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CHICAGO WASHINGTON TORONTO LONDON MADRID MILAN CORNWALL

Black Panther and Black Identity

A new theology

**Anya Berger
Remembered**

**Master of the Line
Toulouse Lautrec**

**Anne Truitt -
an appreciation**

Partnered with

 **THE
JACKDAW**

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**THE ST. IVES
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If you have an interest in our venture, please consult Google, also Art Cornwall, for an interview with the publisher, Derek Guthrie, a painter who keeps his art practice private. The New Art Examiner has a long history of producing quality and independent art criticism. Chicago and Cornwall, as any art scene, needs writers to keep a professional eye on art activity.

Otherwise, insider trading will determine success in this troubled art world.

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EDITORIAL

I write from Washington DC as the New Art Examiner opens a new chapter in the most powerful city in the world. Unlike most capital cities, Washington DC does not have a lively art scene. Political considerations dominate. American politics is in turmoil and the news media every day is breaking news of the deepening political drama. The question is will President Trump be impeached. Corruption, secret deals with the Russians, money laundering, obstruction of justice, proven lies control the attention of the nation and leave a residue of depression. In short, America is in search of a moral compass. Cultural and political confusion are joined at the hip. The undercurrent is the issue of how we expect power to be used. The wind of fashion in art is changing or has changed. The avant garde culture has collapsed into a state of near vacuum. The trends of yesterday hold little definition and are given little respect from the contemporary generation. The new signals are coming through but have to find a shape or meaning. The new mantra is community art. A retreat from the usurped authority of museums, academia and the upscale market. The Washington art scene is defined by middle class mores and social acceptance. Washington is not a metropolis. There is not much social cultural diversity here. Formalism, originating with Clement Greenberg the supreme champion of American modernism, still lingers in Washington. Which means abstract art and formalism are the dominate mode, known as the Washington Color. The new voice, community art, emerges from the grass roots. So a class warfare will play out in the art world. Populism is the new battle cry and is playing out in the art scene.

Procedure is the process of politics and that has to be followed. The same for art mores. This was an easy fix for the avant garde, as the avant garde became Americanized the promise of formalism was well embraced and appropriated in DC as the dominate form of artist practice and expression. Outsider art cannot become well groomed or formalized as when this happens it is no longer outsider art. Trump is an outsider who against all the odds became President. This President poses a dilemma for the body politic as the old rules no longer apply. The old assumptions are falling apart. History teaches that art can flourish and often does in a declining society. The US has been on an upswing since World War II. This is now history; whatever is to be is a fascinating proposition. The NAE is pleased to have a ringside seat. In this we are fortunate to be well placed.

Derek Guthrie

LETTERS

Please send letters to:
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Perplexed Poetry

Editor,

Call me the Devil's Advocate I am perplexed. I had understood that the NAE was dedicated to opposing all that is deliberately misleading in the Art world and fighting against all that is overblown and pretentious and yet, in this recent issue, my senses are assaulted by an article, with poem attached, that begins with a sentence that sent me reeling towards the chocolate counter in need of serious percentages of cocoa – this is definitely an 80% or more article. I quote... 'A post-modern agenda challenging the ontological status of aesthetic value countered the qualitative visual arts by purporting a nonsensical aesthetic, sensory and cultural consumption.' My first reaction is to close the magazine and do something else. Read a little light Leibnitz, perhaps? Eat a little Lindt. But, after some thought, I decided to return to the offending article and try harder. What a waste of my energy. Why does a short poem that has very little to say for itself need twice as many column inches as the poem itself takes up to 'explain' it? What does any of it actually mean? Poetry

is surely a form of communication and should not be so very deliberately vague and obfuscated as to throw the reader, try as she might, into paroxysms of fury and cocoa deprivation.

The words of this 'Prologue' are all understandable of the masses, but not necessarily, as the late, great Eric Morecambe might have said, in that order. Talk about the 'nonsensical aesthetic'! The poem, apparently, 'contemplates the authentic qualities of discovered 'unknowns' and seeks enlightened sensitivities in artistic transformations'. Wow! Wish I could do that. Clearly, my enlightened sensitivities are not nearly enlightened enough. Note to self – try harder in a sort of relaxed, New-Age, aromatherapy sort of way. Should not Poetry seek to speak more clearly to the reading public? It need not attempt to out-Leibnitz, Leibnitz, nor to needle with nuggets of Nietzsche – a bit too Apollonian for my taste and not nearly enough chocolate, Dionysus, me old mate! NAE. Are your writers the movers and shakers or the deliberate obfuscators? Are you trying to clarify or are you joining the foggy few? Do you want people to be drawn to you because you speak

with a new, clean voice in an Art World that is more prone to mumble pretensions while hiding behind smoke machines belching forth a thick slime of verbal diarrhoea intended, at one and the same time both to embrace and revolt the interested public? These are the people we should be writing for. The interested public. These are the people to whom we owe a debt of clarity. Enough meaningless twaddle. Say it like it is or don't say it at all.

Maxine

Flaneuse de Cornouaille

(Ed.Note: The NAE publishes all letters unedited. The views of the writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the NAE.)

More Humour

Editor

Re-your editorial in Volume 32 no 2: How true when you say: "Humour can often get a message over more readily than any amount of serious work." If only humour was more readily used and in vogue than seriousness, we might have a more workable world (and obviously, happier), but sadly it isn't. The stuffed shirts of academia need to get off their pedestals and start looking at themselves and the work

QUOTE of the Month:

"When you come right down to it, all you have is your self. Your self is a sun with a thousand rays in your belly. The rest is nothing."

Pablo Picasso 1932

that they do, or rather don't do. What was the feedback on the satire held in Cornwall from the powers that be? The use of satire can be a very powerful tool and should be more widely used. "But to attack anyone by saying 'you cannot say that' is to shut down the discussion before it begins by telling the parties they are offensive." Sometimes we forget the power of words and the effect they can have on each of us.

Samuel Donsfield 07/02/2018

A Softer Bed

Editor,
I thoroughly enjoyed your review 40th Anniversary at the Mattress Factory (volume 32 no 3) and found it both exciting and fun. It also made me curious to know more, which is in part why a critic reviews an exhibition. Well done. I have a question for you. Could you tell me why installation art "is a medium that continues to demand a lot of its audience."?

Deidre Fischer 07/02/2018

Reply from Scott Turri, Pittsburgh
Editor

Well that is a good question Deidre and thank you for your positive words about the review. I am glad I piqued your interest. It is typically not a passive activity, such as looking at paintings for instance. Installation art requires you to become more of a participant in the experience, forcing you to make decisions about how to navigate within a space and how to piece together a multitude of stimuli and information beyond just the sensory experience of vision. If you are not willing to fully commit and engage on a deeper level then you may come away with an empty

experience. In other words, there is a greater impetus on the participant to work to gather meaning, perhaps more so than other mediums in my estimation.

Tate St Ives

Editor,
They've done better this time with the New Gallery at the Tate in St Ives; the Virginia Woolf exhibition of works inspired by her writings makes this large rectangular room feel less cold and less unappealing. They've also put up two walls to divide the room, something else that helps. However, when I visited the Tate on a cold and blustery winter day, the wind continued to blow wildly all throughout the museum. Is it a sign of change to come?

Sara Thomas 11/02/2018

Dallas

Editor,
It was quite interesting to read about so many art spaces in Dallas all in one article. (Volume 32 no 3 Jan/Feb 2018 pp 21- 23) The Dallas Cowboys art collection at the AT&T Stadium makes its contribution to the art scene by helping thousands of people who would not normally visit an art museum or gallery in their lives to connect to the art world. Making art accessible and not just for the elite is like it once was in Sicily, where even fishermen living in one room houses felt the need to have paintings, not reproductions, on their walls. Do you know if anything similar is being done anywhere else?

Gerald Rossi 12/02/2018

Speakeasy

Dhyano,
I would like your opinion on this.

What do you think of the contributions to art museums made by the Sackler family trying to clean up their name from the money they made on opioids, in particular, OxyContin? The National Portrait Gallery, Courtauld Institute of Art, the University of Edinburgh, the Old Vic Theatre, the University of Glasgow, London's Victoria and Albert Museum, and the Tate have all received substantial contributions from the Sackler family.

"Ryan Hampton worked at the White House under Bill Clinton and is now in recovery from a decade-long opioid addiction. He campaigns on the issue and said funding from the Sacklers was tainted. "The millions the Sacklers donate to philanthropic and art organisations are blood money, plain and simple. When you stand in the Sackler Gallery, you're standing on a pile of corpses," he told the Guardian.

"I find it hard to believe that any museum board member whose family has battled an opioid addiction would be comfortable at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a wing funded by the Sackler family. It turns my stomach."

"The only appropriate place for Sackler family money or Purdue corporation funds is in a massive settlement fund controlled by the US courts to treat those still suffering with the addiction caused by their opioids. That money should be used to right the wrongs in a way that is transparent. Donations to arts organisations are reputation laundering, and a distraction from the wreckage of this family's greed."

James Crown 21/03/2018 (to Dhyano Angius Speakeasy Volume 32 no 3 Jan/Feb 2018 p 6)

Dhyano,

Interesting, though perhaps controversial comment from David Boaz of the Cato Institute on the "Separation of Art and State" from 2012:

"What do art, music, and religion have in common? They all have the power to touch us in the depths of our souls. As one theater director said, "Art has power. It has the power to sustain, to heal, to humanize . . . to change something in you. It's a frightening power, and also a beautiful power....And it's essential to a civilized society." Government funding of anything involves government control. Which is precisely why art, music, and religion should be kept separate from the state.

Government involves the organization of coercion. In a free society coercion should be reserved only for such essential functions of government as protecting rights and punishing criminals. People should not be forced to contribute money to artistic endeavors that they may not approve, nor should artists be forced to trim their sails to meet government standards. Government funding of anything involves government control. That insight, of course, is part of our folk wisdom: "He who pays the piper calls the tune."

Defenders of arts funding seem blithely unaware of this danger when they praise the role of the national endowments as an imprimatur or seal of approval on artists and arts groups.

We don't need any more fights over "Piss Christ" or the National Portrait Gallery's "Hide/Seek" exhibition on sexual difference in portraiture or the Enola Gay exhibit at the National Air and Space

Museum. And we can thank our lucky stars that Kentucky's Creation Museum is private, or we'd have a major political battle over that. Meanwhile, we should note that the NEA's budget is about 0.2 percent of the total amount spent on the nonprofit arts in the United States. The rapidly growing crowdfunding platform Kickstarter expects to direct more funding to the arts in its third year of operation than the NEA does. The American Founders knew that the solution to the Wars of Religion was the separation of church and state. Because art is just as spiritual, just as meaningful, just as powerful as religion, it is time to grant art the same independence and respect that religion has: the separation of art and state."

Dott. Giovanni de Santis 18/03/2018

Donna Festa



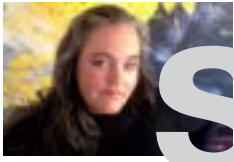
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Mollie Douthit

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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



speakeasy

Caitlin Johnstone

Caitlin Johnstone is a rogue journalist, bogan socialist, anarcho-psychonaut, guerilla poet, utopia prepper and unapologetic rabble rouser writing out of Melbourne, Australia.

Seize The Means Of Creating Culture

Former Green Party Vice Presidential candidate Ajamu Baraka recently made the observation, "From Wakanda with its 'Black identity extremist' and nice CIA agent to Hoover's FBI as noble and honest institution, the 'American' people are propagandized to their very bones. Critical thinking is replaced by fear, mindlessness and the manipulated passions of the herd."

The movie *Black Panther* has sparked a lot of much needed dialogue. It features a heroic white protagonist from the warmongering CIA for no good reason, a villain who just so happens to embody the "black identity extremism" label which has been invented at the FBI and the movie tells the story of a leader of an isolationist nation slowly discovering the wonders of globalism.

I don't know how all that gratuitous pro-establishment messaging found its way into a movie that was supposed to be a cultural triumph for a viciously abused group of people. The US defense and intelligence agencies have a well-documented history of extensively influencing mainstream Hollywood film. At best, the movie was the product of filmmakers who have lived their lives saturated in establishment propaganda.

"We are led by the least among us," the late Terence McKenna once said. "The least noble, the least intelligent, the least visionary."

Culture shapes our minds. If we are to create a true grassroots revolution to overthrow the ecocidal, omniscidal oppressors who are driving us toward dystopia at best and extinction at worst, we need to transform not just the way people vote and organize, but the way people think.

A true bottom-up revolution will necessarily entail a revolution of the ninety-nine percent shrugging off the boxes they were told to stand in and rebuilding culture from their own authority where they stand.

In the old days, rulers relied on religion to shape culture. Obedience and humility are supreme virtues. "Heathens" were converted not just into a new religion and loyalty to the Holy Roman Empire, but into a new culture which consumed and annihilated their old tribal

cultures and campfire mythologies. Control the culture and you control the power structure.

Now they use Hollywood.

One of the most pernicious tropes that almost all commercial art pushes is the "deus ex machina", the hero-saves-the-day. From Jesus to Bruce Willis to Superman. It's now so obviously insane that we've gotten to the point where half of America is hoping the intelligence agencies will save them, and the other half is hoping the reality-tv star president will save them.

They don't want us learning to look at the world with fresh eyes, unobscured by the cataracts of authorized filters. They don't want art which points to the inherent beauty and dignity of the living, which exists prior to any heroic accomplishments. They don't want art which wakes us up to new perspectives.

All art is political. In a society dominated by elites who use art to manipulate the public, art can only ever be political. You either (A) make art directly in service of the ruling class, (B) make art indirectly in service to the ruling class by promulgating dominant orthodoxies, (C) make innocuous mall art which sits there placidly distracting everyone while the world burns, or (D) make revolutionary art, born of inspiration.

Start making art. You can only get it right. Your youth is the prism through which the light dances. Just let the light shine through you and draw the shapes that it makes. Or dance them. Or sing them. Or sculpt them out of mashed potato..

Tend your spark. Become playful in your everyday life and look for opportunities to make something. Put one rock on another rock. Write a little love letter on a wall. Gather a posy of flowers and found objects. Put it in a vessel in front of your television so the light makes shapes on the wall. Draw the shapes.

This is how you build a fire. Shine as bright as you can to draw interest and attention toward the authentic and away from the inauthentic, toward inspired art and away from propaganda. Collapse the machine from its very foundation with a people's takeover of artificial culture.



The Cultural Context and Significance of the movie ‘Black Panther’

You know the drill. You buy the tickets, get the popcorn, settle into your seat, resist the previews — you’re seeing a Hollywood movie. But something interesting has been happening in Hollywood over the past 10 years or so. In the wake of cinematic aberrations such as *The Help* and *The Longest Yard*, a new mood has been on the rise in Hollywood’s treatment of Black subject matter that emphasizes the centrality of Blackness, but addresses it with all of the characteristic flair of any Spielberg or Coppola film. Much is said about the language surrounding Black identity, but not enough about aesthetic, and by extension, moral and ethical treatment of Black Americans. *Black Panther* delivers up a dish in spades, one to savor, one to enjoy again and again.

When I saw the trailer for *Black Panther* several months ago, I knew something major had happened before my eyes and behind the scenes. I remember *Black Panther* comics as a kid. He was someone I thought of as a not necessarily minor character in the Marvel universe, but not *Spiderman* or the *Avengers* either but who was **always** treated with care and dignity.

It was dark in the theater as I was blindly taking notes, and these are the talking points I came up with:

Technology Concealment Afrofuturism
the 1970’s Colonialism Black is Beautiful
“ghetto” vs. “African” speech

I want to start seemingly out of order, by addressing the last point on speech and articulation. The film’s treatment of dialect is important to note. The villain is born of inner city violence. He wants to transform Wakanda, the mythically advanced African country,

I think with *Black Panther* we have reached the apogee of a phenomenon in American Culture that one can casually think of as a Reinvention of Blackness carried out in public. The programs of integration that have failed to deliver change for vast swathes of the Black population, and within which integrated African-Americans have found racial animosity on the right and racial paternalism, condescension and callous ambivalence from corners of the left is intensifying



*Created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, the Black Panther first appeared in *Fantastic Four* #52, July 1966.*

into an agent for Black Liberation worldwide since the isolationism of the country has caused it to fail to protect and defend others. The way he speaks is familiar to ‘us’. It is threatening, uneducated, violent. He exudes his strength through this brand of necessary violence, a violence that is somehow relatable, even desirable. The protagonists, on the other hand, speak with the affectation of educated people, people whose first language is not English — people one may have encountered in a restaurant, board meeting, or college classroom. This use of speech is the entry into the inner lives of the film’s characters; it helps us separate the good guys from the bad guys. It’s what makes the characters relatable, alluring, identifiable with one’s own higher self. The use of speech also lends a hand in towing the party line that the film promotes, that the status quo of international relations is fine as it is, that there is nothing wrong with the world that cannot be fixed through peace and diplomacy, the clarion call of our gentle America-first Eurocentrism. But for many this vision of the world is as fantastical and implausible as the existence of Wakanda itself. Another obvious observation that must be made has to do with the treatment of the white characters. Whiteness is not treated with out-right irreconcilable villainy — much to the film’s credit. Whiteness itself is treated with just as much complexity as blackness, a facet of the film that might be lost on some viewers (especially in scenes of overt black/white violence) because it shows European people from a frame of reference outside of their own. The film is laced with barely perceptible ticks, lines such as “you’ve been watching me since you came in here but you don’t pay

attention to what you put into your own body”, spoken to the African Art curator (perhaps a nod to veganism/anti-racist rhetoric), muttering of the word “Americans” by the protagonists in the casino directed at the white patrons.

While the cast of characters is almost ALL black, *Black Panther* is primarily a film for black and white, and non-black and non-white people to watch together, that treats Black subjects with dignity. It is a sci-fi futuristic epic about tradition, change, good and evil, redemption, the rise of a savior and the triumph of basic human goodness — the standard Hollywood fare, nothing really outstanding; but *Panther* is not notable for its screen craft, its costumes or even its special effects. It’s notable because, like more recent releases such as *Django Unchained* and *Get Out*, it is memorable. The original Black Panther comic was very much a creation of the 1960’s that seemed to fade but remained rooted in the Marvel universe. The comic and the film speak to what we in the alleged post-colonial world so desperately want to believe, that western civilization did not completely crush those who were victimized by it the worst. That somewhere, there must be a culture that is noble, resilient and just as innovative as those we are striving to become. A civilization that charted its own course to modernity without coming to the brink of self-destruction by respecting time-honored traditions. So what happens when those traditions turn against the society that created them and the winds of change sweep over the beloved country? This gives the film its ultimate edge. Wakanda which survived and thrived for millennia, is finally under threat of being conquered, colonized and exploited for its natural resources, and its very traditions will be the instruments of its demise.

I think with *Black Panther* we have reached the apogee of a phenomenon in American Culture that one can casually think of as a Reinvention of Blackness carried out in public. The programs of integration that have failed to deliver change for vast swathes of the Black population, and within which integrated African-Americans have found racial animosity on the right and racial paternalism, condescension and callous ambivalence from corners of the left is intensifying. This is a phenomenon that predates Obama, and was borne of the dissolution of Post-blackness and the gentrified boutique subtle racism of the millennial hipster generation, my generation, with VICE magazine as their spiritual pornography and American Apparel and Salvation Army providing their uniforms.

There is a new celebration of Whiteness reflected in

... it appears that a significant number of white Americans seem to be bored with chants for “equality”, bored with multiracialism, multiculturalism, and waiting for other races to “catch up”, and have now lashed out with a more sophisticated form of bigotry that is “too smart” to simply be labelled as such outright and is broadly tolerated ...

the perverse obsession with period films depicting moments in history where black representation is totally excluded as unnecessary to create fantasies for closet racists, who are essentially what many, many, many Americans are (think *Lincoln* or *The Beguiled*). This American impulse has engendered a counter-reclamation of Blackness among a segment of the population that was taught that we had finally arrived and were “All Americans Now”, and that validates the rhetoric of Afrocentrists who say Americans were too racist to ever accept black people in the first place, an attitude that was disparaged and rebuked by the New Left in the 80’s and 90’s, yet has been adopted by the progenitors of that cultural movement during a moment of nihilistic euphoria that has been on the rise since the mid-oughts.

If you look at the general population, it appears that a significant number of white Americans seem to be bored with chants for “equality”, bored with multiracialism, multiculturalism, and waiting for other races to “catch up”, and have now lashed out with a more sophisticated form of bigotry that is “too smart” to simply be labelled as such outright and is broadly tolerated if not encouraged by others on both the right and the left. Many of those who lived a life relatively free of the barbs of racism up until now feel like outsiders in American society.

But back to the movie. The politics of Black



The beauty of strength gives the Black Panther the first, truly believable female warriors

representation engendering more human visions of African-Americans have been playing out in Hollywood in a moment that I think starts in the late 80's into the 90's. It lay dormant for a while, but came back with a vengeance in Quentin Tarantino's *Django Unchained*. After the release of *12 Years a Slave* in 2013 it was clear that there was a new paradigm in Hollywood emerging, one that treats African-Americans in stark contrast to films such as *Lincoln* that betray nuances of acceptable racism that are not potent enough to smear the exceptionalism of American whiteness. *Django*, which came out at the same time as *Lincoln*, tears that fetishized whiteness down in tantalizing baroque forms of extravagant violence, and was, like Panther, a movie that appeared to transcend itself in the popular imagination, as indeed many of these films of the 10's appear to do.

This new accelerated generation of films centralizes blackness and attempts to discard the animosity that is frequently the handmaiden of black representation, and (since it's Hollywood) serves as a gentle reminder that validates the humanism that binds us together.

This new moment, It's not about black nationalism, separatism, or futurism. It is a covertly interracial programme occurring apparently in Hollywood and the high art world as well that amounts to being a counter to an aesthetic movement that, once again, privileges white identity above all others. Matt Damon in *The Wall*, Sofia Coppola's *The Beguiled*. Black People, and others, everyone else who is not white have felt themselves betrayed by the inheritors of the cultural liberalism as well as the MAGAs, and like *Get Out* have to fight for the

right to exist after falling for a kind of social/cultural trap.

Black Panther, *Django*, *12 Years*, *Get Out*, *Fences*, *Hamilton*, *Detroit*, *Belle*, *Selma*, *Hidden Figures*, and before that *The Color Purple*, *Beloved*, *Malcolm X* and *Glory* are popular films, not art house accretions of a more humane vision of black representation. Panther, and other so-called black films, are manifestations of a unified culture that elevates the necessity of Black identity in America for the interest of self-preservation and to release white people also from the legacy of bigotry that has defined **them**.

Black Panther, I hope, shows all of us something that we desperately wish existed, that lies just over the horizon, a collective hallucination writ large and made for everyone. Not necessarily as a work of Art or artistically great Cinema (as it's based on a Marvel comic book), though I am certainly open to debate about that, but as an overt reclamation of basic human dignity. I hope it asks us to find Wakanda within ourselves and see it in each other. I hope *Black Panther* teaches us that as long as we live, as long as we stare down our fears in the face of overwhelming evil, even if we fail, we will have failed better than our victors have triumphed, and accomplished something more meaningful than our oppressors. We will have kept the waters troubled, and stood up to demand our right to be seen as who are, or at the very least, who we strive most to be.

Spencer Hutchinson, Chicago Editor
(Images: © Marvel Studios)

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Theology in Art

The Old Gods

"These two disciplines used to be inextricably connected ... Artists were theologians, students of God who sought to convey his beauty and truth using material means ..."
(Victoria Emily Jones)

"Throughout history, the arts in all their forms have mirrored cultural change and even injected prophetic voices into our theological understanding." (*The Fuller Theological Seminary*)

These two esoteric descriptions are narrow in focus. They only look at their own cultural theology – and theology is cultural which is why every tribe has their own. But in the wider context of deist belief systems, the arts have a crucial role. Without artists, religions would not exist as we have them and barely have any influence at all for the shared symbolic order of a nation is predominantly conveyed in the visual experience, not the written philosophical. For being creations of the imagination religions thrive upon the images they implant in the brain. So firmly are theologies part of our thinking in the arts that hand prints on cave walls, tens of thousands of years old, are considered by anthropologists who cannot know, to be something to do with secretive belief because they are in parts of caves difficult to access and would have only been made with artificial light. When they are not of the animals hunted by the troglodytes, they must have another, mystical significance. They cannot simply be a pastime. They could never be conceived of as hobby. They aren't there because during storms the inhabitants wanted to get away from the cold. No, they have to be religious.

Mystery, religion and art naturally go hand-in-hand. Art expounds upon some essence in ourselves and in the human experience. This is the default value we place upon it and why we give culture in primacy of place among human accomplishments.

So wondrous is the tie between religions and art they can make whole peoples do amazing if somewhat odd things – look at Easter Island where an entire society was dedicated to a singular purpose. The dedication needed to produce works of art, the concentration and hours of learning to model beauty out of minerals, is enhanced ten-fold by the devotion inspired through the belief in a greater power and an after-life. Add to that devotion, the status given to those most skilled in the quality of their work by the general population, and eventually by those



Seated Ganesha. Orissa, India 14th–15th century. Ivory

The Hindu god of auspiciousness, Ganesha. As the deity who controls obstacles he is worshiped prior to any serious undertaking. This seated four-armed Ganesha holds one of his tusks, two entwined snakes, an elephant god, and a box of sweets. (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)

with power and wealth, and you have art history. The artist, the artwork, the mission, the wealthy political elite. These elements have ruled the art world for centuries and not just the western world. This marriage of skill, the visual image and the message of religion is intrinsically part of the human experience.

Artists have had to learn and relearn a lot over the generations. From the clay fired household gods of Rome or the achievement of the temple to Athena in Athens, The Parthenon, or the temples on high mountains in China and the beautiful forms of India's multiplicity of images of the one god, people's imaginations have worked in a frenzy to bring beliefs out of the imagination and into the light. We would have no Renaissance if it were not for this, most art would not exist, be it of gods, heavens, mythical beasts, decorations of religious buildings, devotional images or icons. From illuminated manuscripts to coins, from statues to abbeys, from frescoes to jewelry, without religious belief that art would not exist and, without art, no religions could function in the global imagination with the ease with which they have: for the visual image is a seducer and beauty its preferred tool. Take the aesthetics of images out of

religions and you are left with storytelling, which when done well by actors, is its own form of imagery. As works of art it impresses, brings to life, startles, affirms and empathises with the pre-existing faith.

In all probability, there is not a single one of the gods humanity has invented that has not been realised in art. Even the pedestal in Athens which Paul of Tarsus noted was to the 'unknown god' covers the possibility of having missed one. We dig up the artifacts of older cultures only to find gods of clay, in clay and on clay, wood and stone and eventually precious metals. It seems to be the structural expression of one's creative self to call forth in some medium, one's belief in divinity.

" ... as the Italian Renaissance progressed, Western culture began to change drastically, allowing for a certain type of secular art to emerge. Artists and scholars were inspired to go back to the roots of the classical Greek and Roman societies as a means of influencing a new culture. As the new idea of humanism became prevalent, giving rise to a more secular society, this caused a shift away from a traditional one in which the Church was dominant. Reflecting this new society and its mores, early secular painting was crucial to the development of modern ideas of art. Thus, the emergence of the modern Western artwork is sometimes cast as a slow process of secularization, with the devotional charge of images giving way in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to a focus on the beauty and innovation of the artwork itself." (Elena Martinique: <https://www.widewalls.ch/secular-art/>)

This is true to a point except that Roman and Greek styles always tried to theologise their secular leaders, just as Romans demanded emperors be worshipped. A creed that was readily taken up in the Divine Right of Kings – a theory still with us in the United Kingdom in the twenty-first century. But this old version of art was going to break down after the invention of photography and the introduction of psychoanalysis, into many parts. Herbert Read noted in *A Concise History of Modern Painters*, "The old language of art was no longer adequate for human consciousness: a new language of art was to be established, syllable by syllable, image by image, until art could once more be a social as well as an individual necessity."

The New Gods

Kandinsky in *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1912) thinks every great work of art has the spiritual in it irrespective of its holy or profane general character. This

is, he thinks, because of the deep emotions at play in the creation of an art object. Franz Marc's work is all about emotion as colour. Rothko as quoted by Crichton Miller in *At The Altar*, says:

"I'm interested only in expressing basic human emotions: tragedy, ecstasy, doom, and so on, and the fact that a lot of people break down and cry when confronted with my pictures shows that I communicate those basic human emotions.... The people who weep before my pictures are having the same religious experience I had when I painted them. And if you, as you say, are moved only by their color relationships, then you miss the point!"

Gerhard Richter, that perfect agnostic, wrote:

"Art is not a substitute religion: it is a religion (in the true sense of the word: 'binding back', 'binding' to the unknowable, transcending reason, transcendent being). But the church is no longer adequate as a means of affording experience of the transcendental, and of making religion real – and so art has been transformed from a means into the sole provider of religion: which means religion itself."

So artists in the modern sense are aware that theology has not gone anywhere in art, even though religion has vanished. How is this possible?

In the contemporary scene we have artists – many of whom may have a faith – using art to say whatever they think they want to say. A disparate, many faced, art world that has the piss-Christ, the female Jesus, the paedophile Mohammed, the historical religious figures rather than the mythological ones and makes them what they are. Flawed people.

The patronage of Popes is still around but does not dictate as much as it used to outside the church. Catholic aristocrats along with all the rest, still buy contemporary art mostly for the wholly secular purposes of profit.

After the Reformation the Protestant challenge to the Catholic church resulted in a continuation of challenges to orthodoxy down the centuries and the proliferation of churches within the Christian community. The proliferation of new ideas and the expansion of knowledge and materials led to the explosion of concepts that defined art history up to the 1950s. Every new invention became a new way of explaining how humans 'worked'. From clockwork mechanics to computer electronics we proliferate in analogies to describe who we are, now we are no longer god's creation. What we are is an animal structured by an unconscious as well as a conscious mind. Just as Surrealism could not have happened without Freud, so art up and through Jackson



*Paul Klee Tale à la Hoffmann (1921), watercolor, ink, and pencil on paper.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*



The Blue Rider (der Blaue Reiter), the book edited in Munich in 1912 by Vasily Kandinsky and Franz Marc. 'Modern art can be born only where signs become symbols'

Pollack could not have happened without Surrealism and its debt to Dada. The links are as inescapable as the artists are captured by their time of living. Like Patrick Heron in a time when artists were supposed to write as well as paint and sculpt, who says in the *Changing Forms of Art*, that Braque "... serves to remind a contemporary audience, fed to anxiety on brilliant innovation, frenzied novelty and every variety of spontaneous expression, that, after all, permanence, grandeur, deliberation, lucidity and calm are paramount virtues of the art of painting." Kandinsky was immediately aware of the dangers which lay ahead, and to which much non-objective art was indeed to succumb — the danger of allowing painting to become 'mere geometric decoration, something like a necktie or a carpet'.

The new theology places us on a rock hurtling through space with no divine interventions, a miracle of chance on a cosmic scale with no set purpose for souls, or understanding of place, except as a part of a cosmos that is best delineated by the logic of astrophysics. Adam is reaching for god in Michelangelo's universe, but in ours the Nude Descends the Staircase like a Dada missionary bringing humanity a vision of itself that cannot be witnessed in the real, four dimensional word of our five senses. The ecstatic altar pieces depicting biblical scenes have given way to graffiti summoning up the demons of

the dispossessed and suffering. Stain glass has been broken by women taking their intellectual places in the study of art and bibles, themselves having been replaced by grant applications, filled to the brim with political ethics redesigning and defining the culture. Religions imposed order through guesswork; today theorising imposes itself upon the artist as an alternative to skill, and the breaking down of that skill into its component parts – ideas of form, perspective, dimensionality, colour – is the single achievement of conceptualism. Not often expressive of a profound emotion or spiritual experience.

The centre of gravity of the artist has not changed. To create stuff for others to see. But the subject matter of the modern theology, though varied, is just as keenly worshipped. To call it liberalism is too broad a definition to be of use; to call it celebrity is hardly to differentiate it from the past, for every Pope and Monarch was a celebrity; to call it economics is too trite. These all play a part in the present theology, but they are not expressing the chaos the artist finds in trying to define their understanding of the human experience, for we no longer know why we are experiencing it or even if it is reality. We know it is not god's will. We are creatures who make machines; we are creatures who manipulate the natural world; we make laws to enable us to harmonise societies; we are thinkers, pragmatists and dreamers.

And it doesn't matter if this doesn't describe all of us. We demand in this chaos a certain degree of conformity. And, like all theologies, the modern artist has to understand the 'common prayer' of grants forms and genuflect before the right people in positions of influence.

But the present theology cannot give up on making humanity central to the purpose of society. We can do away with god in our art, but we cannot entirely replace god with the machine because well drawn machines look kitsch. Academic painting has never gotten to grips with machinery. And giving up on figurative works, as Greenberg would have us do, only leads us to the profound observation of Adorno 'A painter paints a painting not what it represents.'

Art becomes its own theology, whose core subject is itself. We can see people modelling nudes, but they are no longer interested in the nude but in the nude as something in flux... give it the name of your preferred art movement. Contemporary artists take on the status of past artists, with the clothes of modern celebrity and with a new universal belief: everything is art. It is not their work that matters, but their status and through their status, their intentions as artists informs our culture. But as we all become artists we are still asked to

hold some people up as higher practitioners. As the world becomes an endless visual experience we are still asked to visit galleries to see 'what's going on'.

What art has taken from faith is the longing, shared by us all, to feel good. To walk around a gallery and come out as if having said prayers. To see poor people 'doing' art and helping us feel charitable. To call murals on hovels beautiful. To take art into schools and 'feel' absolution. Then to affirm one is giving art to the people. Being confirmed into the financial agenda of government. For everything in capitalism costs money – even theologies.

Theologies of the past always relied upon the emotional responses of the congregation more than the story. If only one story mattered we would only have one, but emotions can be triggered by the theme, and the themes of all the stories of religions down the ages have not varied much. Justice, rightness, goodness, badness. Redemption and judgment, hubris and nemesis. These are no longer the work of the artist. The present theology thinks art is its own judge, its own religion, and the liberal attitudes it now represents are painted upon the artist, not the canvas. They said painting was dead. But like all gods it was resurrected. And today artists are more interesting as flawed people than for what they make.

We now worship culture not as a series of objects left to us by particular tribes, not as a statement of who we are for all time, but as a stock in the market place. A tourist trade. Any wall will do because there are no judgments to be made. And rather like the believer who feels nothing they pray for is ever granted, more and more people realise liberalising the arts has not made us all artists. Has not even made us all creative. That theology has no saints, only a shared sinfulness of no one being brave enough to write a manifesto and put their name to it. For as Klee said, 'we have found the parts but not the whole.' None dare to fix an idea in this chaos because that would end one's career.

The relics of twentieth century art were not made by saints. Following in their footsteps does not endow the acolyte with talent. In making art into a theology and the artist their own judge, we have made the art world a schoolroom and every artist has the right to remain a child. You can shit in a tin, pull wool from your vagina, be politically aligned to liberalism, cry on queue and reel off prepared scripts about diversity and inclusivity and you will do well. Because, as in all ages, artists and what they create cannot escape the politics of their age. Cannot escape the need of humanity to create society



The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass) 1915-1923

even though we are still learning how to do it well. And for the first time in our history we now allow politically motivated, tax payer funded and circumscribed agencies to govern our art. Criticise the policies that have brought us to a resurgence of fascism across the western world and like Lorca, you may as well be symbolically dragged out and shot. You will be ignored. Your voice is not conducive to happiness. The only way to be happy in this world is to blind yourself to the tragedy all around you. There is no other way. And never admit that the corruption of the artist by market economics is the leading reason for the tragedy. For the voice of the modern artist is not singular but one of a crowd. Utterly lost in the cacophony of trade by all means.

The Goddess to Come, Writes

So artists are blinded by the process of being artists in today's society. Their suffering is not the deprivation of past generations but the frustrations of being ignored in an art-stuffed culture. Art is everywhere but it is not all that good most of the time. It is not good because the reason it is being made is not to expound on a principle or to restructure a point of artistic thought. It is the self-

indulgent excrement of an indulged society obsequious to capitalism. It does the same thing with new materials and becomes innovative. It looks at human experience as a series of points to be endlessly expounded upon without ever drawing a conclusion. It doesn't seek conclusions – it only seeks buyers.

Art is like philosophy, it needs to think about something in order to communicate with people. There is far too much navel gazing going and when many artists do think about the refugees, poverty, homelessness, war – they are doing so within the preconceived expectations of galleries and granting agencies. They either have to sell their work or make it fit the criteria for a grant. So forty years of work has led us out of the 1970s right back into nationalism, bigotry on the streets, provincialism and underpinned our feelings of exclusivity. Artists have made no advances.

They swapped one religion for another of a vain and wealthy class who bought and sold art. The market-place overtook the thinkers and the artists, and while they dallied in their preserve of wisdom and history, young artists took over the world with their version of themselves. The present theology has bankrupted the art world the same way the Academies did. The present theology has no more right to define art than the Academies did and it is dying on its feet just as the Academies did.

The new theology that gets us to a place of thinking has to recapture critical thinking across the board in the age of women. No more meek acceptance that the new is everything. No more denial of skill as a loser's argument. Take any artist you wish to, and if you can find work they did at five years old and that they did at twenty you will see a difference. Even if at twenty they try to recapture the five-year old. That difference is called development. It doesn't stop. Not for one day in a lifetime. If you see no development in the thinking, then you are looking at someone who has given up being an artist to become a parody of themselves.

But there is one vital component to the new theology, outside of the skill, the understanding of art history and the search for a purity that defines the human being within the living universe.

It is the rekindle the bravery of a human being with a small candle crawling through a cave with barely room to expand their chest to inhale, without knowing what was on the other side or even if there was another side. It is the take those steps everyone tells them cannot be taken. To reach out and make a hand print in victory at having made the journey.

Sunflowers

So Vincent you were consumed by sunflowers -
 Nothing in the red-poppy fields assuaged
 Your madness only made it worse -
 You were caught, held between a violent sunset
 And the twisted smile of an alley-whore.
 You loved humanity for it suffered
 But you loathed people and their lies -
 For you the butterfly or snail
 Dipped their existence into your paints
 Touched your loneliness, dried your tears -
 Ah! Vincent, the artist bleeds.
 Poets die before believed -
 Your pictures were but post-cards
 Saying, 'Wish you were here' to a host
 Of cold creatures who never see
 The sunflower as a temple
 Or the poppy as a god -
 You found the torment and knew
 That at the tip of your paint-brush
 You held the world hostage -
 Your madness was art being difficult
 Your hurt now hangs on walls
 Instead of in your heart -
 Be still your sorrow -
 Pictures are your yellow-fields
 And silent ransom the price we pay
 For your bullet wound -

Shänne Sands

The new theology must go in uncharted waters. Not go where the arts council goes, not listen to the broken and bought art teachers, not seek the 'bubbling reputation', not be servile to political will and not dance for the public pleasure.

We are all dancing on a planet doomed to be destroyed. Everything we create will become dust. We will go into the future with holograms, if we have them, in which we can witness dead artists at work creating the works we enjoy. We will smell the ingredients and touch the tools they made, and in some fancy games we will become them and have our hands manipulated by computers to make us Da Vinci, Picasso, Klee, Giacometti or whomever. We will be all artists in a very virtual sense. We will not need galleries or museums, what we will need and do need now, is a personal education as unlimited and unrestricted as artists down the ages have worked for. A freedom of the mind that does not look for money nor expect resolution but finds completeness in the journey, (and the writing about it) itself.

It we are all artists let's all be real ones.

Daniel Nanavati

Life in the Margins

By Tom Overton

It's time that the extraordinary life and work of Anya Berger was acknowledged

First published 27 February on <http://frieze.com>

Anna Zissermann was born in Manchuria in 1923. In different countries, under different names, she shaped the horizons of the English-speaking left on issues of race, gender and class, and it's time this was recognized.

Anna – affectionately called Anya – was born into a wealthy, land-owning Russian family. Her mother and older siblings had fled the 1917 Revolution to stay with Viennese Jewish family before they moved to China, where Anya was born. Later, when they heard she was developing a stutter, Anya's grandparents consulted their upstairs neighbour, Dr. Sigmund Freud. He suggested she spoke just Russian for the moment, and she was cured. Later, her unique transnational upbringing, and her ability to learn languages – Russian, German, French, English, some Polish and Serbo-Croat – would make her career. The family returned to Vienna in the 1930s, and following the Anschluß Anya found herself in the crowd for Hitler and Goebbels' 1938 speech announcing reunification with Germany. She escaped to England on her own, attended St Paul's school in London, before winning a scholarship to Oxford to study Modern Languages. There she met her first husband, Stephen Bostock with whom she also had two children, Nina & Dima, and whose surname she used for most of her published work.

After giving up her degree to work for the Russian monitoring section of Reuters in London, Anya reviewed fiction for the Manchester Guardian. Considering Samuel Beckett's *Molloy* (1955) alongside *Waiting for Godot* (1953), she wrote 'Mr Beckett's talent, whatever form of literature he may adopt, is of a poet: hence the elusiveness, the haunting, teasing many-sidedness of his characters.' Her translations, meanwhile, ranged from Soviet writers such as Ilya Ehrenburg – whom she had first heard of while working at Reuters – to Paul Eipper's *My Cats and I* (1955) – an illustrated treatise on cohabiting with cats – to Le Corbusier's design manual *Le Modulor* (1948). The latter was a collaboration with her then partner, the later Professor of Painting at the Royal College of Arts, Peter de Francia (1921–2012), whom she credits for her political awakening: she went on to translate works by Trotsky, Wilhelm Reich, Lenin and Marx.

Anya and Peter are thanked at the beginning of the debut novel John Berger wrote in reflection on that



Anya Berger translated Trotsky, Lenin, Marx and Le Corbusier into English, under the name Anna Bostock

decade, *A Painter of Our Time* (1958). By the time it was published, she was in a relationship with John (she asked to be called Anya Berger in this article). Together, they translated texts by the Berliner Ensemble actor Helene Weigel and her husband and collaborator Bertolt Brecht (1959) – and then Brecht's *Poems On The Theatre* (1961). John wanted to become a 'European' writer, and Anya could get translation work at the UN, so they moved to Geneva and had two children: the writer Katya (b.1961) and film-maker Jacob (b.1963). Exploring Europe by motorbike, they befriended Ernst Fischer, an Austrian philosopher, militant and postwar cabinet minister.

Anya translated Fischer, including *The Necessity of Art* (1973); his application of Marxist theory to the everyday was as important to John's work as Walter Benjamin's. In retrospect, *Ways of Seeing* – John's collaborative TV series and book updating Benjamin's theories on art and mechanical reproduction – looks like part of the English-language re-evaluation around Harry Zorn and Hannah Arendt's 1968 collection *Illuminations*. But exposing John to Benjamin's ideas far earlier than this is only one of the ways Anya shaped the series.

Ways of Seeing episode two starts with John discussing 'the male gaze' in Western art and society:

Men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at. This determines not only most relations between men and women but also the relation of women to themselves.

After 15 minutes, the director Mike Dibb cuts to a studio to hear the opinions of five women: the artist Carola Moon; the publisher, scholar and activist Jane

Kenrik; Barbara Niven, the art critic of the *Daily Worker*; Eva Figes, who had recently published *Patriarchal Attitudes: Women in Society* (1970), and Anya. As the episode closes, she suggests 'what a picture of a woman might be like': the figure of Peace from Lorenzetti's fresco *The Good and Bad Government* (1338–39). Her description offers a note of hope:

She could be one of the liberated – or trying to be liberated – women of today. She is at ease, she is relaxed, she is not playing any part at all. She is able to combine pleasure with thought, and with dreaming, and she might spring into action at any moment. For me, she has much more to do with nakedness, with the truth about one's self, than any number of nudes that I've seen.



Anya, with daughter Nina (whose father is Stephen Bostock) and John Berger

Later in 1972, Anya made a BBC radio programme called 'Women's Liberation'. Recommending the American poet Robin Morgan's anthology *Sisterhood is Powerful* (1970) she explains that:

All branches and persuasions of the Women's Liberation Movement believe that the world as we know it has been made by men and is being run by them, with the more or less tacit connivance of women. We do not like this world. We don't like violence, exploitation and the manipulation of minds; we don't like the consumer society which imposes arbitrary standards of beauty and glamour upon us, just as it imposes false notions of status upon the men we live with. Least of all do we like the enormous waste of human potential which we see all around us.

Anya goes on to describe how her group began with 'consciousness raising' discussions about the situation of women in society, and moved on to 'social action': educating others about free contraception, abortion rights, and childcare. In 1976, after separating from John, Anya wrote for the British feminist journal *Spare*

Rib on changing a toilet seat with shit-stained screws as a single, independent woman. 'There are no woman-type jobs or man-type jobs', she concluded, but:

I know I am not – we are not – out of the shit yet, not by a long way. Half the time we aren't even sure which way to push. But when we get to the end of it – for, like those bloody screws, it does have an end, I'm sure of it – I guarantee you a moment of elation before the next job clamours to be done.

As Griselda Pollock has pointed out, the movement did not then describe itself as 'Feminism', but as 'Women's Liberation'. Anya's programme traces the name to the States, where it emerged 'by analogy with Black Liberation.' Anya's work is alive to this intersection:



Anya, Jacob, Katya and John Berger on a trip to Leningrad on the Krupskaya, 1969

in 1970, she and John had published a translation of *Return to My Native Land*, Aimé Césaire's poetic exploration of post-colonial black identity. In his work, it informed the decision to share the Booker McConnell prize with the London Chapter of the Black Panthers: a gesture of solidarity with black struggle against the legacies of colonialism. In hers, it informed 'Women of Algiers', a 1974 piece for *New Left Review* which moved beyond *Ways of Seeing* to use art history to examine the intersection of race and gender.

In September 1973 Anya was in Algiers during the fourth summit of the Non-Aligned Movement; a group of nations co-operating outside of the binary oppositions of the Cold War. Algeria, which had fought a war of independence against France between 1954 and '62, had been among the first countries to join in 1961.

The war had been a cause célèbre among Anya's contemporaries: Peter de Francia's vast canvas *The Bombing of Sakiet* (1959), for example, depicted a French aerial assault on a village across the Tunisian border thought to house Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN) liberation fighters. In 1955, Picasso produced a

series based on Eugene Delacroix's 1834 *Femmes d'Alger*; in 1965 John had thought them representative of Picasso's inability to find a theme of his own, but as they became the most expensive paintings ever sold in 2015, he emphasized that they were an expression of solidarity with the Algerian struggle.

Anya begins her piece with a description:

When Delacroix visited North Africa in the 1830s he did a thing which was extremely rare for a European in those days to do: he went inside an Algerian home and saw, unveiled, the women of the house in their living quarters.[...]

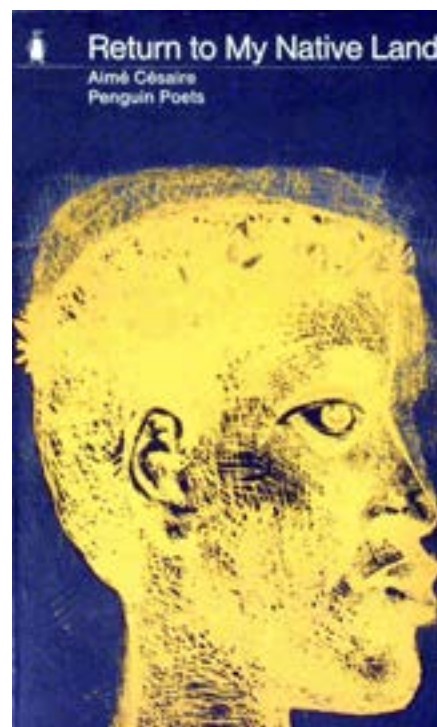
One might perhaps say that the [resulting] painting describes a dream: a male dream of perfectly passive femininity and, by implication, of masculine power.

In 'Algeria Unveiled' (1959), one of Aimé Césaire's pupils, the FLN member Franz Fanon, described how 'the woman who sees without being seen frustrates the colonizer'. Delacroix's picture unveils the harem-owner's property to the visitor of the Paris salon: domestic possessions become imperial, and the objectifying male gaze holds. In Anya's deceptively simple article, the lives of the 'average' family she stayed with fill out with individual human frustrations and amusements.

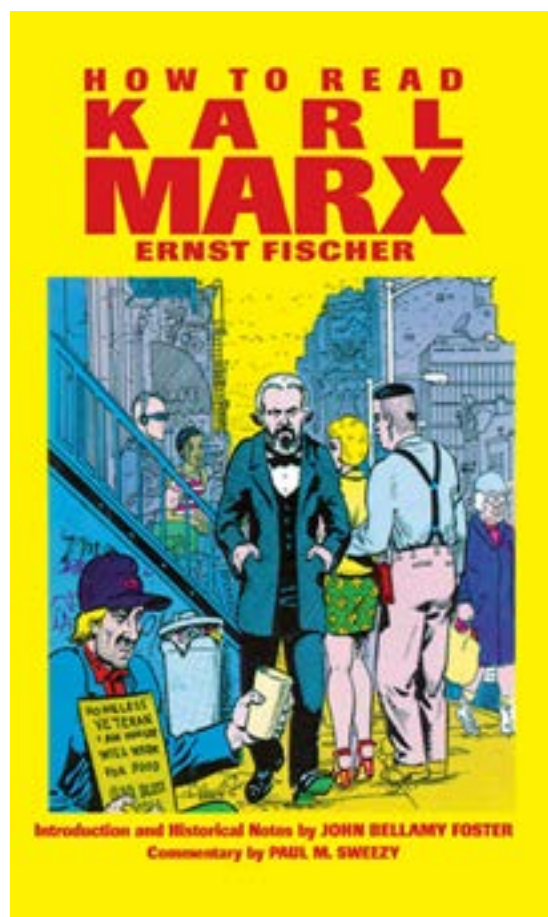
Recently, I visited Anya in a care home in Geneva. Slowed down by age, she still radiates intellectual power. I ended up singing to her – badly, she said – but she held my hand anyway. Katya read Russian folk stories by Korney Chukovsky and half-lines of Wordsworth's 'Daffodils', which Anya proudly completed from memory. It's appropriate, I thought, that her last translation was Andre Leroi-Gourhan's 1964 *Gesture and Speech*, a book which draws on anthropology, ethnology and paleontology, to understand where art and language come from.

*Tom Overton is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow on the archives of the Barbican and Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He edited *Portraits: John Berger on Art and Landscapes: John Berger on Artists* (Verso, 2015), and is writing *Berger's biography*, and a book on archives and migration (Allen Lane). He tweets at @tw_overton and collects his articles at overton.tw.*

You may read the original article at <https://frieze.com/article/life-margins>



translated by Anna Bostock, pen name of Anya Berger



Marx in his own words by Ernst Fischer in collaboration with Franz Marek - translated from the German by Anna Bostock

Lautrec

Master of the Line

Jane Addams Allen first published in the Washington Times



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec: Jane Avril Dancing.

SUMMARY: A new exhibition of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's works at New York's Museum of Modern Art makes it clear that for Lautrec, the color lithograph, not the painting, was the ultimate work of art. The "how" of the artist's intense printmaking method is explained by a series of exhibits showing his step-by-step process from rapid sketch to completed print. The works on display exemplify Lautrec's precision of line and merciless honesty, which, in his renowned depictions of life in the brothel, help underline the essential banality of sin.

"Take a line for a walk", urged the Swiss artist Paul Klee. But Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901) went further. He romanced lines, he twirled them and tossed them to the provocative rhythms of the cancan. His legs may have been halt and lame, but his eye and his hand were swift.

A recently opened exhibition at New York's Museum of Modern Art presents a new view of the much romanticized painter and printmaker, usually portrayed

as the quintessential Bohemian artist, drowning the pain of his crippled legs in drink and debauchery among the prostitutes and cabaret artists of Montmartre, all the while sketching their self-destructive habits with acid clarity.

The new, rehabilitated Lautrec of the New York show is an earnest fellow who wants only peace and quiet after earning an honest franc in the publishing business. He works long hours and often writes to his mother.

Lautrec doesn't even portray prostitutes in the nude, as Riva Castleman's essay in the catalog solemnly points out. Castleman, director of the museum's prints and illustrated books department and coordinator of the show, argues that Edgar Degas was far more of a sensationalist because he depicted naked prostitutes "in areas of the brothel where it was unlikely they would be unclothed. "Degas visited hounds", she concludes indignantly, "Lautrec lived in them."

Lautrec's movie image is undoubtedly pure hokum. But Castleman does the artist a disservice by trying to put wraps on his keen insights into the essential banality of sin. Dressed in frowsy nighties and too-tight corsets, Lautrec's prostitutes are infinitely more suggestive of the miseries of their profession than are any of Degas' angular, athletic nudes,

Lautrec's drawings, lithographs and oils for his 10-print series "Elles" are devastating precisely because he depicts the life of the brothel with such merciless honesty. From "Awakening", a deceptively simple color lithograph of a solicitous madam encouraging a hung over girl to rise and shine, to "Reclining Woman, Lassitude", a print in which the lines themselves exude total exhaustion. Lautrec never allows us to forget exactly where we are and what is happening.

Fortunately, the main point of the show assembled by guest curator Wolfgang Wittrock, is not the rehabilitation of Lautrec.

The more than 300 sketches, photographs, prints, trial proofs and paintings of "Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec: Images of the 1890s" offer a fresh look at the 'how' of the artist's intense printmaking activity. And here the visual evidence does indeed reinforce the view of Lautrec as an indefatigable worker and consummate craftsman.

Lautrec created 368 lithographic prints between 1891 and 1900. Many of the most famous are here in fresh, unbleached versions that restore the luster that has been



*Bust of Mlle. Marcelle,
Lender Google Art Project*



*The Englishman at the Moulin Rouge,
Wiki Commons*



*The Seated Clowness,
Wiki Commons*

dimmed by too many tired examples and bad reproductions. In these wonderful prints the lines are crisp, the colors clear and bright. The show also reverses the idea that Lautrec was primarily a painter who made prints on the side. Although two larger paintings are included — “La Gouloue Entering the Moulin Rouge” and “Chilperic” — it is the prints that draw the eye. With the evidence of the sketches, oil studies and numerous trial proofs before you, there is no doubt that Lautrec’s painstaking refinement of his images leads to the color lithograph as the ultimate work of art.

Lautrec’s oil sketch on cardboard for “The Englishman at the Moulin Rouge” (1892) looks as if it were done on the spot. The painting focuses on a top-hatted dandy who is trying to make time with a woman whose back is turned to us. Only his fashionable figure, sharp features and quivering mustache are rendered in any detail; the other figures are rapidly sketched in. In the finished color print, however, the Englishman is in shadow, and the expressions of the woman and her companion have been characterized with care. This final version is infinitely more pointed and sinister. Enclosed by the yellow curve of the woman’s chair and the yellow door frame behind the intent Englishman, the trio seem to be concluding some infinitely dubious transaction. While the print loses the immediacy of the sketch, it is undoubtedly a more balanced, more expressive work of art.

An even more striking comparison can be made between the oil and gouache on cardboard titled “The Large Theater Box”, and the finished print of the same name. All the oil’s extraneous, distracting texture has been deleted in the print. The two women framed by the

curving red rims of the theater box have been sharpened in every detail.

The colors in these prints are unusual. There is something acid in their light, clear tones, their flush pinks and feverish yellows. After 1891 Lautrec rejected the yellow, red, blue, black order of printing commonly used in lithography to produce overlapping intermediate tones such as purple or green. Instead, he substituted his own, more intuitive technique. By juxtaposing a number of premixed colors — salmon beige, light red, olive green — he achieved a more individual palette. In “The Englishman at the Moulin Rouge”, for example, Lautrec used six colors.

But much more than the color, it is the quality of line that makes these prints and drawings so compelling. “I have always been a pencil,” Lautrec once said. Of course, he enjoyed the tremendous advantage of living toward the end of one of the world’s great explosions of graphic genius. The French caricaturist and painter Honore Daumier (1808-1879) was his forerunner; and Degas (1834-1917), Edouard Manet (1832-1883) and Constantin Guys (1802-1892) were the elders to whom Lautrec looked for guidance and inspiration. Vincent Van Gogh was his friend and contemporary. It would be hard to find a milieu more conducive to belief in the ability of the line to deliver instant revelation.

While one can see the influence of almost all of these artists on Lautrec’s work in one sketch or another, in subject matter, at least, the most enduring model seems to have been Degas. The generally woman-hating Degas was fascinated by the poor working women of Paris; he loved the unconscious grace of their tired, work-worn bodies. The laundresses, milliners, dancers, circus

performers and prostitutes Degas painted became Lautrec's subjects too, although their tired souls seemed to interest the younger artist more than their bodies.

Even more important, Degas pioneered the café concert painting that Lautrec later made so much his own.

Lautrec openly acknowledged his debt to the older painter. Once at a friend's dinner party, he led the assembled group into the drawing room, placed them in front of a painting by Degas and said, "This is my dessert." Unfortunately, Degas did not return Lautrec's admiration. "He wears my clothes, but they are tailored to his size", he once remarked in a mean-spirited reference to Lautrec's small stature.

Degas was wrong. The compressed tailoring of Lautrec's lithographs came from a different source altogether — Japanese prints. Lautrec learned from the Japanese how to make lines do double and triple duty.

With a few swoops of his pencil or brush, he could sharply delineate character, divide his composition into large, easily read masses and impart a sense of vitality and motion. No wonder his very first poster, "Moulin Rouge," brought Lautrec fame. Its powerful use of silhouette makes other posters of the time look confused and weak. No one before him, not even Daumier, seems to have understood so intuitively the relationship between line and impact in the printer's art.

This is a timely show in that serious contemporary artists again are employing techniques of commercial printers and finding subjects in the popular arts of the day: film and television. But if these artists find reinforcement in Lautrec's work, one hopes they also will find inspiration in the honesty of his observations and the ruthless precision of his line. His latter-day descendants seem unutterably bland by comparison.

Jane Addams Allen 1985

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.

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Anne Truitt: In the Tower at the National Gallery of Art

An act of resistance

The mid 1960s saw an array of overlapping art styles vying for dominance, from Warhol's Pop icons to Lewitt's Conceptual work and Judd's cool Minimalism. Exhibitions attempting to define these movements were often organized by their canonical male figures and even institutional surveys that aimed at enshrining the avant-garde rarely included women. With few exceptions, women were not recognized as part of this pantheon.

Coming of age as an artist in Washington DC in the '60s, Anne Truitt found herself in dialogue with the burgeoning Minimalist movement. Her stark forms resonated with the aesthetic trends gaining traction in New York. The motives behind Truitt's innovative geometric work, however, were far removed from those of Minimalist figurehead Donald Judd's cerebral, objective constructs. Truitt was an unwitting Minimalist; her works were contextualized within an existing critical framework, referenced within a trending coterie, but she was never an avowed proponent of the idiom or its postmodern stance. A truly independent spirit, Anne Truitt does not neatly fit into a category.

Truitt navigated the gender disparity of a male-centric art world with varying degrees of success. "The sexism cannot be exaggerated," she related in a recent interview. Like many women artists of her generation, Truitt continued without major sales or recognition until her much deserved, late-life rediscovery.

A new survey exhibition at Washington DC's National Gallery of Art, *Anne Truitt: In the Tower*, highlights over a half dozen of her signature columns, a form she explored for most of her career. In keeping with Truitt's desire to have her work viewed in 360 degrees, the spartan sculptures are arranged in the gallery with no particular didactic order or chronology, letting the viewer walk freely among them. The exhibit covers a forty-year span of columns, from the 1962 five-foot yellow and white homage to her friend, Mary Pinchot Myers, called *Mary's Light* to

Twining Court II a seven foot-tall slim black pillar from 2002. Truitt purposefully scaled her work to human dimensions rather than architectural ones; at various times she alluded to them as figures, untethered and free. They were a friendly entourage that staves off the loneliness that would follow her throughout her life and career.

With the exception of the icy blue horizontal *Parva XII* (1977), there is in Truitt's sculptures an aspirational



Tor in Twining Court with Anne Truitt

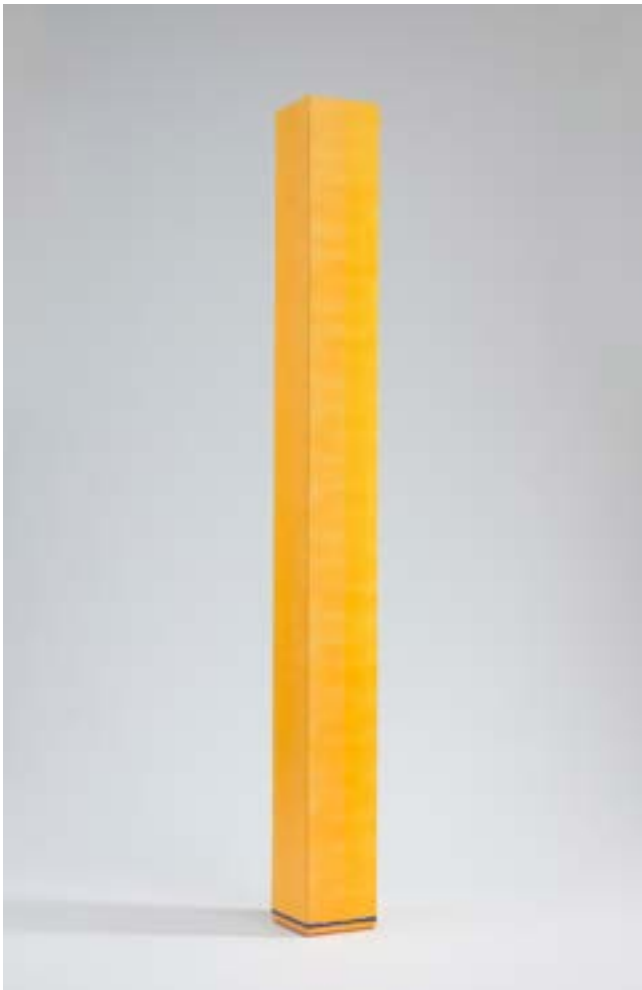
impulse in their verticality. These works reference prehistoric cultures' axis mundi, the pillars that symbolically connect earth and sky. She spent a large part of her life in Washington DC, where urban architects designed colonnades and massive monuments embedded with neo-classical symbolism; there were columns everywhere. Yet Truitt's stela-like works do not function as markers of ceremonial, astronomical, funerary or boundary locations; rather, they mark her own territory. As acts of resistance these columns reclaim a symbol of power and stability. These ideas are reinforced by titles such as *Knight's Heritage* (1963) and *Insurrection* (1962.) Firmly rimmed with a wraparound base, the early columns seem weighted and immovable. In later works, Truitt removed the base, allowing the pillar to rest flush with the ground, as if rooted in a natural environment.

Wood was Truitt's material of choice because "it grows slow, like my temperament." She hired fabricators from local lumberyards to build her poplar or mahogany boxes, but was not focused on the objective character of industrial products like her minimalist contemporaries. She considered her works to be gallery objects and prioritized the hand in her meticulously painted and luminous surfaces. Truitt insisted her works were about "light as space," not space vis à vis the body, like her minimalist contemporaries. In this respect she has more spiritual kinship with Rothko than intellectual affinity with Judd.

Thin and precise, her brushstrokes alternate from horizontal to vertical, either with or against the grain. Her shift to acrylics in the late '60s significantly reduced

the work's drying time and freed her to experiment with new techniques of sponging, rolling, and hand-drawing lines. She refined her process by successively sanding and layering the surface, applying up to thirty coats of creamy color. She remained intensely focused on being a studio artist, on the work as a contemplation of pure form through its infinite nuance.

Deeply impressed by Ad Reinhardt's monotonal, non-monochromatic black paintings, Truitt likewise allowed her hues to subtly emerge over time. Steering clear of coloristic bounce, her colors are inflected, like an elegantly modulated voice varying its pitch. *Flower* (1969) is painted with three pale yellows, equal in value but slightly varying in hue; it initially appears as a monochrome but steadily reveals colors at the threshold of perception. Other seemingly monochromatic sculptures vary lightly on all four faces as in the crimson *Mid Day* (1972); this is Truitt's invitation to a slow journey of discovery. By the 1970s, the somber and



Summer Remembered, 1981
acrylic on wood
National Gallery of Art, Washington
Gift of Carolyn Small Alper

muted tones of her early years yield to deep carmines, strident yellows and blacks that give each work its specific emotional tenor.

While committed to the focused isolation of the studio, Truitt was circumstantially well connected via her father, a man close to politics, as was her husband, a prominent journalist. While she was not personally interested in the corridors of power, she benefited from significant friendships and support from an entourage that included art luminaries David Smith, Kenneth Noland and Walter Hopps, and DC proved to be the right place at the right time for this artist. In 1962, when Noland decided to move to New York, Truitt took over his DC studio and began a highly productive period that she designated as expressionistic geometric abstraction, reaching well beyond the dominant Washington Color School.

Noland mentioned Truitt's work to critic Clement Greenberg who in turn mentioned it to André Emmerich. When all three came to DC for Morris Louis' funeral, (at which Truitt's father was a pallbearer,) they visited Anne's studio. Emmerich offered her a show on the spot, which opened 4 months later. Thus in 1963 at age 42 Anne Truitt had her first solo show in New York at the André Emmerich Gallery.

One year later, Truitt's husband was appointed Tokyo Bureau Chief for Newsweek and she was forced to shutter the DC studio and follow with her three young children. While captivated by the essentialist aesthetic of Japanese culture and its inherent restraint, Truitt was painfully aware that this was a bad career move for her. Still, for the next three years, she experimented with new materials and fabricators but concluded, "The light is wrong." Dissatisfied with her work, she destroyed a large part of it, keeping a few columns and some works on paper. Among the works that survived this period is Truitt '66 [4] (1966), which hangs in the exhibition's second gallery and prefigures her idea of folding color into space. On a large white sheet, a red stripe rises across the paper, ending in a slight bend, while an overlapping blue stripe appears to be folded within. Other works on paper line the walls including some graphite drawings, several black and violet architectural silhouettes, and a working drawing for *Knight's Heritage*.

Shortly after their return to DC, her husband's descent into mental illness was exacerbated by alcoholism and became unbearable. As a single mother in the late '60s, Truitt contemplated a move to New York, which was quickly becoming the epicenter of a vibrant and supportive artistic community with the likes of Helen

Frankenthaler and Agnes Martin. Reluctant to claim her place in a male-centric art world, she decided against the move. The bustling New York scene was anathema to an artist who needed a quiet work space and felt at ease in the provincial DC light. Central to her creative output was a fierce determination to carve out studio time with “tranquility and lucidity of mind... to translate aspiration into achievement with quiet fortitude.” Faced with dwindling financial resources and worry for her children, she accepted a teaching position at the University of Maryland. Although she remained semi-reclusive in the ‘70s and ‘80s, she did not retreat from public life. Besides teaching, she served for years on panels, advisory boards, for NEA grants, and most notably as a Board member at Yaddo, the artist residency where she journaled extensively.

Truitt rarely focused on the intellectual or critical justification for her work, nor did she truly aspire to be an avant-garde artist. Her intent lies beyond, in a space of gender neutrality, integrity and authenticity. What we know of her inner process transpires from interviews or the journals she kept until her death in 2004. Her writings shed light on an artist fascinated with “the intangibility of essence experienced in the process” and of “reaching for a pure power embedded in the object...” Like Agnes Martin, another artist of her generation



*Working Drawing, 1962
acrylic and graphite on paper,
Estate of Anne Truitt
Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery*

whose meditative paintings of grids and stripes were influenced by Zen Buddhism, Truitt’s work draws on quietude and tranquillity to access a transformative potential, or what she called limitlessness.

Mokha Laget is an internationally exhibited artist, independent curator and translator. She lives in an off grid studio in the mountains of New Mexico.

All quotes in italics are taken directly from Anne Truitt’s 3 journals: ‘Daybook’, ‘Turn’ and ‘Prospect’.

Chicago

Jackie Saccoccio “Spectral Hole” Solo Exhibition Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, IL December 15 -January 27

I first encountered Jackie Saccoccio’s work in person at Corbett vs Dempsey in Chicago. I had stumbled upon her online a few years earlier and was instantly hooked. The vibrant colors, the all over painting technique that seemed to lead the eye on a very deliberate course are at once mesmerizing and disorienting.

Jackie utilizes a surprisingly limited number of techniques that yield wonderfully diverse vibrant paintings, often times manipulating the canvas by dragging one surface across another and working the painting from different angles. Her heavy use of saturated colors, and her copious drips give her work an almost psychedelic, Gerhard Richter cum Jackson Pollock feel. Her interest and talent for working with the materiality of paint are just as important as her interest in ambiguity through the evocation of places and people in her works and the duality in the process of looking at what is

present, and what is concealed. The six paintings on display are dominated by an implosive pictorial energy achieved through an improvisational, controlled set of accidents. Confusions of color are used to overwhelm the viewer and the paintings are on such a massive scale that this effect is easily achieved. The paintings find their place between the body of the viewer and the architecture of the space that they inhabit, creating a definite mood and sense of atmosphere.

There’s something classical in Saccoccio’s adherence to pure abstraction, updated for the digital age where most people will experience her work online, and not be disappointed.

Price range \$35k-\$45k

Spencer Hutchinson

The Shop Window Renaissance

How is it that the Italian shop windows are amongst the most beautiful in the world?

A less important aspect of the shopping experience in some countries, in Italy window design is an essential element of the merchandising package, just like the wrappings of a present or the bag that is used to carry away purchases, even for small shops. Most Italian shops and department store windows are a joy to behold, where everything looks irresistibly beautiful. All over the world people study window dressing or window design, also in Italy in every centimetre of the country, even with on line courses, but it can't just be these courses that is the reason for their stunning displays that contribute to making shopping a very aesthetic experience. There must be something more. What is their secret? Where does their creativity come from?

With one of the least creative educational systems in the western world, one wonders how Italians can ever become such creative individuals. Is it their having to live a life of navigating an obstacle course of barriers and bureaucracy the reason why they excel so much in all fields of the creative arts? But not only in the creative arts, in many other fields Italians excel, in science,

engineering, music, literature, sports, cars, etc. Italian schools are not an inspiration for developing creativity in children, as almost all of the "learning" is done through rote memorization; most teachers (called "Professori") give one-way lectures, followed by hours and hours of the Professors orally questioning students individually standing by their desks, while their classmates die of boredom waiting their turn to be questioned one day or the next. Notwithstanding this old-fashioned educational system, it still cultivates innovation, perhaps as students' minds are forced to wander to survive and so find ways to evade the hours of interminable boredom during the school day. Undoubtedly, this system produces excellent theoreticians, recognized worldwide for their ability to discuss and elaborate details on practically any argument. In my opinion, it is those students who have difficulty with this system who later become the creative innovators, fashion designers, inventors, designers, artists, thinkers, writers and dreamers. This leads to window dressing, where even a fruit and vegetable shop



can become a feast for the eyes, enticing the passer-by to enter the shop and at least have a look around. The big department store windows, such as La Rinascente, show amazing theatricality and stage design that make them experiences “degno” of La Scala or of major art museums.

The above photo on the right of a glove shop in Florence looks somewhat inspired by Zacchia da Vezzano’s painting of the Nativity in the 1500s on the left, but is designed in a more abstract format through the use of gloves. Beauty and harmony are present using gloves like colourful figures, with pillars and buildings in the background. Notice the similarities between the painting and the shop window? These are just gloves, but could there ever be a more beautiful display of gloves in a shop than these? This shop window innately reflects an essential element of the cultural heritage and abundance of artwork from past centuries present everywhere in Italian life and in the genetic makeup of all Italians; it’s no surprise they are so inspirational.

However, Italians are not always serious; even black humour has its place in window dressing. The above photo shows “Saldi mai visti” (Sales as never seen before). How can anyone even think of using Andrea Bocelli, the blind opera tenor, in this way? It could also be offensive to the singer; however, it is quite effective in catching the attention of the public and cannot go unnoticed.

Window dressing is an added expense, especially if one considers that in Italy shopkeepers pay taxes even on awnings to protect shop windows from the strong Italian sun, the so-called shade tax, but also for permission to

put plants or flowers outside the shop. The shade tax is charged per square meter, based on how much shade the awning covers over public land. It sounds a bit like a joke, but the country must somehow further maintain their high taxes and costs of bureaucracy.

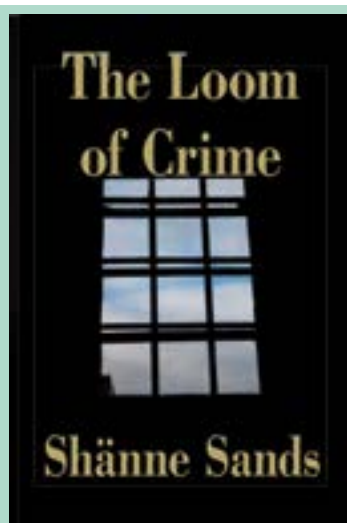
However, it remains a mystery; one wonders if it is their educational system, DNA, rich cultural heritage in every angle of the country, wine and food, classical and



contemporary music, Italian language and literature, countryside and seascapes, iodine from the Mediterranean Sea or are the Italians just plain gifted? What is it exactly? I think that many people would like to know their secret, but perhaps we will never know what it is exactly, and perhaps they don’t even know either, but it’s definitely present and is a country worth visiting to see some of their spectacular shop windows.

(This article was not sponsored by the Italian Tourism Bureau.)

Pendery Weekes



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A Home for Artists — The Foundations in Venice

Nobel Prize winner Iosif Brodsky of Venice, “This city improves the appearance of time, embellishes the future and reveals in its palaces the most beautiful design that time has left on earth” (Watermark or *Fondamenta degli incurabili* in Italian). But, if the beauty of its buildings is in some ways unsustainable for the Venetians, modern architects are responsible for resizing it, says Tiziano Scarpa ironically, in his witty guide, ‘Venice is a Fish’.

Without a shadow of a doubt, it can be said that with the meticulous restoration work of the Palazzo delle Zattere, home of the V-A-C Foundation, the antique and contemporary parts have blended together very well. The Palace, built around 1850, stands on four levels, half used for exhibitions and the other half for offices and apartments; studios for young artists.

The foundation, created in Moscow in 2009 by Leonid Mikhelson and Teresa Iarocci Mavica (Director), is committed to the development of contemporary art. In May 2017 the Venetian offices opened, intended not only for exhibitions, but also for the accommodation of emerging artists. The current exhibition *The Electric Comma*, extended to April 2018, is a collective exhibit that questions changes in language, perception and understanding in the exchanges between human and artificial intelligence.

Venice is increasingly the go-to city for contemporary art, just think of the art galleries (Contini in first place), cultural initiatives, exhibitions and of course the Biennale.

“The continuous mixture between the old and the new, which echoes between water and land, is the salt of what you see”, writes the art historian Angela Vettese in her beautiful book ‘*Venezia vive: Dal presente al futuro e viceversa*’ (‘*Venezia lives: from the present to the future and vice versa*’). This mix, which alternates marvelous buildings from the golden age of the city with illuminated interventions by well-known archi-stars is typical of Venetian politics, of the present but also of the past, when the Serenissima welcomed the most heterogeneous trends, customs, and styles and made them their own.

The Palazzo delle Zattere is located in the Dorsoduro district (at the time of the Doges, Venice was divided into six districts, three on the right side of the Grand Canal, and three on the left side, also in order to be able to

collect taxes more easily and rationally). The area, once neglected because considered peripheral, has recently acquired great vitality thanks to the offices of foundations, artist studios and associations focused on contemporary art. From San Basilio to Punta della Dogana, there is a succession of workshops, ex-warehouses, exhibition venues from the Vedova Foundation to the Pinault Collection; one can enter narrow or dizzyingly large spaces (like the former salt warehouses).



Palazzo delle Zattere

The Vedova Foundation, realised by Renzo Piano, is open to artists from all over the world, for a dialectical confrontation with the works of the “master of the house”. Emilio Vedova deeply loved this part of Venice, which wedges itself in a world of water, where commercial exchanges took place, rafts and boats of the salt loaders sailed. The artist felt the need to document human suffering and fatigue with his painting made of lights, of liquid transparencies like the water that surrounds his studio. After World War II, it was the artist himself who saved the Magazzini del Sale (where the exhibition space is located) from the decision to tear them down. In the immense space of the former salt deposits, the Master’s works are exhibited in special metal structures.

Francois Pinault, one of the greatest French collectors of contemporary art, in 2007 won the competition held by the city of Venice for the restoration of the so-called “customs house”, a 15th century building for commercial activities on the western tip of Dorsoduro. After 14

months of work, entrusted to the Japanese architect Tadao Ando, the exhibition center of contemporary art opened that hosts major exhibitions, of which the latest one was dedicated to Damien Hirst.

If Venice on one hand “dies” due to the suffocating

number of tourists and the abandonment of its historical centre by the natives, on the other hand it “lives”, thanks to a continuous artistic and cultural renewal.

Liviana Martin

Cézanne and the End of Art

Ordinarily one does not finish a book because it is good. Usually, one tires with the monotony of its language and casts it mightily aside.

This is not the case with Donald Kuspit’s *The End of Art*. I am taking a break from it because it is too good, it scares me. The book is brilliant and intense and to be reread, as it is an “almost history of Modern Art” and it’s “downfall”, depending on what side of the Art World’s orthodoxy you identify with. It is really bad news for those of us who seek “art in our reality” in our lives because Kuspit says there is very little that has escaped the de-aestheticization of contemporary art.

Art now is largely hollow hype, commodity and art talk a by-product more dependent on an art market than human sensitivities. More driven by ego and pop culture’s infectious spread than a challenge to our deeper nature and curiosity. Art today is more localized and bereft of larger global vision as a world class art with human aspiration than ever before. I shall not attempt to get into the specifics of this book as it is very well detailed, arguments carefully built and to me, the very reckoning that it’s power is of stripping our late modern masks away, as we wonder through the “vacant now” of contemporary art. Kuspit will tell you what happened on very select terms, you the reader, must make sense of it. The feelings it brought forth in me are significant in my own life and, in retrospect, uncover the unconscious process I went through late in the last century that I did not understand but felt. Although at this point I will make no apology for not finishing this book, I will promise to finish it as I think it will be with me for the rest of my life. So take your time reading, as I am. But up to this point, instead of trying to explain it, why do we not try to *apply* it to the latest National Gallery of Art offerings and see what rings our bell. After all, art really has not died or stopped, it maybe asleep for a while and we are certain that it’s ghost will always haunt us. Art is in our collective unconscious, however deeply buried. We must respect that.

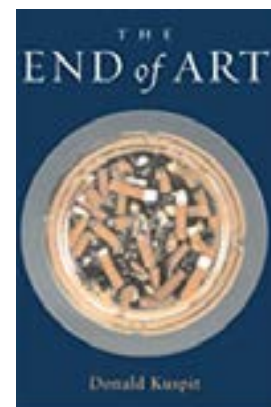
Currently there are two major shows at the Washington D.C. National Gallery of Art. Paul Cézanne’s Portraits and a show entitled *Outliers and American Vanguard Art*. They conveniently, for the purposes of this article, may be seen as bookends of one another in contemporary art history.

Derek Guthrie, the publisher of the *New Art Examiner* will go further into the nature of the *Outliers* show in the next issue. I will briefly bring up the salient points as I experienced it and divulge my Kuspitian insight, limited as it may be.

As far as the *Outliers* are concerned, my points are quite simple. Here we see a large collection of some intended art, some aspirational art, some “thing-age” the curators brought in, previously never recognized. But now it is here for whatever reason. It is a big show, almost impossible to actually “see” it all; it spans from paintings, to signs, to ad-hoc sculpture and found objects purposed for art or not, some much more finished than others. I am very familiar with this type of stuff. I have always had it around on a personal basis because I am an itinerant collector of stuff. Usually because just I like it. Here and there was a more cultured approach to this vast collection as it was on various levels of accomplishment. One can imagine oneself in a curio shop, an attic or yard sale; it had that feel, but yes there were many works that deserved closer scrutiny and appreciation. But the show was overpoweringly huge. I will not discuss the particulars of the show in deference to its sheer overwhelming volume. To me, I was virtually in a sea of stuff. I felt very normal.

My question is why now is this coming to the National Gallery of Art’s forefront? After all this time, of all this stuff hanging around out there, why is this being curated and shown now?

Washington



There are no doubt many answers, least of which is, it may be good? But why timely?

I think the art world is exhausted. It is now looting the pop world of life to find “relevant” work to show because this, to a calculated certain extent, has already been pre-seen, tested, road tested in the lives of so many junk hounds, such as myself, that it was safe to splay across the big stage and be somewhat assured it would pass muster with a receptive and sufficiently propagandized public; whether they want to admit it or not. Kuspit would say much contemporary art is determined on pre-acceptance, depending on referential and inferential media hype, museum and gallery infused, or public presence in the world. Well, this stuff gained popularity in the public for the last hundred years, give or take, the pre-seed PR is done so on a popular groundling level the aesthetic was safe to cart out. Limited risk. Entertaining. A feather in the cap of the National Gallery. But no cigar, no Cézanne.

Paul Cézanne’s work is complicated, struggled, striving in the world of art and holds a major place and role. He was a foundation of so many artists. He’s vastly important because he is great. Now how can I say that? I didn’t, Eugene Delacroix has:

“The sight of a masterpiece checks you in spite of yourself, captivates you in a contemplation to which nothing bids you escape an invincible charm”

That is from Delacroix’s journal on September 23, 1853. Of course Kuspit brings this quote to view and it is absolutely applicable to Cezanne as it has been for over a

hundred years and counting. Oh yes, this work is tried and true and tested but in a much more important way, it is irreplaceably brilliant, it is endlessly mysterious, and just what itself was struggled to accomplish, a coming to grips with a vision, a perception and a painting that speaks to so many and behold, it is just itself. Not a reproduction picture of itself as Frank Stella would argue would be appropriate as a device to make us feel comfortable for a new modern art stripped of meaning, acceptable to get us down to popular culture we thrive unknowingly in.

As you wander through the exhibition, one can detect the different frames of mind our artist struggled through, some not as successful as the next. But his eye / brain / painting is alive and moving with the thoughts and people of the day, especially those close to him. Some say he treated his portraits as he would paint an apple. I disagree, he would save the faces for the last aspect of a painting because it was the most crucial and challenging to him. And he was as true to them as anything. The critic T.J. Clark said the faces indeed were not apples but people whose pain and subjectivity he gave consideration. I agree. But as Kuspit would say, we would be unpacking the academic tool kit, the “narrative-in place”, the line on Cézanne in orthodox art history, to understand that his painted portraits were those of the same as his apple. Just look at them. Look at them and forget your art history. They are people he knew. Take note.

Al Jirikowic, Washington Editor

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In our next Issue: July/August 2018

- A lecture by Greenberg, never before in print, on the autonomies of art and how art can be discussed and enjoyed quite separately from art history.
- Lihting Li Kostrzewa interviews the architect Frank Gehry.
- Frances Oliver, our book editor, on Erich Maria Remarque's lesser known work *Shadows in Paradise*.
- Liviana Martin reviews the futurist show at Fondazione Prada in Milan.
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Cornwall

'Hummadruz', Newlyn Art Gallery, March 3 to June 2nd 2018

Curated by Field Notes - Cat Bagg and Rosie Thomson-Glover.

'Hummadruz' refers to a humming sound heard by some visitors to ancient sites such as reported by Andy Norfolk in the periodical *Meyli Mamvro* as he and two friends experienced it at Zennor quoit, not far from Newlyn Gallery.

My companion reacted to this by saying, 'sometimes you get a noise from the wind blowing through the long grass - it's a physical phenomenon - not some mystical crap.'

As the title is a Cornish word new to me I found I was calling the show 'that stuff about the occult and magic' rather than the gallery leaflet's 'lived system embodied by both artists and communities'.

Unusually it was the video exhibits I found the most interesting. There is a circular tour round an Irish hill plus a black mark on the lens that the artist, Niamh O'Malley, thought necessary. There's a beautifully filmed bright sequence of a Danish woman asserting her belief in the strengthening properties of a Rowan tree, by Gitte Villesen. And there is a small child listening to remarks about the supernatural, as he colours in and asks matter of fact questions. This last, by Susan MacWilliams has a warning in case parents do not want their children to be hearing the conversation.

In the 70s Monica Sjøo's works about the occult and the Bronze Age stone circles were complained about in St.Ives and removed by police. The curators have the

account of this in the *Daily Telegraph* to entertain us, but now no such fuss has been made as her paintings are shown here.

The American Mary Beth Edelson's use of nude photos plus pagan allusions from the same time are also here. Both recall an era when feminism had quite a yearning for times before patriarchal religions took control, and a fascination with the idea of an essential 'femininity', which claimed certain qualities for women's work. Some appreciative visitors' comments indicated this may persist.

There are artifacts displayed from the Cornish museum of witchcraft.

There is rather a lot of small print to read, stuck not always quite straight on the wall and not as I would have liked available to read as a handout, sitting down to take it in comfortably.

Linda Stupart has spells to take away, one of them against the malign effects of Richard Serra's work and fame, a sign of men's dominance in the art world as macho wielders and welders of big heavy objects.

So, there is humour, history and the batty edge of art, from Ithell Colquhoun's surreal vision of a stone circle to an artist new to St.Just, Lucy Stein, who says, 'Since settling permanently in St.Just I have become totally cosmic'. (2016)

Does this show provide an interesting change from

the usual arts council fare? Another show all by women but not saying it is so as not to provoke complaint? Is it a worrying rejection of science and reason in suggesting the ancient supernatural beliefs are live and flourishing? Is it adding to a Cornish touristy myth of a backward strangeness with romantic aura? Is it a themed show with art you probably haven't seen much of before? An examination of a tiny backwater?

Tim Shaw and the Side of Life I don't Want to See

Tim Shaw, "What Remains" at The Exchange Gallery, Penzance (10 Feb-12 May 2018)

I was left shell-shocked, speechless for a few minutes; I felt blocked. This was the powerful and unexpected effect that Tim Shaw's exhibition had on me at The Exchange in Penzance. No evading reality here, no joy or soothing landscapes. What a sharp contrast to what usually takes place when I look at a painting in Cornwall. After walking through a winding wooden construction-site structure, I entered a dark room with around 20 other people, where visibility was limited. Tim talked about his work amid his haunting forms that seemed to come to life, while the people watching were mostly motionless almost like statues, as if part of the installation. A statue lying on the floor by me, representing an anorexic woman after being raped and killed, a group of large men surrounding a man with his head covered in a black sack, torn jackets and monstrous looking heads in front of me made me feel a bit threatened and on the alert; it felt eerie. Tim Shaw can incite these powerful feelings in a brief time space. Outside the installation in a brightly illuminated room Shaw displayed the resource materials of his second installation. These paintings and drawings of the Belfast bombing scene with objects flying about had a haunting beauty of motion and form. Tim told of his childhood in Belfast and Bloody Friday and of the 26 bombs going off unexpectedly all over, paralysing the city and its people.

He set the scene. Entering the next room on our own, six at a time, we witnessed the after-effects of a bombing, with the background noise whistling in our ears. Trays were flying off tables; chairs were overturned; coats, handbags and other objects were left skewed on tables and on the floor. On the walls in the background were shadows of people running, clutching each other, people of all sizes and ages. It was very moving, while also frightening. Tim Shaw had a profound effect on me and led me to think even more of the fear people experience during and after a terrorist attack, life shaping events in

It's all of that.

The slides weren't working, the tea was not being served and my camera batteries ran out.

A jinx on this sceptical visitor or just bad luck this bank holiday Monday?

Mary Fletcher

www.axisweb.org/p/maryfletcher

all senses, that is if they don't lose their lives in the process. I wondered about the construction of these installations, especially the second part, as there was so much to control, the movement of the trays flying through the air, more than twenty of them, rotating at angles, perhaps attached to transparent strings from the ceiling, the shadows running around the room, the background sound, the positioning of the objects people had left; all must have taken a great deal of coordination to create this very effective installation. Listening to Tim speak and talking to him showed me his greatness, not only in his artwork, but in the depths of his feelings. He is someone you can talk to, who also knows how to listen, but when he speaks he does not scream violently at you, nor harshly. He gently tells his story, as a father to a child, trying to help the child see through a different lens and help understand how violence is not the way. He talks of the bombing when he was only 7 years old, of the effect on his life and of his not beginning to paint what he had experienced until 30 years later.

Tim Shaw's work left me troubled and full of anxiety, anxiety for the truth that he displays, for the issues I cannot face, nor does our society seem to want to face. His works are like out of a nightmare but are also a reminder of what we must confront and not forget. How difficult it is to accept his work – haunting, disturbing, but also very vibrant and alive. However, I ask myself, what is this exhibition doing in Penzance at the bottom of Cornwall, cut off from the rest of the world, with its barely 21,000 inhabitants? How many souls can this installation possibly touch? I am very grateful to the New Art Examiner for agreeing to run this short but important review to bring his work to an international audience.

Pendery Weekes

Virginia Woolf: An Exhibition Inspired by Her Writings Tate St.Ives until April 29th 2018. Curated by Laura Smith.

As I walk around enjoying a lot of the paintings, it slowly dawns on me that they are all by women. As it's so rare to encounter over 200 works by women in a space and none by men, I wonder why the Tate does not make this clear. Is it fear of criticism or is it the intention that visitors become gradually aware of this? Surely many will not notice - Is this the point?

The curator has thrown in a long list of women artists, including many living ones who have recently been in shows here. Their connections to the works of Virginia Woolf seem often to be tenuous.

The prevailing mood of the works is quiet, personal, delicate, lacking in any stridency, which rather perpetuates stereotypes of femininity.

The Judy Chicago sketch including Woolf in her dinner party show requires knowledge of that important feminist exhibition. Often one piece of art, like the Louise Bourgeois sculpture, seems meaningless alone when that artist's work has usually been seen in installations where the visitor gets multiple impressions that add up.

There isn't much about Virginia Woolf, or her writings; there isn't the rather surprising completely abstract painting by her sister Vanessa Bell that has been shown before here.

It's enjoyable, a bit incoherent, but worth visiting for many individual treats.

Mary Fletcher

St Just's Nooks and Crannies

Julia Kerrison's exhibition upstairs and on the stairs at the restaurant, Cook Book in the town of St. Just in Cornwall, is one of those 'nooks and crannies' as my Grandma used to say. Nooks and crannies are well suited places for Grannies drinking tea, and secretive enough spaces to play hide and seek with your thoughts. The hidden secrets of this exhibition have touches of magic realism amongst figurative work using Impressionist colours.

Caressing nature's nuances, in a way that brings the vulnerability of the natural world to the senses and merges the realities of the environment with something almost unknown; the artworks consist mainly of layers of acrylics that embody delicate pencil-like strokes, suggestive of drawings.

Yet, one chances unexpectedly upon smaller art works, resting nonchalantly on the window sill, waiting to be noticed. These are different, using a heated

beeswax-based technique called Encaustic, dropping where it will to form into whatever creatures it wishes in deep seascapes, celebrating nature's depth of possibility.

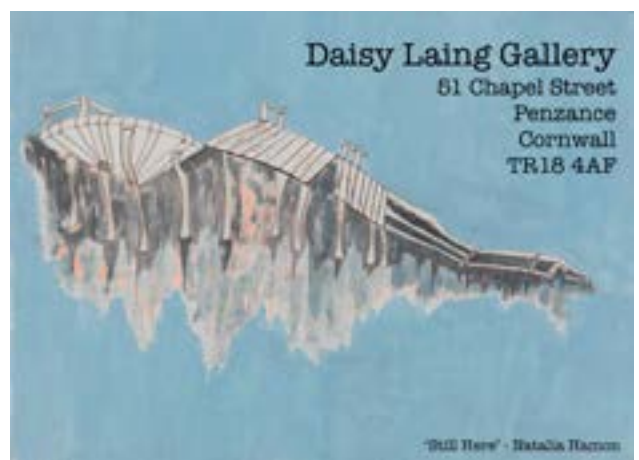
Following on from a recent debate I had at the Redwing Penzance, a thriving gallery embracing the outside of mainstream, does art need to be shown starkly in a wide open lit space or can it fit itself to a place packed full to the brim of books and shadowed corners?

Indeed, should art not wriggle away into spaces that are supposedly prohibited, both symbolically and physically and be appreciated also in nooks and crannies like this one.

The prices range from £140 to £300 with the smaller encaustics priced at £65. It is a permanent exhibition, although the pieces will alter according to the new creations of the artist.

Emilie Pencha

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The Emotions of Colour

An Appreciation of Franz Marc

Franz Marc was born in Munich in 1880. He died near Verdun in 1916, legally murdered in what was called The War To End All Wars. A war which slaughtered over a million men.

Marc's father was a representational animal painter. His son took the language of animal imagery to new symbolic heights. In 1901, abandoning his philosophy course, he enrolled for two years training at Munich's Academy of Art. Here he learned to paint in typical Munich School style, which combines traditional composition with delicate, subtly emotional colours. There is no sign here of the glowing colours and leaping, fractured forms of his later work. In 1903 he went to Paris, then very much the centre of the modern art world, to be powerfully moved by the Impressionists with their brilliant colours and more openly contemporary subject matter and style. He saw real rivers, real dance halls, real unidealized men and women, people and landscapes painted outdoors in a bold, abbreviated style. The daringly simplified composition of Japanese woodcuts, then highly popular, also attracted him. These inspiring influences enabled him to lighten his colours and simplify his forms.

A second visit to Paris in 1907 showed him the work of Gauguin and Van Gogh, who tremendously excited him. His paintings now became much less static, more rhythmical, and he started painting outdoors. These advances only occurred in his landscapes, however, and from now on human figures largely disappeared and animals, already a favourite subject, became much dominant. He verbalized this as a choice between natural and unnatural, pure and impure, with animals definitely seen as superior. Without at this stage abandoning the naturalistic style Marc, an intense, spiritual young man, sought a deeper spiritual subject matter in animals. He also studied animal anatomy at this time, but already his work is miles away from his father's strictly representational animal paintings.

Now everything seems to happen at incredible speed. In 1910 Marc paints his ground-breaking *Horse in a Landscape*, with its red horse with a blue mane gazing into a drastically simplified landscape composed of colour areas of red, yellow and green. Still more simplified are the glowing forms of the *Yellow Cow* and *Blue Fox* of 1911. He meets Kandinsky, who is already moving from



Rotes Reh, Red Deer (1913), by Franz Marc - Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, Public Domain.

simplified forms to abstraction, becomes involved with the Blue Rider group, acquired his first patron, Koehler, and systematically develops a language of colour symbolism. Basically, blue is masculine, spiritual and austere, yellow is feminine, sensual and light-hearted (that yellow cow is a real flirt!) and red represents the heaviness and brutality of the material world. These can be endlessly contrasted and combined.

Another great leap forward occurs with the geometric forms of the *Tiger and Gazelle* of 1912, and in *Horse Dreaming* (1913) and *Tyrol* (1913-14) we see how successfully Marc has absorbed Cubist, Orphist and Futuristic influences.

Around 1913 Marc began seeing ugliness in animals as well as humans. Animals in his work accordingly became increasingly stylized and symbolic. Hence the swooping, swirling, fragmented forms of *Mandrill* (1913), *Composition of Abstract Forms* (1914), *Blue Roe in Landscape* (1914) and *Abstract Forms* (1914).

Marc joined up immediately when war broke out in August 1914. He wrote to Kandinsky of seeing war as both a great adventure and "the only way of cleaning out the Augean stable that is Europe". Like so many he visualized war as a way of purging a corrupt, decaying world. Eighteen months later, he was dead.

Jane Sand.

Camille Paglia's Glittering Images

At a first glance *Glittering Images*, starting from Egyptian art, going on through the centuries with major focus on twentieth century art and George Lucas' *Star Wars* appears to be a useful introduction and overview to art history for first year university students.

The book is printed on high quality art paper in an elegant and readable typeface. It would look very nice as one of our famous, unread and untouched coffee table books, though it is smaller than most.

After the acknowledgments at the back of the book she writes, "No research assistants were used for this or any other of my books. Whatever errors may appear are entirely my own." I wouldn't want to read a book by anyone else substituting for her, given that she's the "intellectual" of the world, and as she says, "I'm probably one of the last ones left". The resulting book has twenty-nine chapters, plus the introduction (the best part). She is plain interesting and worth reading.

Starting from the middle of the book (as internet dependency has shrunk my attention span; an already short book of 202 pages seems shorter that way) with an essay entitled "City in Motion" about Edouard Manet and his painting *At the Café*, Manet is quoted, "We are not in Rome, and we don't want to go there. We are in Paris—let's stay here." This was thanks to a quarrel he had had with a male model in Couture's studio who was modelling in classical positions. Manet challenged the status quo, something that Paglia also does. She does indeed rock the boat in her book, over and over again.

Moving backward to the introduction, I was enthralled. I could really relate to modern life seen as a "sea of images" and how we are all faced with too much visual over stimulation thanks to mass media and our electronic gadgets. Professor Boat Rocker continues with how children "receive a torrential stream of flickering images, which addict them to seductive distractions and make social reality, with its duties and ethical concerns, seem dull and futile. The only way to teach focus is to present the eye with opportunities for steady perception - best supplied by the contemplation of art." Does this mean also contemplating *Star Wars*? Is it something worth contemplating? How can she dare compare Lucas' *Cross-Sections* books to Leonardo da Vinci's notebooks?

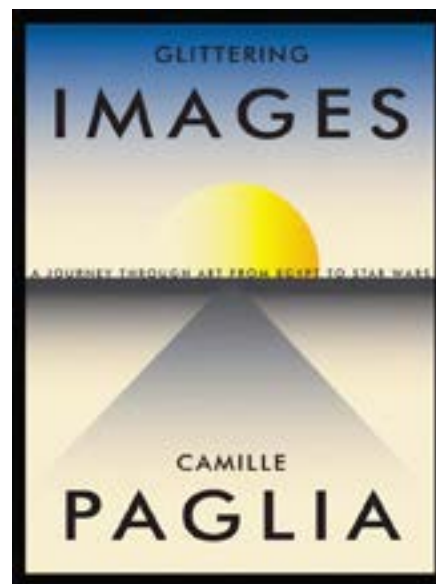
Perhaps she has also been a disgruntled professor watching her students glued to their tablets or phones instead of listening to her lectures. Perhaps she feels discouraged by their apparent lack of interest in anything else. She offers solutions, mainly education as she

believes in teaching. Is anyone listening anymore? What can be done about everyone's gadgets? It's a bit of a problem for which I don't think she really has a solution, except, in her own terms, they have the great art work of George Lucas' *Star Wars* to contemplate.

On Q TV, Paglia speaks about her book in rapid sequences like a machine gun, shooting out the words one after another rather aggressively, not giving the listener time to minimally absorb the "important" things she says. Her excessive gestures and body movements are quite disturbing at times. I wonder if she does this in the classroom too. It would be nice if she could speak without causing everyone else to huff and puff to keep up with her, as though she were on speed or worse. We should probably forget her interviews and just look at her writing, though the interviews give another perspective to the writing and its contents.

Surprisingly, with the Egyptians, she starts with their haunting messages from the dead. Is it that a message from the dead is secretly haunting her when she speaks in front of a camera? Is this why she cannot relax and relate to her interlocutors? The messages from the dead in ancient Egypt perhaps connect to the messages from *Star Wars*: Immortality and eternal life, both present in Egyptian art and in *Star Wars* "art". This could have contributed to her choice of Lucas for the last chapter, or better, her version of *The Last Supper*.

I wonder about her choices. Why doesn't she reflect more on her Italian heritage? Where are the Futurists? Do they not send messages from their graves? I also wonder why her "journey through art from Egypt to *Star Wars*" only focuses on the western world? Is ancient Egyptian art considered part of the western world or not? It must be borderline. John Adams from the *New York Times* finds that confining the choice of artwork "almost exclusively to Europe and North America is as inexplicable



as it is inexcusable. How can any serious survey published in 2012 slight the testament of the human condition as expressed in artworks from the world's other civilizations?"

"The important question," she writes "about art is: what lasts, and why?" Regarding Tamara de Lempicka's painting *Portrait of Doctor Boucard*, as he holds the test tube of blood she says, "it implies that Dr. Boucard, like the Egyptians, is searching for the secret of eternal life. But as Lempicka demonstrates in this painting that resurrects a once famous but now forgotten man, only art has that power." Is she, herself, afraid of being forgotten? Is that the urgency we can detect when she speaks?

With the final chapter on Star Wars with a shot by shot breakdown, it's as though we are talking about a Leonardo da Vinci or a Rubens. My neighbour's five-year-old has all the film series and the merchandise, including t-shirts, Lego toys and video games, in which he is totally mesmerized while playing. He even has the £19.99 Lego Skywalker watch. Disney is now building two Star War Lands, one in California and the other in Florida. There will also soon be a Star Wars TV series in streaming to make this an ongoing art affair. Virtual reality experiences of the Star Wars story will soon be available in Anaheim, California, London and Orlando malls where people can get their own performance for thirty minutes at \$30 (any longer would be an extra dollar per minute) complete with goggles and computer backpacks. Can this "art" experience get any "better? If indeed this is art, what can be next?

Paglia started with the Egyptians and ended the book with George Lucas's Star Wars because there is a connection. With some ongoing discussion about who really built the Egyptian pyramids believed by many to have been the aliens, the connection to Star Wars becomes idiomatic.

Why is she so fascinated by Star Wars? This is the art all of us gadget dependents have been waiting for. Does it give us what Paglia says looking at a painting should give us, "A magical tranquillity?" I'm not sure, but certainly the multi-billion-dollar empire of Star Wars is proof that she's right.

Jian Ghomeshi interviewing Paglia on Q TV referring to George Lucas asks, "hasn't he contributed to those glittering flashing images that are distracting us from art?" Paglia evades the answer and says that "she was searching for strong examples of contemporary art to end the book with a

bang and no other contemporary artist has attempted or succeeded it." Really? Philip Marchand from SF Gate says, "art quickly tends towards decadence, as the last chapter of this book demonstrates." While SF Gate J.M. Tyre: "Paglia's lionizing of George Lucas as "the world's greatest living artist" is a calibrated outrage that pointedly rejects the institutionalization of contemporary art and

Why is she so fascinated by Star Wars? This is the art all of us gadget dependents have been waiting for. Does it give us what Paglia says looking at a painting should give us, "A magical tranquillity?" I'm not sure, but certainly the multi-billion-dollar empire of Star Wars is proof that she's right.

deliberately embraces trash."

She says in Los Angeles Magazine: "Lucas was not part of my original plan for the book. But as I was searching for strong works of contemporary art with which to end the book, I couldn't find them. It was very discouraging. Everything seemed to be derivative of something else. No one was making bold statements except in the field of architecture. As I was writing the book—which took five years—I would channel surf for relaxation and repeatedly encounter the Star Wars films being broadcast by Spike TV. Slowly, the enormous power of the volcano-planet finale of *Revenge of the Sith* worked its magic on me. I became obsessed with it. It seemed like epic poetry, nature painting, and grand opera all rolled into one. After studying it deeply, I think that the long, complex finale of *Sith* is the most important work of art produced anywhere in the world in the last 30 years."

Star Wars, she says, has "penetrated the imagination of young people for three generations around the world." Isn't this just what we're worried about, the loss of imagination of our young people? Can't you see it Paglia? Can't you see that you too have fallen into the trap? Your mind has been taken.

Professor Boat Rocker I wish to thank you for your book; it was well worth the read, which I found very thought provoking. You have helped me focus on the state of the art world more than I have been able to in the last ten years. It isn't necessary for me to like all aspects of your book for me to advise others to read it. Who knows, maybe even Disney will make a film of your life and immortalize your writings in a format more conforming to the non-readers of tomorrow.

Pendery Weekes

NEWS IN BRIEF**MUSEUM REMOVES WORK, FOLLOWING BACKLASH ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Lyon, France, has pulled a video work by the Algerian artist Adel Abdessemed, which features several tethered chickens that appear to be on fire, after a public outcry. Activists criticized the work on social media, calling it “animal torture.” (ArtForum.)

BUDI TEK'S SHANGHAI-BASED YUZ MUSEUM WILL PARTNER WITH LACMA

Budi Tek, the prodigious art collector and founder of the Yuz Museum in Shanghai, said that he will partner with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art to form a yet-to-be-named foundation, to which he will donate most of his sprawling collection of Chinese contemporary art. (ArtNews)

THINK GRAND RAPIDS, BENTONVILLE OR HOUSTON —BUT NOT NEW YORK

The Art Newspaper's 2016 survey and found that, while places such as Chicago might have more museum goers, residents of cities such as Minneapolis, Grand Rapids and Bentonville are more engaged with their local institutions. Perhaps the biggest shift has been in the perception of the institutional space. Julián Zugazagoitia, director of the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City. “What we're doing today is saying it's appropriate to have fun, to come with friends, to talk.”

David Rockefeller's Art Collection to Be Sold

The last-surviving grandson of Standard Oil giant John D. Rockefeller, David Rockefeller was known for his philanthropy, and the proceeds of the sale's approximately 2,000 items will benefit a dozen institutions, including New York's Museum of Modern Art. Arrangements were made before Rockefeller's death for Christie's to handle the estate. The Rockefellers had worked for many years with Marc Porter, who recently returned to the house following a short stint at Sotheby's.

Experts are already speculating that it could be the most valuable collection ever sold at auction, surpassing the 2009 sale of the estate of fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent, which totalled \$484 million.

A major donor to MoMA, Rockefeller and his collection was the subject of the museum's 1994 exhibition “Masterpieces from the David and Peggy Rockefeller Collection: Manet to Picasso,” featuring 21 canvases gifted or promised to the institution.

ArtNet



Art of Kindness

Imperial graduate pioneers art as a vehicle for social change

Art of Kindness, Devika Sarin, graduate of Imperial College, London is a new marketplace for art where people can discover, exhibit, buy, and sell artworks while championing social causes around the world.

A portion of the sales proceeds from every artwork sold through the platform are directed to projects by partnering non-profit

organisations.

Art of Kindness is currently working with five social impact partners, including Acumen, who work to alleviate poverty and Project Pressure, who work to document the world's vanishing glaciers and boost public awareness about the impact of climate change.

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