of this unique city.

Liviana Martin



Paintings by Sarah Bell
at Chapel Street
Art Penzance

chapelstreetart.co.uk

Honeyland – Documentary

It's rare for me to leave a cinema in stunned silence. But "Honeyland", a documentary by two Macedonian film-makers that has garnered multiple Sundance awards left me muted by a cocktail of overwhelming emotions - crippling melancholy at the stark hardship of some people's lives: profound awe at the sheer beauty of the images, and immeasurable gratitude for the comfort of my own life and the existence of loved ones to share it with me. At my side, walked my Spanish husband, also silenced by this incredible film and thrust into a reverie of visions of his own grandmother whose isolation in a remote homestead in Cantabria and her courage in the face of hardship, paralleled the life of the central character in the film, Haditze. In her mid-50s, Haditze, one of Europe's last keepers of wild bees, lives with her elderly, sick mother in an abandoned village in the rugged mountains of Macedonia where she sustainably harvests honey. The opening shot is from a high-angle of her, a lone figure winding her way across a vast, ochre field. As a film-maker, I couldn't help wondering if it was set-up; it was like a painting and far too beautiful to have happened by chance as in typical documentary fly-on-the-wall style shooting. But as the film progressed, and the imagery seduced with its breath-taking splendour, I no longer cared whether the film-makers had manipulated the action, a dilemma for many makers of documentaries. In the three years that it took to shoot the film, they had obviously built an incredible rapport and trust, though never once did you see any acknowledgement from Haditze of the existence of the film-crew. I also wondered whether the film-makers suffered the same fate as the family who



moved in to one of the village ruins, eventually to bring about the collapse of Haditze's life. While Haditze never seemed to be stung by the bees – perhaps her singing calmed them – the family, from toddler to father, suffered terribly from bee stings. Did the film-makers too, I wondered, marvelling also at their determination to tell this story. I wept at the scene of the death of Haditze's mother and her howls of pain at the loss of the only family she had. I couldn't help hoping that the film-makers had crossed the line from professionalism to humanity to offer her some comfort and at least to assist in the burial of her mother's body. A masterpiece of film-making, it captivates and inspires while simultaneously challenging our complacency at the ease of our own lives. Don't miss it.

Gill Fickling

Made by : Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov,
General UK release from 13 September 2019

Cont from page 4:

Marie Kondo's bestselling book, *The Life-changing Magic of Tidying*, by eliminating all that is superfluous, folding our clothes carefully in half and then in thirds, throwing out that which doesn't give us joy; we are numbing ourselves to all the rest. Enough is enough!

I write with passion about the lack of involvement in our magazine and in the visual arts in general. A few people comment, but not many. We don't offer many articles of scandal or of heated political commentary, but we write about the visual experience around us. The architecture, the mass media, the movies, the galleries.

Art is about passion. Life thrives on passion. It is often said that the artist's work is the words not said aloud, nor

written in text, but in images. Images are powerful transmitters; they can soothe, stimulate, question, beautify, embody, annihilate, disturb, provoke, and awaken feelings that we keep tucked inside.

However, if you've read this far to the end, I ask you now, what truly inspires you? We want to hear your thoughts and also who the artists are that turn on the lights for you. Become one of the voices from among the 47,000 online readers we had in the month of September, by letting us know in the comment area here below.

Pendery Weekes

NEWS IN BRIEF**NEW ART EXAMINER NUMBERS**

We are delighted that our unique visitor numbers continue to grow, now reaching 53,000 in the month of October 2019.

MARY FLETCHER'S REVIEWS

We have been publishing Mary Fletcher's reviews for a couple of years now and are pleased to see two of her recent reviews making the pages of the St. Ives Times & Echo. We hope to see more of her work being read by the St. Ives community.

ANNIE MARKOVICH'S UK VISIT

Long time assistant publisher, writer and artist Annie Markovich is now in the UK over Christmas and the New Year. We will be meeting each week to discuss the magazine's growth online, the potential in the Far East and new writers groups which have been promised in Toronto and Hong Kong.

WRITER'S GROUPS

Milan held its first writer's meeting on 14th November. We now have a new writers' Group meeting every month in St Ives, Cornwall and offers of new groups in Toronto and Hong Kong.

Jeff Koons in Paris

Bouquet of Tulips in Paris as a memorial to the victims of the 2015 terrorist attacks by the American popularist Jeff Koons. First muted in 2016 it has been mired in controversy as being wholly inappropriate. Emily Collugi wrote "Whereas the French gave us this enduring symbol of freedom, (Statue of Liberty) we gave them a gargantuan fist—huge, bright, kitschy, and ultimately devoid of meaning. How appropriately American."

It has been likened to a group of arseholes by French protesters. The English speaking world, outside of the sycophants longing for a bit of money to come their way, have

NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

The National Gallery of Canada has named Kitty Scott as its new deputy director and chief curator. Ms. Scott is the one who said "no one knows

HOW MUCH DOES THE ART WORLD CARE ABOUT HONG KONG? THIS MUCH -

What should the art market make of the unrest in Hong Kong? The protests against China's government have gone on for much longer, and more intensely than expected. Events including a women's tennis tournament and, more recently, the Rolling Loud hip-hop festival have been cancelled while the city's retail, tourism and property sectors are feeling the pinch. Protests aside, Hong Kong's streets are, apparently, empty.

Yet Sotheby's autumn series of auctions, which coincided with the

joined in likening the sculpture to sex toys, and endless Uranus jokes. We don't mind anyone ripping Koons a new anus, he's cheap and brash and no idea of art has ever touched one of his 'public' sculptures. We are delighted to see some French people retain an idea of taste long dormant in the America and England. A fitting tribute to all terrorist victims will be the necessary recycling of Koons junk from wherever it is found.

what art is anymore", and she's a major promoter of artists who cut pictures out of art magazines or who destroy furniture and claim it's a masterpiece. Ms. Scott may occupy that position for decades.

provocative 70th anniversary of Communist rule in China, were a hit. Five works sold for more than HK\$100m (US\$12m), including Yoshitomo Nara's Knife Behind Back (2000), which went for a staggering HK\$195.7m (US\$24.9m). (Art Newspaper 8th November 2019)





Sino Art Creative
& Extensive
City Art Fair
城市艺术博览会

深圳/香港
SHENZHEN / HONGKONG

中创艺博第10届 (深圳) 城市艺术博览会 THE 10th SHENZHEN CITY ART FAIR

2019.12.13-15 (10:00-20:00)

展览地点：深圳雅枫国际酒店7-8楼

Shenzhen Lafonte International Hotel:

Library Building, No.70 Jingtian East Road, Futian District,
Shenzhen, China

(深圳福田区景田东路70号，福田图书馆旁)

ADD: Shenzhen Lafonte International Hotel
No.70, Jingtian East Road, Futian District, Shenzhen

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城市艺术博览会

深圳/香港
SHENZHEN / HONGKONG

HONGKONG CITY ART FAIR

May 22-24 2020

Island Shangri-La Hotel Hong Kong

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HONG KONG 2019
CITY ART FAIR
香港城市藝術博覽會

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