

NEW ART examiner

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OF THE VISUAL ARTS

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Nancy Schreiber in Maryland
Rosanna Hildyard on John Berger and Naomi Woolf
Jane Allen van Gogh in Arles
Al Jirikowic in Washington DC
Spencer Hutchinson in Chicago
Pendery Weekes in the final days
Maxine in Cornwall

The Etiquette of the Arms Trade



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

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

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

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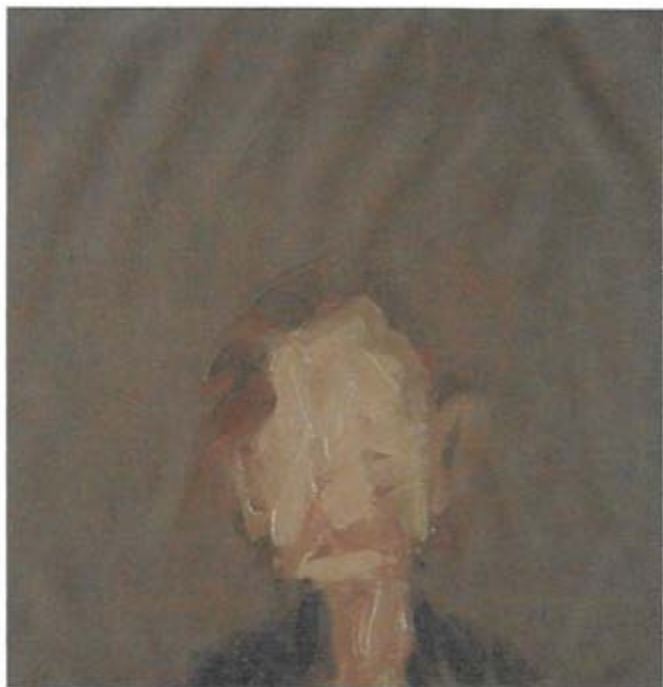
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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

LETTERS

Is There Anybody there?

Hi Al,

I really enjoyed your review of Francisco Toledo.

Why do you think that Washington has a "largely insensitive and lax art community"? Wasn't it just perhaps that American University was the wrong venue for showing his work and that possibly there wasn't enough publicity to make people aware of his exhibit?

Richard Grant

30/08/2018

(Editor: I remember Washington when openings were crowded and there was a pulse in the air. Then Corcoran museum died, which was a tragedy. There is a low pulse in Washington DC now, which is not to say that some artists are lively.)

Does Jacobs Think?

Hi Miklos,

Excellent review! I loved when you wrote, "Which brings us to "the deeper way that artist would compel us to think". That deeper way wonders where's the art - if the artist is MIA? We're compelled to deeply think that this is the art of the salesman, not the art of the artist. There is no art here, only clever marketing; any pretense to art is obviously fake, and that's a postmodern strategy." It made me think of an antique furniture showroom with the chairs on display, but of course not for sitting on either, just display.

Cammie Stover

2/09/2018

Museum Rigamortis

Hi Jody,

Though I really enjoyed your well written review, I had a thought and question for you. Is the interest in the art world less focused on what is happening in the mainstream scene such as places like the MOMA and other

traditional art spaces, and is it becoming more focused on what is happening at the level of community and less "in the box"? Are we beginning to look at established museums as they really are? Static and hopelessly outdated?

Tim Yang

Reply08/09/2018

(Publisher: The New Art Examiner, since its inception, was aware of the problems of museums. They do not always show good or original art. Also occasionally community art can be dynamic and original. We do our best to respond to quality art no matter where exhibited, unlike traditional art magazines.)

Picasso's Whip

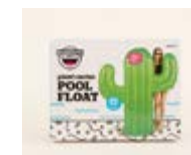
"In spite of the adulation which came very early in his life, he was constantly dissatisfied with his work." This is the essential aspect of Picasso's success, being dissatisfied with his work. Many artists, musicians and writers have high expectations with an unreachable criteria for success. It is what pushes them on and on to improving their work - that is, if they don't lose it first due to total frustration.

Rich Gaboul

Reply28/08/2018

Khalo Afloat

There's even a giant cactus pool float from New Look, global fashion retailer, which is very similar to the felt cactus wall hanging being offered by the V&A in the above article. No mention though of the connection to Frida Khalo's work



Matt Brother

26/09/2018

(Publisher: The selling of Frida Khalo look-alikes in the V&A museum was a symbol of the deterioration of museums. Please

consult this issue of the New Art Examiner in which Jane Addams Allen way ahead of her time, reviewed the low grade marketing of Van Gogh in the Metropolitan Museum in January 1985 and criticized such commercial practices. Money talks.)

Lets All Hide

Hi Scott,

It's what Annie Markovich refers to in her editorial, "Self-made cages or ones imposed by society often are unconsciously absorbed by citizens; they bind human thinking processes to thoughts that constrict creativity. Our society gives us culture miasma, an oppressive atmosphere to pursue transactional rather than relational exchange between each other."

Is it through Skylling's grid-like designs that she can relate in her 'self-contained, self-made world' of minimalism? Who doesn't have nostalgia today of a bygone era? Wouldn't we all rather not "grapple with the complexity of social issues that permeate every waking moment in our hyper real lives"? I can see why you find her work refreshing.

Will Davenport

23/09/2018

(Reply by Scott Turri:

Thanks for reading and responding to my review, Will. Interesting tie in from Annie's piece - sometimes being restricted can foster creativity. When we work inside our own constructed, orderly world it provides a sense of control over our lives I suppose. Working within a really small set of parameters can create a meditative experience for the maker and potentially the viewer. Perhaps it is a way to shut out or wall off the outside world... I guess like the well-manicured, 1/2 acre lot in the suburbs at least that seems to be the belief.

23/09/2018)

Falls at the Last

I found Camille Paglia's Glittering Images a striking book until I read the last chapter, where she totally deluded me. It reflects the ritalin laced culture our children now live in with so many being diagnosed with ADHD, thanks to films and video games like Star Wars. Is this what our culture is all about today? I refuse to accept her opinion on George Lucas and think there is much more to the art world than flashing lights and glittering images here on earth.

Star Oakley
31/07/2018

So much for Stalin

This beautifully crafted review connected perfectly to what I'm reading in Leonard Shlain's, Art and Physics: Parallel Visions in Space, Time, and Light:

"Whether for an infant or a society on the verge of change, a new way to think about reality begins with the assimilation of unfamiliar images. . . . Because the erosion of images by words occurs at such an early age, we forget that in order to learn something radically new, we need first to imagine it. "Imagine" literally means to "make an image." Witness the expression we use when struggling with a new idea: "I can't picture it," "Let me make a mental model," and "I am trying to envision it." If, as I propose, this function of imagination, so crucial to the development of an infant, is also present in the civilization at large, who then creates the new images that precede abstract ideas and descriptive language? It is the artist. . . . Revolutionary art in all times has served this function of preparing the future."

There is much more to see than just the artwork in this exhibition on Revolutionary art; it's a very significant display of the setting of the stage of the coming era and decades following, "preparing the future".

Rob Stanovich

15/05/2018

Open call for Idiots

Hi

People find it easier to just use someone else's work; it takes less effort to steal someone else's ideas than to be creative and find innovative solutions. There is a shortage of creative people in all fields due to the dumbing down of educational systems in most western countries and also due to a global problem of Internet addiction. Just think how life was thirty years ago when we didn't have Internet, when we depended largely on television or libraries for our information. Now with so many images bombarding us online, we no longer realize what is fruit of our imagination or what has been implanted in our minds through our searches.

Of course this doesn't justify using an artist's work from a competition inappropriately, but it only further goes to show how we are losing the battle of integrity and of honesty, once important values in life.

It would have been helpful had the writer given more specific details on what took place, but evidently it was not possible to do so.

Truman Georges
18/05/2018

Found Nothing

Miklos,

Certainly Farmer's installation, the Grass and the Banana go for a Walk, does him more justice than what he did in Venice.

<https://catrionajeffries.com/artists/geoffrey-farmer/works/#12>

Lori Thaheem
06/04/2018

(Toronto editor: Thanks Lori for the heads up. I cannot deny that some people call it art, but I see

no art in it; in my opinion it's a collection of objects gathered in a room. Art historian and critic Barbara Rose complains of similar artists whose thinking stops at the idea of putting a found object in a museum. I wrote a review last year of Ydessa Hendeles, an artist who also gathers objects, but whose talent makes a big difference; her work has an almost religious quality that shakes the soul, where Farmer's strategies illustrate art theory and give us an intellectual moment but no heart.

10/04/2018)

Monet's Tanks

Editor,

More news from Poland, as the military can do as it pleases regardless of an area being protected by the EU or not. The prime focus today is not on beauty and nature, nor on art to do its part.

"The US military wants to cut down a large swathe of green woodland in Poland, designated by the EU as a conservation site for rare and endangered species. The cleared area will be used to expand an existing air force base.

The US Army Corps of Engineers procurement documents, obtained by RT Russian, detail the Pentagon's plans to cut down 38.18 hectares of protected forest in order to build a prepositioned stock and maintenance complex (APS) around the Powidz Air Base in central Poland. All the tree-cutting must be completed by the end of February next year."

Marianna Nowak

<https://www.rt.com/news/441143-poland-forest-us-forces/>



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EDITORIAL

The USA is very unhappy. In particular the poor and the near poor who are mostly women and minorities are unhappy. Frustrated. Bordering on angry.

The art scene has lost all gusto and art no longer enjoys the support and prestige it had even in recent memory. Social media has utterly changed the cultural landscape. The president is unique in his persona. He is "making America great again" through various hard-headed strategies, starting: trade wars, tightening up on immigrants, and subsidizing the wealthy through enhanced tax advantages only they can activate.

Confidence and the ability to energise the will of the many was a hallmark of American life and was reflected in the art scene. But the art scene has changed. To put it simply, private dealers are vanishing as a source of energy. It is more difficult to keep their shop open. Money is scarce.

Now Art Fairs dominate the sales structure. They are modelled on the stock exchange, and more specifically the futures market. At the other end of the scale, gentrification is eliminating low rent neighbourhoods pricing artists out. Then in academia most colleges and universities are struggling. The abuse of adjunct faculty is well documented. In particular art departments give out art degrees that no longer directly secure employment.

The heady excitement and gusto of Abstract Expressionism is over as is the shock value of POP art. Curators hope their world will throw up new, original, or unappreciated art. A very few actually go looking for it.

The one thread that binds these observations together is 'celebrity'. That means consideration of popular culture has to be factored in to presentation, whether in Hollywood politics or any other theatre seeking political or cultural affirmation. Criticism is swept aside as if it is now redundant. PR has replaced critique. Most artists cannot discern the difference.

The NAE can and does depend upon very limited, if any, resources. We come from a tradition of humanism originally defined by Jane Addams, who cared more for people than status. Her message came out of Chicago which then and even today, was the dark side of the USA. The fate of many immigrants there was appalling.

The USA today then, has to reclaim meaningful language and not give in to the fake news cycle. The art world has been effectively seduced into fake news and bombast. We try to draw a line in the sand.

Derek Guthrie

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QUOTE of the Month:

I would wind myself through all the drains in the world and would endure every humiliation and dishonor in order to paint.”

Max Beckmann (NAE January 1985 p 35)

SPEAKEASY

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

Political Art is not Historical Art.

In keeping with his years long tradition of making political oil paintings and lithographs satirizing and glorifying the Trump administration, Brigham Young University adjunct professor Jon McNaughton has produced “Crossing the Swamp”. An oil painting with numerous gliclees and lithographs resulting from it, inspired by the German-American painter Emanuel Leutze’s 1851 painting, Crossing the Delaware, McNaughton has raised my ire while appealing to those who support Donald Trump and adhere to his admonition first uttered at a 2016 campaign rally in Madison, Wisconsin to “drain the swamp”.

I am disturbed that he would conflate the image of George Washington, who famously refused the office of King, uttering, “I did not fight George III to become George I”, and who reluctantly agreed to command the Continental Army for his country’s good with Mr. Trump who pursued four deferrals from military service before his successful deferral due to bone spurs (even though he went to military high school).

I am distressed that this artist would depict Trump as George Washington who, on the way to his inauguration in New York, left New Jersey early in the morning after people gathered in a boisterous farewell at Philadelphia’s City Tavern, “to avoid even the appearance of pomp or vain parade” (from the newspaper of the day), when Mr. Trump planned a military parade costing millions to adulate himself and his reign.

I am incensed that Mr. Trump is conflated with General Washington because upon getting to Trenton, where President-elect Washington had fought the British and Hessians, women met him with a banner proclaiming “The Defender of the Mothers will also Defend the Daughters” as young girls scattered flowers at his feet, when Mr. Trump neither defends women nor their children, daughters (and sons), but rather abuses and imprisons them.

The boat depicted in Mr. McNaughton’s painting, allegedly sailing up the Delaware (although observed from the shore of the Rhine River) contains Nikki Haley, James Mattis Ben Carson, Donald Trump, Jeff Sessions, Mike Pence, Melania Trump, Mike Pompeo, Sarah Sanders, Ivanka Trump, Jon Bolton, John Kelly and Kellyanne Conway. Also aboard are Native Americans, Africans, Scots, statesmen and heroes James Monroe, General Nathaniel Greene and Edward Herd adding military heroes and statesmen to Trump’s crew.

Artistically, there are several ways this painter has not paid attention to detail; rifles held upside down, the people sitting in a boat that would have had ice on its floor; ice floes more reminiscent of the Rhine than the Delaware, flying a flag that did not yet exist.

Even if it had, that flag no longer stands for the United States of America for which General Washington and his Continental Army fought for and sacrificed so much.

Satire has long been used, both in print newspapers and magazines, and now on the Internet and web. It is our right entrusted in the Constitution’s first amendment to freely express ourselves. But to conflate America’s forefather, selfless hero, first President and Commander-in-Chief, with someone who I believe would be king if he had the choice demeans the office, George Washington. Perhaps McNaughton’s next painting might be Trump taking the oath of office where President Washington did, on the steps of Federal Hall, where in 1737, John Peter Zenger fought for the rights of the press to speak the truth. After that inauguration, where the crowd shouted “Long live George Washington, President of the United States”, he left to address Congress. He implored Congress to sit after bowing to the Representatives and Senators, to distinguish this Congress from the British House of Commons which stands when addressed by the Monarch.

Clearly, President Washington should not inspire any artist to depict his visage as Donald Trump, nor his corrupt cabinet members and advisers as Washington’s adjuncts who gave their all, with very little recompense, to the founding of this nation.

Furthermore, it has recently come to attention that a high-quality laser print, The Republican Club, by Carthage, Missouri based painter Andy Thomas, of President Trump with Abraham Lincoln, observed by every Republican president who has served the U.S. hangs in Trump’s persona dining room at the White House.



continued on page 25

Bearing Witness, Not Weapons:

Jill Gibbons Skypes with our European Editor

DN: Thank you very much for talking to the New Art Examiner today. I wanted to know a little bit about your background. When did you first think you were going to be an artist? When did you first decide you wanted to be an artist?

JG: Oh, that goes back a really long, long time ago. I think I couldn't really imagine doing anything else. I think one of the ways I have always understood the world is through drawing. I've always just felt as if drawing offers something that writing doesn't. Interesting, actually, when I was young drawing really wasn't done in the art world. It was a method that was beginning to be seen as irrelevant and was being replaced by photography. So, that made it an even stranger choice but it is one that I have become increasingly committed to. Drawing offers something that it is very hard to capture in other mediums.

DN: You went to art school I presume?

JG: I did. It took quite a long time actually. I came to the UK from Australia and spent quite a few years as an activist. I was involved in the peace movement in the 1980s when the cruise missiles were coming to the UK; at that moment that seemed to be the only thing that seemed relevant. It seemed so pressing, the Cold War, the siting of the cruise missiles, and that really took up all my energy. Then I went to art school, Leeds Polytechnic. After that I did an MA at Keele in contemporary art. It was some years after that, that I did a PhD at Wimbledon School of Art, that was really, really useful. That is where I began to tease out all the sorts of assumptions about why does drawing no longer seem relevant?, why does representational work theme?, apolitical and unpolitical; that was sort of the crux of the matter I was looking at. But particularly about drawing in relation to war. That was the real underlying question in my PhD.

DN: So, you met or you were part of the women on Greenham Common?

JG: Yes. Absolutely. I went to Greenham Common. I visited a couple of times. I was part of women's peace activism in Leeds and we went fairly regularly to visit Greenham Common, and that was phenomenally influential. In terms of ideas of witnessing, in terms of using your body

as(pause) simply the idea of placing your body in militarized places.

DN: As someone who was completely unarmed and unprotected.

JG: Absolutely. Just to go in and situate your body there. That idea of witnessing has been a thread through my work ever since, I would say. What began to really interest me in later years was that, if you look at official war art, war art is often described as a form of witnessing and it is often described as an eye-witness account, which is odd for starters because it offers this idea of an eye, detached, hovering over events. As if the artist's body is irrelevant, or not there. I began to get really intrigued about what would happen if we replaced that idea of witnessing with this activist feminist idea where witnessing is all about your body, and it's all about situating your body in militarized spaces in an oppositional way. That's the key difference. Not as a detached observer but as an embodied protest.

DN: You raise a question in my mind that I didn't latch onto when reading about you. When looking at the history of the victimization in war, the long history, you are actually empowering yourself by going to these arms fairs and you're putting women at the centre of the argument in a very powerful way. You are saying we are not victims, we are going to talk about this and we are going to expose what you are doing.

JG: Oh, absolutely and there is also an element there, and it's one of the things I'm very aware of using, of the invisibility of women. You talk about how women and children have often been the targets, the victims, of war and I think that is also kept invisible. What tends to be focused upon is the war zone, not the aftermath, nor the impact. There is also something about becoming a middle-aged woman and being invisible. I really enjoy using that invisibility. What I have realized is, if I put on the suit and have this kind of veneer of respectability, no one notices me. I can just slip in and out of the aisles. Wearing pearls helps because that situates me in a particular class so that I am invisible and kind of respectable as long as I've got the pearls and the heels. So, it's playing with all kinds of myths of gender and femininity and absolutely subverting them. You know, the idea of the powerlessness of women,

the idea that they are victims of war; it's trying to turn that on its head and get inside the military industrial complex and (slight laugh)... What? That's always been the question for me, what then? And there again, one of my guiding principles, really is this idea of feminist witnessing. Simply to be there, and then one of the ways I stay there is through the drawing. I feel very much at sea if I am not drawing. I draw in small notebooks so it appears that I'm taking notes. I think there is a particular look of concentration that comes on my face so it's a way that I can seem that I am meant to be there.

DN: If I may go back a bit just to ask you, the drawing is obviously vital as you are drawing while you are there. And I've looked at your drawings which have an immediacy and the rough-hewn quality that you're there getting it all down. When did you realize that drawing can have this kind of power within the context of an arms fair?

JG: It's been a real process. And the drawings have really changed and how I use the drawings has changed. And I would say it's an ongoing process of exploration, what I can do drawing in the arms fairs. I would say when I first went into an arms fair I was really, really shocked. And I would say of my first experience I was in shock. And you can see that in the initial sketchbooks they're really frantic and I felt totally out of my depth and I think the drawings are a bit out of their depth and they are highly caricatured because I think I just felt in shock and angry, and all of that comes through. As time has gone on I have begun to think more deeply about what I'm doing with the drawing. What is this achieving? And with that, what I do with the drawing has changed. I've become really interested in this veneer of respectability and in the sales gestures and all the little rituals that contribute to this veneer of respectability. And what has begun to occur to me is that by representing those gestures, it's a way of interrupting them. That's very much influenced by Brecht in fact. Because Brecht writes about the use of gesture in theatre: you interrupt the gesture and you free the gesture, you quote it, you draw attention to it. By drawing attention to all these little rituals that provide this veneer of respectability I'm interrupting it. The other thing that has happened is that the longer I have been in arms fairs I have been looking at people really closely. And I have begun to realize that this veneer of respectability is very incomplete, there are cracks all over the place. There are cracks and fractures. People drink a lot. People get sick. I have seen reps vomit twice, (they may be simply exhausted) but people with their heads in their hands,

kinds of manipulation, seduction, kinds of lecherous lunges at the young female rep; it's all there underneath the polite surface. So the other thing I do is to try to grab those moments and it's all done on location so it is very



Stress Relief: A Bomb

chancy. Another big question for me is how I show the drawings because a lot of the purpose of drawing is to survive simply being there, but then I realized I have got this archive that to an extent reveals the life within an arms fair. The way I exhibit them at the moment is an entire sketchbook. I tend to draw in concertina sketchbooks so I can show the whole thing open. The other thing, I draw in, little notebooks, are shown open. I think the moment I take the drawings out of the sketchbook and try to neaten them up or in any way work to tidy them up it loses that connection to the witness, essentially. The drawings are a document of an intervention, they are also a document of a performance because I'm always performing while I'm in there.

DN: I never gave it a second thought that you might have tidied them up after the fact. You feel these are done in that minute. You and I, I think, would completely agree that human beings no matter where they are or what they're doing never cease to be the animal they are and there will always be a certain banality to their behaviour. One of the questions that strikes me and my readers from an art point: the tradition of drawing how you learn to draw has a huge aesthetic history.

JG: Oh yes.

DN: There is an aesthetic, however horrible, in armaments.

JG: Yes, oh god yes!

DN: There is a certain strange beauty about that bullet, this missile and you bring that out in your work. And when you bear witness to this are you witnessing to the fact that human beings even when they create something terrible have to put a bit of beauty into what they make?

JG: The aesthetics of the arms trade are absolutely key. Arms fairs in themselves are highly aesthetic events. I define and think about aesthetic experience as a sensuous experience and arms fairs are incredibly sensuous events. There's music, there's champagne, there's food and then there's the weaponry which is presented spotlit, new, shining. When you are talking about the bullets they are displayed in cases absolutely exquisitely spotlit, revolving. It is all about it being new and never about its use. You never see this material when it's exploded or its impact on people and communities. So the aesthetics of the event is a really important challenge in how I represented and how I interrupted those aesthetics. You talked about the aesthetics of drawing. I have become increasingly aware of the connotations attached to different drawing traditions and I have begun to try to use those much more deliberately. So when I first went in there, as I said, I used to caricature wildly and I still will have moments of that and there the influence is George Gross and sometimes I will try quite deliberately to reference George Gross. I think one of the things George Gross did so brilliantly was to get a sense of that really disturbing intersection between the beauty and the horror of the Weimar Republic. The young party-goers in their dresses, the beautiful prostitutes: but war profiteering absolutely infected with that. So, I quite deliberately try to reference George Gross in the history of war profiteering but also the other tradition of drawing is basically Renaissance



Stress relief: A Soldier's Head

drawing. The preparation. In quite a traditional way I will draw from Michelangelo drawing, Raphael, just to familiarize myself with those conventions. So, the angel looking upwards, a certain tilt of the hand, and then I will use those tropes in the drawings to get at the way that, potentially, the arms world is trying to present itself as civilized. So, for instance, with the classical music everything being terribly polite; and I suppose, Renaissance drawing if it has one connotation it is civilization. The civilized West. So I will bring in those little tropes but I will always then try to interrupt them in some way by having them next to a missile. It is always a dilemma. I think some of the drawings are too polite, they simply reproduce the veneer and I might go into another phase of George Gross caricature for a while so it's a kind of uneasy balance between those two very different approaches.

DN: So since Upton Sinclair talking about the corruption of the armaments industry in the First World War right through to Gross in the Second World War. I know you are producing a book, *THE ETIQUETTE OF THE ARMS TRADE*, and it's on sale at the moment, and we will have a little note at the bottom of the interview where people can purchase it. Do you think by bearing witness alone you can make a change in even one of these individuals going to these fairs? Or are you trying to enlighten the public because it is the taxpayers money that is producing many of these armaments?

JG: I think that the arms trade relies upon invisibility, particularly in arms trade with repressive regimes. The British Foreign Office has a list of countries where there is serious concern over human rights, the British arms industry sells weapons to ¾ of the countries on that list. It is so blatantly corrupt that it relies upon being hidden. So, a key aim is to make it visible. For myself, I think that art needs to work in collaboration so it is art, activism, research coming together. The book has a lot of drawings but it also has a couple of essays, one about drawing and one about the arms trade, which is as comprehensive as I can give, based on current research of what the arms trade is and what it does. I don't think drawings can fracture the polite veneer of the arms industry on their own.

DN: And you have an exhibition on at the moment?

JG: That's right there's an exhibition at the Peace Museum in Bradford and there sketchbooks are on show, there are photographs, there is a performance, and there are also



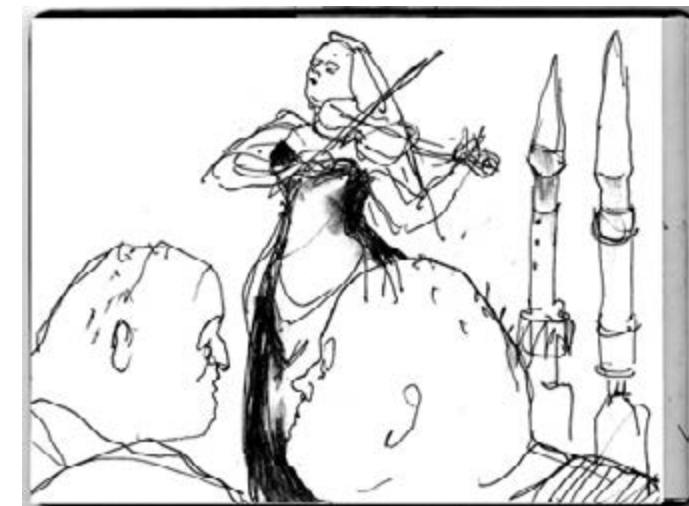
Stress relief: A Grenade

gifts. Another aspect of the project is collecting the gifts given away by arms companies. Really very bizarre. So at the Peace Museum there is a stress ball in the shape of a bomb, in the shape of a grenade, in the shape of the tank. There are condom's with the slogan 'the ultimate protection', a sweet with the slogan 'welcome to hell' and these objects within the arms industry seem a joke but I think when you take them out of that context and put them into a context which is critical of war they become something else.

DN: May I ask a sort of the last question, do you ever see many female buyers?

JG: That's a very interesting question. Overall the industry is very male dominated and on the whole the women who were there tend to be young, very often they are models who have been employed simply to stand at front doors, lean against tanks, or lean against missiles. However, the large corporations are aware that they need to present a more progressive front so in the larger arms companies there is a real effort to employ more women and have women on the board, usually non-executive women, who say nothing. You do see some women who are involved in sales and I think, again, that is the only way I could get away with being there. And because it's quite new and seems to be terribly important bringing women into the industry I'm treated, on the whole, with great respect. People are quite deferential to me which again is something I am making use of. You know if they want more women in the industry then here I am (laughs) is my approach.

DN: Thank you very much Jill. I would love to talk more. Good luck and with your teaching as well



A sketch

JG: The questions have been much more interesting than the usual ones I must say. I really appreciate them.

DN: The New Art Examiner was started by Derek Guthrie and Jane Addams Allen, who was a Chicago native and her great aunt was Jane Addams.

JG: Oh.

DN: So that is the tradition we follow.

JG: That's great. Well I really appreciated it. Thank you.

The Etiquette of the Arms Trade – Ten Years of Drawing by Jill Gibbon.

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PRESS RELEASE

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Glenstone Penitentiary

Intensely anticipated by the New York and DC art community, October 4 marked the public opening of the Mitch and Emily Rales' Foundation's "Pavilions". Billing itself as the latest U.S. non-profit museum, it may not qualify as a museum at all. According to the International Council of Museums, a worldwide body of museum professionals a museum is "a non-profit permanent institution in the service of society and its development open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits...for the purpose of education and enjoyment."

Glenstone's two non-profit ventures satisfy none of these requirements. It might not satisfy its non-profit status either. In 2008, Senator Orrin Hatch's Senate Finance Committee stipulated that institutions enjoy non-profit status in return for the owners giving up the power of ownership. That is hardly the case with the Glenstone Foundation or The Pavilions. Emily Rales, Director and Curator of the Pavilions collection, solely chooses which artists' work to include and display and refuses to engage in serious research or education.

Mrs. Rales requires an artist to have shown at a museum or major gallery for fifteen years before consideration for the collection. Galleries and museums nurture talent by buying work and supporting the artist from the inception of a career, enabling new work. Over fifteen years, the best and seminal work has largely been spoken for, leaving lesser work not desired by galleries, collectors or museums to become available. The Rales make a point of not attending international art fairs such as Art Basel, where better work might be available due to owners selling it to galleries. They prefer to buy directly from the artist, establishing a personal connection, but also buying only what is left or newly created expressly for them.

What is really happening is that the Rales Foundation continues to amass a collection of 'names'. The quality of the work does not matter, as long as the famous artist, already known to the public, is represented. The quality of every artist's work I saw at the Pavilions and at the Glenstone Foundation, predecessor to The Pavilions, called a starter museum by Mitch Rales at the press opening for the Pavilions, was lacking in contrast to work in museums and private collections. There is no depth to the collection and no daring. It is a safe collection, made up of proven names in the art world, represented by work of lesser quality. A suburban institution, it attracts a public who can say they saw a Warhol or a Koons or a Bourgeois sculpture, name-dropping as is unfortunately the practice of the public in contemporary times and in wealthy suburban enclaves. The



Aerial view of Pavilions, Iwan Baan

lack of research and education does not matter, as this public is not interested to learn more about an artist's career but would rather enjoy a day in the country quietly walking amongst works by artists from the contemporary canon whose names are instantly recognizable. The opening of The Pavilions underscored their inspiration and aspiration, as the attendees mirrored those often encountered at New York or London openings, where fashionably-clad, white wine sipping patrons assess each others' appearance rather than the art's.

In the foundation building, the "Starter" museum, the current Louise Bourgeois show provided a comprehensive look at all aspects of her long career, but the quality at all points was not there, because the work was held by major collections and museums. The preceding show, of Roni Horn's photographs of the Thames and sculptures of solid glass, mimicking that photographic lens, are out of place here. Without the context of the Thames, outside the Tate, as part of the nominated work for the Turner Prize, they do



Passage in the Pavilions, Iwan Baan

not make sense, becoming pretty photographs of some unknown water source. Nor do the sculptures, pink glass upturned to resemble a photographic lens, seemingly capable of photographing the visage of the viewer staring down into it. There is no aesthetic position taken, no context provided. Fred Sandback's lyrical optical tricks of colored yarn comprised the biggest solo success of the three most recent exhibitions at the "Starter". Not yet popular, and therefore featuring his best work to date, his minimal "structures", delineated spaces bordered with yarn, work. The air they encompass exists only due to the tautness of the yarn outline, allowing the forms to breathe, while still standing against the white walls. Seeming no less existential than Dan Flavin's geometric forms of light, they function as outlines of spaces, and do not seem lost in the Starter's vast, white space.

At the new Pavilions, the Rales aim to provide a quiet contemplative, slow experience where people might contemplate the art. Slow is the new buzzword. Quiet and contemplation is a polite alternative to our present reactive culture. When one is quiet, conversation or debate is absent. The guides constant query, "How does this sculpture make you feel?" adds to the feel good yoga-like vibe encouraged by Glenstone. Miles from any urban center, isolated due to its purchase of many surrounding houses added to Glenstone's fiefdom, totally controlled in every aspect by the Lord and Lady of the Manor, the Rales, this feudal kingdom displays its collection in a building comparable to a prison, where, doing time, all I wanted was to escape to the reality of noise and debate and art that is not safe, that takes a chance, that explores and dares.

In the northern reaches of Potomac, Maryland, guards checked my credentials before I was allowed to drive to the parking lot. A red crushed stone walking path connected the parking lot to the Pavilions. Once there, I entered a cedar-walled arrivals hall leading down a stair, lined on both sides with unadorned walls of some of the 26,000 grey concrete blocks required to build The Pavilions. Downstairs rooms led into each other with identifying labels on side walls naming the work occupying the space. There is good work here, although regrettably, work by the best artists here is not represented more deeply. Among the best is Pipilotti's List's 1976 video, "Ever is Over All" which I saw exhibited in the Hirshhorn Museum's show "Regarding Beauty: A View of the Late Twentieth Century". In the video, a figure later revealed to be a woman smashes car windows with a baseball bat. Martin Puryear, just chosen to be the U.S. representative at the 2019 Venice Biennale, is here represented by "Big Phrygian", a huge reproduction



Eva Hesse and Richard Serra Installation, Ron Amstutz

and sole sculpture in a room, of a Phrygian cap, worn by liberals during the French Revolution. A symbol of liberation, as is Rist's smashing of car windows, corroborates my impression of The Pavilions as somewhere from which to escape or liberate oneself. Standing under cold light, from skylights covered in plastic, and clerestory windows admitting little light, in the concrete-block surrounded space, it stands overseen by a museum guide dressed in a



Room 2: Ruth Asawa, Ron Amstutz

grey smock keeping watch over the viewers, querying the public about their reactions to the art, begging the question of whether this more resembles a prison or a mental institution.

Roni Horn's two solid-glass drum like sculptures, rescued from a past show at the Starter museum, with glass resembling a photographic lens turned upwards encourages the viewer to look down into that "lens", corroborating their coding as instruments of surveillance, further adding to the prison-like aesthetic.

Robert Gober's installation takes up an entire room, with a wall mural of a forest, featuring protruding bars and sinks with running water, with piles of newspapers on the floor. Although this might refer to forest deforestation, the sinks, and newspapers, (recalling what crime?) again recall a prison room.

Outside, Michael Helzer, a land-artist, has worked with Emily Rales for several years to create 'Collapse'. Multiple wooden beams are arranged helter-skelter in an open pit, surrounded by crushed stone, as museum guides admonish viewers to stay far from the edge lest they fall in. The surrounding walls, more than eight feet high, are constructed of the same grey concrete block as The Pavilions. As there are no holes in the walls, there is no way these beams could have fallen into the pit at the angle they are arranged. So all the viewer is aware of is the danger of falling into the pit, and wondering what happened. Is this not the same question one asks in a dungeon, or when observing a disaster that cannot be explained?

Michael Helzer's 'Collapse' best signifies the philosophy of the collection. It is safe art. This safe collection purports to bring one to the edge - but the Rales are afraid to jump in, and keep me from doing so. Asking perfunctory questions, making a show of engaging the viewer, guides want to know how I feel about the work. I want to know how those beams got there; why Emily Rales chose Andy Warhol's Flowers and Rauchenberg's Untitled (Early Egyptian).

Without a comprehensive well-thought out collection, my questions cannot be answered. Anyway, I know the answer: these works by name artists was available.

Additional work shown in rooms shared by artwork at the Pavilions include name artists Andy Warhol's painting, Large Flowers (1964), the instantly recognizable print which adorns college dorm rooms and first apartments nationwide; Jackson Pollack's Number 1, his 1952 drip painting of rather drab coloration, Rothko's Number Nine (White and Black on Wine) from Rothko's depressive phase, lacking the startling color vibrations of earlier work, one of seven of Duchamp's Fountain (1917/1964), that iconic urinal that questioned the meaning of art and led to manifestoes

galore, Barbara Kruger's *Untitled (We won't pay nature to your Culture)*, a Jasper Johns orange flag, and other work of famous and iconic artists. Fairly bored with all I had seen before, better contextualized and shown to better advantage, that slow movement Glenstone hopes to induce became a cursory look at readily recognizable work, and a rapid walk through the prison-like maze of increasingly claustrophobia-inducing grey concrete block walled galleries was the obvious result.

Exiting the Pavilions, up the stairs, rounding the corner, I escaped, encountering true nature, albeit controlled, where the galleries of the Pavilions surround a central aquatic courtyard, open to the sky. Control returns as aquatic plants in the outside tubs are replaced when they reach beyond a uniform height. But maybe this is what Glenstone does best; making the comparison between natural landscape and man-made, with the natural winning; making the galleries inside so unappealing that one seeks to immerse oneself in the natural, light-filled, outside world.

Surrounding Glenstone's buildings, installations by famous artists interrupt the landscape, presenting the best at Glenstone, Necessitating walking down a muddy path, Andy Goldsworthy's *Clay Houses (Boulder-Room Holes)*, a sequence of three clay houses one can enter, smelling and observing the beauty of earthen clay and imagining the feudal era tenants lucky enough to live in an earthen hut rather than the dungeon-like main house; Richard Serra's *Contour*, providing a strong steel barrier holding back natural grass-covered earth, a weapon-like material segregating one part of the estate from the other; Michael Helzer's *Compression Line*, which from afar might be a river under a border wall, but is actually a gash in the earth beyond that barbican, or Jeff Koons' *Split Rocker*, a giant dog's head covered with newly planted foliage each season, again showing control of nature.

We are constantly reminded of Glenstone's total control of the environment, within *The Pavilions* or in the landscape where molded walls hold back grasses and wildflowers, determining one's path. Quiet ensues. But rather than bringing about contemplation, one tries not to trip on the gravel or slide in the mud, urging one to escape and rush to that wilderness of native grasses that surrounds it, risking inevitable scratches. Out in the wild, avoiding the paths, on the hill leading to *Split Rocker* overseeing the wildflower covered hill, a silent watchdog looked down on me, freely enjoying the nature and art that the Rales have not yet corralled.

Nancy Schreiber



Andy Goldsworthy *Clay House* - Jerry Thompson



Roni Horn *Water Double V* - Ron Amstutz

Van Gogh in Arles

The Metropolitan Museum of Art's *Van Gogh in Arles* show, which opened to the public in October 18 is both exhilarating and crushingly depressing. What unfolds at the Met is a tragedy of grand dimensions. There has seldom been this show which follows an artist development so intimately on the day to day basis nor one which reveals so clearly the terrible cost of superhuman achievement.

The experience is all the more poignant because Van Gogh in this show is clearly not the out-of-control mad genius he is so often portrayed as being. Revealed here is a master draughtsman steadily enlarged and refined his graphic vocabulary, a painter who thoughtfully explored the most up-to-date colour theories, a sensitive, well educated, well read man who played on literary references in his choice of subjects.

Only an artist in full possession of his faculties could have completed in just over a week the magnificent series of five large landscape drawings which are the centrepiece of the exhibition. Never before shown together, these works depicting the environs of the ruined abbey of Montmajure were intended to be Van Gogh's contribution to paying off go Gauguin's debts. Not one of them sold, but for breadth of vision, for compositional invention, the richness of texture, these panoramic reed pen and ink vistas rival anything Bruegel or Rubens have to offer.

Even after his mental breakdown, van Gogh was still remarkably lucid. This view is depression on leaving the museum was not caused by the self-portrait in the last gallery. Although mutilated by his own hand and obviously numbed by cold, van Gogh the artist triumphs over van Gogh the madman in this soaring the honest picture. If the red, green, violet, and yellow, brilliantly woven together in complimentary counterpoint, stand for the diverging emotions warring in the artist's soul, they also stand for his ability to transcend these emotions in the creation of majestic colour harmonies.

No, it was the Mets appalling commercialisation of a profoundly serious exhibition that provoked distress. The shop through which visitors must pass on their way out of the show raises tastelessness to new heights. Cheap scarves blazoned with quotes from the master, picture puzzles of sunflowers, tawdry knickknacks, are hawked with a blatant, sentimentalised ring hard sell which makes a travesty of the new Mets tax exempt status.

The New York Museum's efforts to milk van Gogh's tragedy for all it is worth goes even further. In the hope no doubt of whipping up public demand, the Met opened the exhibition to the press and sundry in the month before the



Vincent van Gogh; *Flowering Garden*; 1888; pencil, reed pen and brown ink on wove paper; 241 x 314 cm
14

actual public opening. And weeks before the press were allowed in, more than \$430,000 four dollar tickets for van Gogh in Arles went on sale at Tickettron locations all over the country.

Lured by this blockbuster bait, some 430,000 visitors will no doubt pay their money and obediently enter during the appointed half-hour to mill along with multitudes of their fellow art lovers. If they are lucky they may even catch a glimpse of van Gogh's paintings and drawings over their heads and shoulders of other moving bodies in the snail's paced stampede.

But how many people will be able to linger long enough to absorb the important lessons there to be learned about the dimensions of the human spirit? How many artists will be able to return again and again to the exhibition, so that they can take the full measure of van Gogh's greatness as a goal for which to strive? How many lost souls will be confronted by the intense humanity of these paintings and drawings? How many children will discover for the first time what a line or a colour can mean to the expression of their innermost feelings? Aren't these things what an art museum is for?

The circus which the Met has created around van Gogh in Arles seems expressly designed to elicit only the most superficial response. It is said that Mark Rothko committed suicide in part because of his inability to control the circumstances under which his paintings might be seen. If any nightmare could justify Rothko's fears, it is surely this one.

This is doubly unfortunate because the show itself is such a sterling example of the way art historical scholarship

can add to our understanding of an artist. Often heavily biographical exhibitions (and this is one of them) tend to place too much emphasis on supposed correspondences between works of art and the artists emotional life.

Van Gogh has been particularly victimised by this treatment. Museum docents love to pollute the minds of schoolchildren with such statements as “you can tell from the wiggly lines of paint and the strong colours the van Gogh was really upset when he painted this.”

However, it is the artistic breakthroughs, not the emotional breakdowns that create the drama of van Gogh in Arles. Guest curator Ronald Pickvance has done a superb job of establishing an exact chronology of van Gogh’s artistic activity during this most important period of his life. From January 1888 to May 1889, in spite of the most extreme fluctuations of physical and mental health, van Gogh kept up the pace of creation unequalled in the 19th century. The 142 works in the exhibition were chosen from some 200 paintings and over 100 drawings and watercolours completed during his 15 month sojourn in the southern French city of Arles.

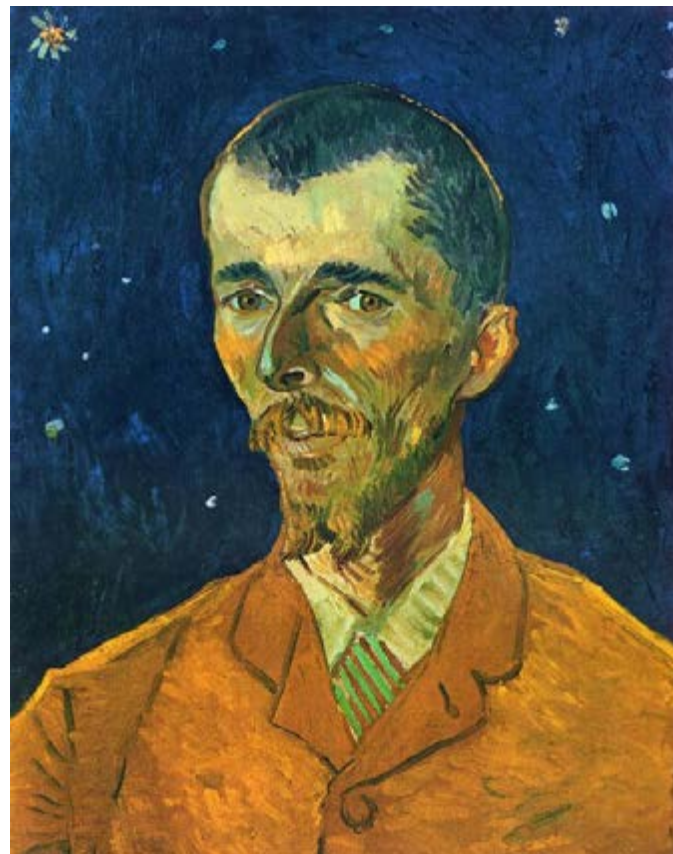
It is only because the artist also wrote at least 200 long and profusely illustrated letters from Arles to his cherished younger brother and numerous artist friends that Mr Pickvance was able to date the works so exactly. Extensive quotes from these letters, which constitute an artistic achievement on their own, make the catalogue an essential accompaniment to the exhibition

. . .

It was in January 1888 that Vincent van Gogh decided to leave Paris for the more healthful climate of southern France. Exhausted by the cold weather, debilitated by drinking bad wine and smoking cheap tobacco, he felt he had absorbed enough the artistic firmament of the city. Besides, his turbulent personality was straining the tender relationship in enjoyed with his art dealer brother Theo, who supported him. Van Gogh hoped to benefit from a period of solitude.

With the exception of sunflowers, a vigorous oil of contrasting blues and yellows, the Parisienne works in the prologue of the exhibition seem startlingly weak. In fact, the basket of apples and Japonaiserie: the courtesan look like the work of a second-rate painter. Certainly, if these and the works which immediately followed his arrival in Arles in January to 20th 1888, were all that we knew of van Gogh, 20th-century hagiography would be missing a major figure.

If he was expecting healing southern warmth, van



Portrait of Eugene Bach oil on canvas

Gogh was disappointed. He was greeted by about 15 inches of snow and a cold snap which lasted nearly a month. But spurred both by his own ambition and his desire to justify Theo’s financial support, he set to work immediately on a countless of the snowy landscape.

The painting and the series of orchards in Bloom which follow a month later lack the coherence and power of his later work. Van Gogh seems uncertain as to how to organise his space; his brushstrokes are confused and jerky. However, in his letters he seems well aware of his deficiencies.

“At the moment I am absorbed in the blooming fruit trees, pink peach trees, yellow white pear trees,” he wrote to Emile Benard on 9 April. “My brushstroke has no system at all. I hit the canvas with irregular touches of the brush which I leave as they are... I’m inclined to think that the result is so disquieting and irritating as to be a godsend to those people who are fixed, preconceived ideas about technique.”

The best proof of van Gogh’s desire to get his spatial organisation under control of the series of drawings he did in April and early May with the aid of a perspective device. In these we also begin to see the elaborate system of marks, dots, cross hatchings and slashes with which he differentiated his spatial planes. Although the flat landscape and rich vegetation around the old French town reminded van Gogh of Rembrandt’s and Ruisdhal’s Holland, its



The yellow house - pen and ink on paper

essence was elusive. It took him some months to internalise its rhythms and patterns.

Then in May he made one of those startling leaps forward that seem to characterise his progress. The first clear evidence of this new stage in his development is still life with coffee pot, a brilliant painting, seldom seen in public, which belongs to a private collection in Switzerland.

Many things about this campus market is special in van Gogh’s oeuvre. Not only did he characterise it as “something quite apart” in his letters, it also is one of the most carefully painted and finished works in the exhibition. Van Gogh even enclosed the still life in a white and red painted frame to give it importance and, in a rare gesture, signed it Vincent in red on the upper left hand corner.

Still life with coffee pot is monumental, spatially complex, totally controlled and wonderfully rich in its variations of blue and yellow. It is also a touching memento of van Gogh’s first and only independent home, his famous yellow house at 2 Place Lamartine. He proudly reported to Theo on May 8 the purchase of “things for



Fishing boats on the beach- pencil, reed pen and ink

making a little coffee and soup at home.” This painting celebrates the occasion.

Other important breakthroughs follow. A short visit to the seaside town of Stes Maries resulted in a number of important works, among them the vigorous, highly stylised drawing fishing boats on the beach. In a letter to his brother, van Gogh boasts, “I’ve only been here a few months but tell me this: could I, in Paris have done the drawing of the boats in an hour? Even without the perspective frame, I do it now without measuring, just by letting my pen go” unfortunately the painting of the same subject, which has always been a public favourite, could not be obtained the exhibition.

A little later on in June, van Gogh’s developing mastery shows up even more clearly in a magnificent series of 10 harvest canvases, six of which are in the exhibition. Painted outside in the full heat of the sun, the vigorous rhythmic brushstrokes echo the crossed hatch textures that pulse across his drawings. The compositions have been powerfully focused by exaggerated perspective and violent contrasts of violet and yellow.

Months later van Gogh was to write to his brother, “instead of eating enough and at regular times, I kept myself going on coffee and alcohol. I admit all that, but all the same it is true that to attain the high yellow note that I attend last summer, I really had to be pretty well keyed up.”

This, of course, is a crucial point. Was this statement van’s rationalisation for self-destruction or was his self-sacrifice really necessary to his fevered production? Whatever the truth, he certainly pushed himself unmercifully through June, July, and August. Besides the harvest series the Montmajure drawings, and a series of gardens, he began to do portraits of local characters, his friend Joseph Roulin, the Republican postman and as a Zouave soldier – “a boy with a small face, a bull neck and the eye of the Tiger.” He also executed numerous drawings after his paintings to send to his friends, refining to the point of virtuosity his reed pen technique.

All this while van Gogh was tremendously excited by the possibility of an extended visit from Gauguin. He discussed endlessly with Theo via the post his plans to start a colony of artists in Arles begged his brother to extend financial support to Gauguin as well as to himself. This Theo ultimately agreed to do in return for a painting a month from Gauguin. Since Gauguin’s work, unlike van Gogh, occasionally sold, the bargain was not such a bad one.

An important aspect of van Gogh’s personality was his exceptional sensitivity to other people’s opinions and tastes. One can even see it operating in the graphic works he sends off to his friends. For the artist Emile Benard who



Still life with coffee Pot - oil on canvas 1888

hates Seurat and pontillism, van Gough senses his textual dots and makes his drawings more structural and Cezannesque. For John Russell, an Australian painter and collector, he stresses delicacy of tone and a great range of textural effects. In one drawing for Russell, garden with weeping tree, van Gough seems to deliberately evoke the English landscape tradition.

His extreme sensitivity was to prove devastating when van Gough and Gauguin were actually living and working together. But anticipation of the imminent arrival of his revered older friends spurred van Gough to new prodigies or production. During September, he devoted a great deal of thought to the decorations for Gauguin's room in the yellow house, and ultimately completed for extraordinary autumnal canvases which he called the poet's garden. Brought together here for the first time, there are among the most beautiful he ever painted.

It was also during the early fall that van Gough began to most clearly elaborate his theory of correspondences between colour and emotional states. About the night Café,

he wrote to his brother, "I have tried to express the terrible passions of humanity by means of the red and green." His colours for portrait of Eugene Boch were meant to express his love and admiration. "By the simple combination of the bright head against the rich blue background," he wrote, "I get a mysterious effect, like a star in the depths of an azure sky."

Gauguin finally arrived on October 23. While there is no record (in the catalogue at least) of his response to van Gough's paintings, the effect of his powerful personality shows up almost immediately on the younger artists canvases. In order to save money Gauguin instituted the practice of buying cheaper colours and preparing canvases from rough burlap. But the unprecedented dullness and flatness of van Gough surfaces and the pictures he completed shortly after Gauguin's arrival cannot be only attributed to the material change. Such paintings as Lee Alyscomp show clearly that van Gough's nerve had failed in the face of go-go and decorative, almost abstract compositions.

Worse followed. As the result of Gauguin's prodding, van



Portrait of Madame Roulin with baby - oil on canvas

Gough's attempted to work from his imagination with disastrous results. Memory of the garden at Etten, the dance hall and spectators in the arena are all weak and confused compositions.

It was only when van Gough ignored Gauguin's precepts in his portraits of the Roulin family and Madame Gimoux (L'Arlesienne) that he got back his confidence. And even in these justly famous pictures, there appears a growing alienation from his subjects that was certainly not evident in the idealising portraits he completed during the summer. Madame roulin with baby is almost brutal in its handling of the drawing and colour.

The end of van Gough's long anticipated collaboration with Gauguin came swiftly. Already threatened by the older artists dominating ways, van Gough was further upset by a portrait of himself at work at his easel painted by Gauguin in early December. "It is certainly I, but it I gone mad," he allegedly commented. On the evening of December 14, van

Gough threw a glass of + that Gauguin's head and go again decided to leave. A few days of calming student and he changed his mind, but then after five days of continuous rain on December 23, violence erupted again.

According to Gauguin's reminiscences 15 years later, it was after dinner that van Gough followed him into the garden and (the poet's garden of the Place Lamartine, the site of the younger artists most ardent hopes) and threatened him with a razor. Gauguin simply stared at him and van Gough returned alone to the yellow house

While no one knows exactly what happened in the interval at 11:30 PM the artist appeared at the door of the local brothel and asked for a girl named Rachel. When she appeared he presented her with the lower part of his left ear, saying "keep this object carefully," and left. The next morning he was discovered by the police in his bed almost dead from loss of blood.

Van Gough was never really able to live on his own again. After protests from the neighbours yellow house was closed by the police and its contents ultimately dismantled. Finally in May after months of virtually living in the hospital, van Gough decided to commit himself to the asylum at Saint Remy, a town not far from Arles.

In retrospect it is quite amazing that an exhibition of van Gough's works in Arles has never before been mounted. So many of his most important paintings date from that period, yet public attention has always been focused on the artworks he completed in Saint Remy after he was certifiably insane. It was easier, perhaps, to explain their intensity and power stemming from the overwrought brain of a madman.

This exhibition gives the lie to that theory. At the very least, it strongly suggests that we should consider the contrary proposition, that his madness was in fact a collapse resulting from the enormous strain of his work. "You will perhaps understand that what would reassure me in some fashion as to my illness and the possibility of a relapse," van Gough wrote to his brother on January 28, 1889, "would be to see that Gauguin and I had not exhausted our brains for nothing, but that some good canvases have come out of it."

Jane Adams Alan was the art critic for the Washington Times and a founding editor of the New Art Examiner.



Derek Guthrie will have an exhibition in Cornwall's Lost Meadow Gallery in May

All-consuming Beauty

I was walking past a nail bar, one of the kind you find from the centre of London to provincial market towns, and caught sight of the small-print words 'Fat Freezing' on the sign swinging outside. I wondered why this was not strange. I stopped and read the sign. The words that had simultaneously attracted and repelled me were in fact an unusually non-euphemistic subtitle to the larger-print word 'Cryolipolysis'. What I had unconsciously termed a 'nail bar' was, as these places usually are, also a high-street stop-off for those purchasing non-invasive plastic surgery, a place where, I read, one could order, alongside fat-freezing, more euphemistic 'medical grade procedures' such as 'HIFU "No Knife Facelift"', 'Botox and Injectable Fillers', 'Laser Hair Removal', 'Ultraformer III Skin Tightening – Face & Body' and 'Bespoke Medical Facials'. This is the world we live in, yet this objectification goes unexamined.

I began to think of critics John Berger and Naomi Wolf. They need little introduction, as two of the most famous critical authors of the twentieth century. Berger's seminal BBC documentary and book, *Ways Of Seeing* (1972) has received 966,215 views on Youtube in the past two years, and his death in 2017 increased the media adoration yet further. Wolf's book, *The Beauty Myth* (1990) is an international bestseller and Wolf a spokesperson for the 'Third Wave' of feminism. Due to these and other writers typified as 1970s and 80s 'feminist' writers, bringing up the objectification of women is often counter-productive, these days. Laws have changed; there isn't a culture of sexism now like there was in the 1970s; aren't we past that? It needs to be made clear that discussing the cultural ideal of 'beauty', as Berger and Wolf did, is not a specifically 'feminist' (and therefore overstated) problem, but resonates in a larger discussion of how the vision of ourselves is formed. Berger and Wolf's messages are as crucial today as when they were written. Their separate analyses of how the female body is constructed in Western society are more relevant to modern constructions of the body than ever. Moreover, they explain how it is that we cannot trust the judgment of our own eyes.

In *The Beauty Myth*, Wolf argues that cosmetics, the food industry, aesthetic surgery and women's magazines should be seen in financial terms, as parts of an economic system which is violent to women's bodies. Any person who buys into feminine beauty, is taught to abuse themselves and their sisters with the weapons of starvation and self-hatred; and gender relations reinforce this limitation of ambition.

"The beauty myth countered women's new freedoms [...] [achieved] in the two decades of radical action that followed

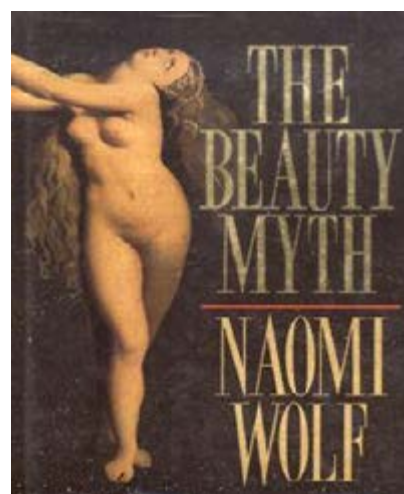
the rebirth of feminism in the early 1970s [...] by transposing the social limits to women's lives directly onto their faces."

Using dozens of examples, she describes how violence against women is enacted through the dehumanising act of plastic surgery, while advertisements and beauty magazines (often bankrolled by cosmetic companies) manipulate women into fearing their own ageing, blemished faces, and all around it is reiterated again and again that the female appearance is something to be 'controlled'. Except, of course, it is big business which shapes the one-size-fits-nobody mould that is 'beauty', in order to sell the 'fix'.

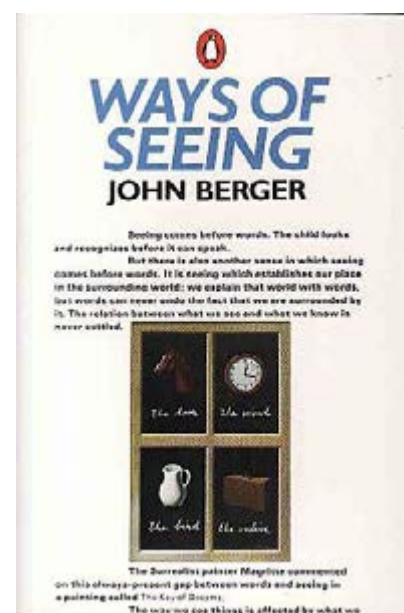
Wolf's argument directs blame specifically towards the beauty industry for causing women's bodies to be seen as, specifically, decaying. Berger's is a larger grievance: he is infuriated that women are seen as sights at all. *Ways Of Seeing* shows how the entire Western tradition of representation of women in art since medieval times is geared towards making women purely visual objects.

"A woman is constantly watching herself [...] a woman is an image."

Berger shows how the feminine body is always read: is she wearing an apron? She must be motherly. Grand hairstyle? Powerful. And what does a specifically beautiful appearance mean? Merely pleasure for the viewer – beauty, in whatever form it is shown in the image, is not for her herself.



The Beauty Myth (first edition).



Ways of Seeing

"From earliest childhood, she is told to survey herself constantly. Behind every glance is a judgment."

This results in an imbalance between the feminine and the masculine assets. A woman in a painting is not an active creature with a mind of her own, but something to be put on display; in most paintings, the woman is presented only as a body that is a set of visual signifiers. As Berger puts it, "aesthetics, when applied to women, are not as disinterested as the word "beauty" might suggest."

Wolf's excoriation evidently had no long-term effect, while women are still shaped as sights as Berger showed, now more than ever. According to Goldman Sachs, the beauty industry (with a predominantly female market, selling products designed to create a conventionally feminine appearance) is still growing by 7% each year; more than most developed countries. Flicking through a fashion magazine targeted towards women, we are presented with advertisements for products that can 'perfect my skin' by 'reducing shine' and 'minimizing the appearance of fine lines and pores'. A shiny face and pores is a horror to be gotten rid of by advertising copy. But these are ordinary features of the body. There will always be more pores, and the never ending fight to erase them makes money for companies. The ends to these means, Wolf points out, is actually economic, not aesthetic – desire for beauty is exploited, but the concept of beauty is actually used as a factor within a capitalist system – 'lack of pores' is something of financial importance more than an aesthetic value.

Products can make the buyer's features 'stronger and healthier', they 'revitalise' hair or give skin a 'deep cleaning' combined with 'the luxury of a spa facial'. The overall message is clear: one's own body is dirty, alien, something to tame, not something to love. This imagery pretends to be descriptive but is actively persuasive – men and women accept that the body is editable. (the female body, as the current industry target, is gradually changing.) It is true, of course, that beauty has been pursued through hair-plucking and makeup for centuries, yet the extent to which the body is seen as mouldable, visible and foreign to its possessor is only relatively recent – particularly the female body, which *Ways Of Seeing* shows has always been more visible than the male. This concept of 'beauty' as youth, purchasable and additive, is nothing but fashion not an essential truth.

Yet thirty and fifty years after *Ways of Seeing* and *The Beauty Myth* we are in exactly the same self-sabotaging mind-set. In yet another example, the announcement that Edward Enninfu was being made the new editor of British Vogue in 2017 was hailed as the beginning of a forward-thinking era for Vogue, with an active focus on promoting positivity, self-acceptance and the value of diversity rather

than whiteness, passivity and exclusivity. And yet, the first two issues under Enninfu's editorship included full-page articles in praise of aesthetic surgery. An article titled 'Little Wonders' described 'subtle cosmetic treatments' – quick, invasive procedures with inconspicuous effect. Masking the Botox and bruising with descriptions of 'pretty pink cotton pads' and 'face and body tweaks', Vogue declared that 'you could mistake this "superclinic" for a smart Mayfair hair salon'; 'you can be in and out within your lunch hour.' Vogue itself certainly has an interest in promoting the idea that beauty is something purchasable, as it sells advertising space to such clinics in its back pages. The fact that the magazine takes care to write their procedures as casual, and even profess a comforting, therapeutic effect shows their very inefficacy. Dentists do not bother to seduce customers into visiting them, because they know we need



Fat removal using cannula during tumescent liposuction (Wikiki Common)

teeth whatever the discomfort.

Cosmetic surgery is exemplary for showing how a power structure (financial, political) can impose aesthetic (or indeed moral) standards and make them invisible; even when these standards are artificial, even when they are damaging. The 2014 report from independent regulatory body the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons reported that they (BAAPS), had seen a growing trend in young people receiving Botox and breast enhancements, and warned that it is 'too big an operation, with too many potential life-long implications'. Legally, anyone over the age of 18 can have plastic surgery, though most cosmetic surgeries insist on a personal consultation. 'Book now for your FREE consultation', 'a bespoke package will be created for you at Consultation', 'Free surgical consultation without any commitment', say the magazines in Harley Street lobbies. Nothing is free. As Naomi Wolf warned nearly thirty years every employee of a private company, consciously or unconsciously, will be encouraged to make money for the business.

The industry's own methods prove how successful it has been in changing how we pursue aesthetic ideals. The Telegraph recently ran a parent-scaring article titled 'The Rise Of "Selfie Surgery" ' about increasingly youthful patients. In fact, the language used by Vogue and cosmetic surgeries shows that The Telegraph should not be so surprised. Cosmetic surgery is now marketed as desirable. Though extreme, cosmetic surgery has become normal. One of the Kardashians, 20-year old Kylie Jenner, has lately spoken openly about her 'super natural' lip filler. She casually calls her LA surgeon 'the best'. Jenner has 105 million followers on social media, to whom cosmetic surgery is now by extension 'the best', and their body is something to inject.

It could be argued that breast surgery is still relatively taboo and so, surgery is not a significant concern. However, the normalisation of surgery as a beauty treatment means that it is a widespread problem, but hidden in full view. How has this normalisation of a potentially taboo pursuit been achieved unnoticed? It is a catch-22 between following fashion and creating it: unmarked advertising in features like 'Little Wonders' can literally change fashion with no input from the consumer, marketing copy gradually changes from normalising to advertising, and contemporary culture overwhelms us with new imagery about the body. Company needs for exponential growth means that the number of high-street aesthetic surgeries (nail bars) that offer Fat Freezing and 3D-Lipo alongside a manicure have increased. This is partly due to the need for businesses to diversify into whatever is fashionable; and partly the acceptance of the customer that, if this is offered, it is normal.

The 2016 Department of Health Review of the Regulations of Cosmetic Interventions states that such high-street clinics are a particular cause for concern. 'Anyone can set themselves up as a practitioner, with no requirement for knowledge, training or previous experience. Most dermal fillers have no more controls than a bottle of floor cleaner.' I enter one of these, the 'New York Laser Hair Clinic + Medispa'. It is white, minimalist, medical, with gleaming chrome bar stools. The women working there are dressed in buttoned-up lab coats, with matching sleek ponytails. The Clinic describes itself in its own brochure as 'a friendly, welcoming and safe environment to offer you the best medical treatments'. Listed under 'Conditions' are 'Stretch marks', 'Ageing and problem skin', and 'Excess body fat'. These are not actually harmful, though the language suggests they are. I am older than Kylie Jenner, though I am still in my twenties. Posing as a client, I enquire about prices for dermal fillers, and am met with unwillingness from the woman behind the counter.

'You must talk to the doctor, see what's best for you.' She will not look me in the eye. To book a surgical procedure, you must get what is effectively a doctor's note from your GP giving you permission to proceed, and also make a deposit. Do they return deposits if you cancel your procedure at the last minute?

'Mm, of course, we're not going to take your money if you don't have [surgery]!' She evidently did not think I, a young woman wearing trousers, was the right person for an injectable filler. Her reluctance to offer me surgery, for whatever reason, shows how automatically we form our thoughts and actions on visual judgments. All she had to go on were the cultural signs of my appearance – young, make-up free – and she did not question her assumptions. Seeing without questioning and spontaneously following what we see is humanity's vanity.

Ironically, the beauty industry's vilification of age and valorisation of sexuality was probably why I was actually protected from its capitalist calculations, on this occasion. However, as in the truism, 'the customer is always right', the retailer could not disengage herself from me. Here, she could have used her eyes to refuse an unsuitable patient 'treatment', but the patient was also a customer, a clash of care that these practitioners try to gloss over – and one that illustrates nicely how company financial interests are central to the creation of beauty. There are more factors than the aesthetic in the cultural concept of 'beauty'.

My interaction with cosmetic surgery is an example of how social ideals are shaped; exploiting human desires while working within larger systems of capitalism and power. It is important to be aware that the beauty industry's creation of beauty is an increasingly damaging concept, particularly for women; but more than that, we should be aware that it is only one of many possible constructions. Berger and Wolf are not simply criticizing our idea of beauty; they are raising the issue that beauty is creative and our morals and standards are creative. Reading these texts as 'feminist' polemics ignores their wider significance as to how to read the wider world.

Ways Of Seeing assumed the reader understands why the objectification of women is bad in itself, but as an effect of this, the dangers of cosmetic surgery probably did not cross Berger's mind. Women vulnerable to such procedures would benefit from considering the way they feel towards their own body, and whether the ultimate ends of the procedure is indeed their beauty, or the surgeons' gain. Would she be having breast augmentation if she were reading about fat-dissolving lasers and water jets in liposuction rather than the vague 'procedure' most brochures term it? Would she, if Berger and Wolf's points were brought back into discourse

and we tried to attack the way of seeing women as no more than part of the view? In the wider context of history, the idea that the body is editable is not normal.

Of course, women maintain an appearance for all kinds of reasons: not least to feel joy in themselves and embrace their femininity. Take, for example, a woman using a face cream and injections to 'minimise the appearance of fine lines' because she knows that the minute she begins to look older, she will face ageist discrimination. She is using this conception of beauty (equalling youth, equalling sexuality) not as a signifier of vulnerability and innocence, but as a form of resistance to misogyny. Wolf does not allow for the power that women can hold by manipulating their appearance. The fact that a body can be an editable work of art is not always bad. However, *Ways Of Seeing* reminds us that however a woman manipulates her image to her own desire, she is still controlled by the idea that her worth is estimated relative to a viewer's pleasure. A woman who believes in beauty believes it a form of power over other people and over physical realities. It is. We believe attractive peers are more trustworthy, more respectable and more powerful, as well as more attractive. And as we believe, so it is – for a while. A woman who buys into the idea of beauty as it is currently perpetrated is buying a form of control that cannot last. She believes she can control how she is perceived through her own desperate efforts, that with potions and lotions and incisions she can miraculously continue in youth. Isn't that always a losing fight? It is one that many, many women I know fight, hating their own body as it ages. Does it have to be this way? 'Beauty' could probably involve self-acceptance, individuality and natural appearance, if we praised such things more in the newspapers. The battle to control one's own body is a civil war that cannot be won.

And this matters for men, for those who do not read 'female' magazines, for those who do not go into Harley Street surgeries, are not bothered about wearing makeup, and have no intention of going under the pretty, pink knife. All of us are affected by this language and overwhelmed with the art around us which presents women as visual objects above all else – in public adverts, in contemporary culture like *Keeping Up With The Kardashians*, in the beauty products aimed at women in shops etc. The idea that the appearance is no more than a set of constantly-varying signifiers, as Berger suggests, and that the beauty industry offers to make each signifier perfect, as Wolf argues, is dangerous in that it presents a physical body as something that can always be controlled. We like to feel in control, but bodies cannot be completely controlled – while true control lies with the cosmetic companies. How are women ever to feel natural or accepting towards their own bodies, when

they are dis-embodied? And let alone the harm they might do to themselves through surgery and self-hatred, the effects on others of this view of the female body could range from patronising her intelligence to assaulting her.

I cannot be objective when analysing Berger and Wolf's relevance today, as any effect they have would show in a direct impact on my life. Their lack of effect shows, when I live a world in which cosmetic surgery is easy for me to purchase, in which the culture I consume recommends I change my body, and in which the women I see around me overwhelmingly model themselves for other people's viewpoint. Berger and Wolf use the example of the plastic female body to remind us that we form our standards – moral, aesthetic, automatic – on the signs we read. Though we may think we are too mature and sophisticated – too old, our modern world too advanced – to discuss abstract concepts in daily life, at parties or at work, these controversial, emotional, often unfashionable aesthetic and ethical ideals are our reality.

Rosanna Hildyard

NB: In this article, I have made reference to women and used pronouns 'she' and 'her'. I consciously did not delve into the problems that men, transpeople and femme-identifiers find within the search for positive access to femininity, as there was not time or space. Nonetheless, cosmetic surgery and the search for a 'perfect' body is of course relevant to more than just women, and the exploitation of human vulnerabilities – physical feelings as well as self-esteem – for a company's financial gain is something we all should be aware of in a capitalist society.



Mollie Douthit

www.molliedouthit.com

Relating to Rae Johnson in Toronto

Ever see a hugemongous drawing? Rae Johnson's paintings, average 48", appear as pencil drawings writ large. Walk up to one, and it introduces itself and shakes your hand as a painting, but it's a painting of brush strokes imitating a huge pencil.

In an era where artists put their shoes on the table and call it art, it's best to look at investor grade work, not for the market value, but for how beautiful the work is. Among non-verbal languages in our mind, dance is body language and here's visual language, sometimes our nerves are tickled pink. After decades of experience Rae is in a mature phase where she paints a song with visual notes, conducts an orchestra with brush and paint. The fuzzy snow in one painting feels a bit like synesthesia, to feel what you see.

And I'm not supposed to say this, but anonymous European interests likely mean the value of her work is expected to rise soon, so this is one of those chances people always wish they had, to get in at the lowest prices before the market burns it up. Enter Christopher Cutts Gallery on Morrow street. Hidden treasure.

Benjamin Buchloh tells painters to lose their skill, says artists are de-skilling like crazy, to enter the golden age of the simple mind. No amount of lack of stupid will give you the magic. That comes through the soul after years of experience when your skill is second nature and paint flows like milk and honey.

Rae said she considers this work a step closer to my inner vision without concern for what art is supposed to "look like at this moment" For me this is how I feel the world looks. And yes I feel I belong to the long history of humans making images of their worlds. I feel a little raw and exposed but I have to do what is honest for me. I look around and see people disengaged with reality, comforted by their devices that offer artificial versions of life - what it is, what they should desire, what they should believe, and most of all what they need to buy to fill the void. This new show only asks the viewer to look around and simply feel the life pulsing in everything, themselves. Simple subjects wrapped around the mystery of our very existence, the impossibility that we even exist and can ponder the meaning of the universe at all.

Science tells us painting will never die because it is to vision as writing is to books. A perception of aesthetics in the stone age led situations that enabled the continuity of the perceiver's genes. Art is based in biology, it is not a social construct, and artists with their paintings stimulate an expansion of consciousness, the same way that a mathematician uses numbers to work out a problem. This



Men on Steps 2017



Stairs snow 2017

has been going on since the dawn of time, a cultural heritage Rae Johnson pours out on the canvas, she turns and says to me "I think they were relieved to see paintings that they could relate to for a change".

Miklos Legrady, Toronto Editor

Rae Johnson The City, Christopher Cutts Gallery, September 8th- October 13th

Lithuania

The Swamp School

One quarter of Lithuania's territory consists of swamps and wetlands. These lands represent the ethno-cultural identity of the various regions, and pedagogues have long stressed the relationship between ethnic culture and ecology. It is common in ancient myths to consider water a sacred element for positive spiritual activity, but with potential for evil. In local folklore the devil lives in swamps and marshes. The protagonist in the popular 1945 novel Baltaragio Mal nas by Kazys Boruta is the devil who lives in a swamp. The novel, written during the Nazi occupation of Lithuania is about struggle with one's own fate.

Curators Nomedas and Gediminas Urbonas have brilliantly resurrected their heritage and boldly challenged the world to rethink cohabitation between humans and other forms of life. More than fifteen tons of Lithuanian swamps were dug up and replanted in Venice for The Swamp School, the first Lithuanian pavilion created for the 16th Venice Architecture Biennale 2018. The Swamp School

consists of intense interdisciplinary research in acoustics, "The Swamp Radio," and environmental protection, "Futurity Island," as well as a laboratory to explore dialogue among different life forms, "Commonism." Sensory experiences were highlighted as was the concept of invisible architecture. An impressive list of international contributors supported a series of public interfaces and pedagogical workshops in socially engaged design. The goal of The Swamp School is to apply the complexity of swamps to imagine a viable future in today's over-developed planet beset by perpetual threats.

Milda B. Richardson

Nomedas & Gediminas Urbonas, curators, Pippo Ciorra, commissioner, Produced by the Architecture Fund, Presented by The Lithuanian Council for Culture, Venue: Giardino Bianco art Space (Castello, Viale Garibaldi 1815), www.swamp.it, E-mail: media@swamp.it.

Speakeasy Cont:

A female figure stands in the background, attesting to the possible future woman who holds the office. While many prints have been sold in gift shops and online, the original is retained by the artist. As in McNaughton's

painting, I cannot imagine the chagrin of Lincoln, Bush, Reagan, and other presidents depicted in Trump's company. They are all laughing, at this very sad joke.

Nancy Schreiber



Crossing the Swamp by Jon McNaughton

Marking the Infinite: Contemporary Women Artists from Aboriginal Australia

Washington

The Phillips Collection: Marking the Infinite, spotlights nine leading Aboriginal Australian women artists: Nonggirnga Marawili, Wintjiya Napaltjarri, Yukultji Napangati, Angelina Pwerle, Lena Yarinkura, Gulumbu Yunupingu, Nyapanyapa Yunupingu, Carlene West, and Regina Pilawuk Wilson. The artists are from remote Aboriginal communities across Australia, and the subjects of their art are broad, yet each work is an attempt to grapple with fundamental questions of existence, asking us to slow down and pay attention to the natural world...

And so says the Phillips Gallery of Art in their introduction to this show of Australian Aboriginal women artists, currently displayed until September 9.

My colleague and I wandered into the gallery, rather heartened by the simplicity and quiet power on the walls. Parts of the show were quite arresting in the refined sense of form and pattern. It "felt" organic. This "feeling" did not last long, it faded before our very eyes as we became more aware critically of what we were seeing and how it was put together. What we began to suspect was rather deflating our hopes. And sure enough, we realized we were looking at self-conscious made-for-gallery "art". We may have been hoodwinked for a few minutes insofar as we were gazing upon "discovered" aboriginal culture. These mighty discoverers/curators of art brought forth into civilization of the vaguely primitive or first people anthology of culture, a tribal culture of the indigenous native people of Australia... BUT No, that was not the case. And I have to admit it saddened me as much as any cultural disruption of indigenous people in the world today by the encroaching "world".

"Appropriation" is a big word in the art world, it refers to the ongoing of art "taking" from other art, whether from time, culture, history or style, so as to recompose or "borrow" it completely in order to recontextualize a given work of art. This is a standard of art history either thematically, specifically, or outright replication of imagery. This is nothing new ... think Greek, Roman, Renaissance, Neo Classical or Post Mod seizure of pictures in art history or pop culture or attitude etc. This is the case here in a different respect. These ladies were "asked" to view their heritage so as to aesthetically update it for the modern gallery world, they were consciously curated so as to create art for "export", at least as a cultural voice meant to echo

the culture of their very distant past. They were asked to, in a sense, "channel" their heritage, their non-practiced historical anthro-tradition-mythos, as if they were living it today.. That is not to say they were not artists to begin with and we do not see their earlier work, be that as it may. What we do see is the curated show that began at the Nevada Museum of Art, organized by William Fox the director for Art for the Environment. Then curated by Henry Skerritt, curator of the Kluge-Ruhe Aboriginal Art Collection at the University of Virginia from the collection of Debra and Dennis School. So this show was brought together outside of the country of Australia and indeed, the artists hail from different areas of Australia thousands of miles apart. This "vision" is concocted and pieced together by largely Americans for the purposes of their designated "theme". Or so they admit in the press briefing. How conscious of the artists of one another is not known, they were all award winners whose works are in major collections around the world.

The re-appropriated artifacts of the Aboriginal culture are not familiar to these women by any means. For example one piece that was particularly striking to me was "Syaw" or the fishnet-like inspired painting created by Regina Pilawuk

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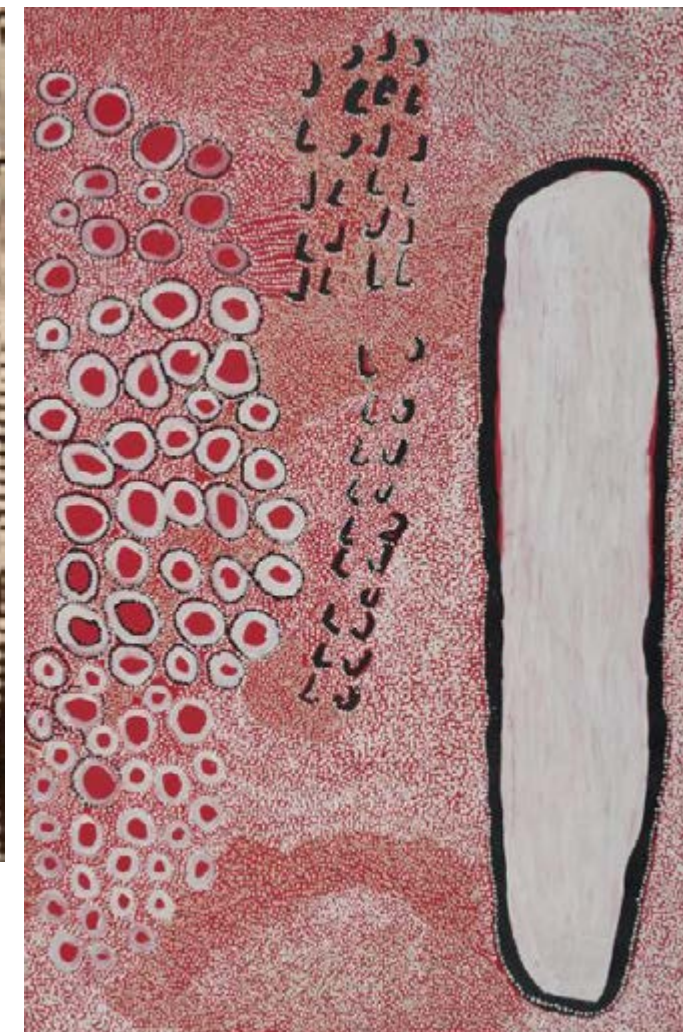


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Yurr'yun Nonggirnga Marawili 2015

Wilson in 2014. Ms. Wilson had to research the fishnet she recreated on canvas using a Synthetic polymer as her pictorial medium. The depiction of the grid-like fish net was indeed well organized and executed ... but it had a vast and omnipresent flaw in terms of its authenticity. In other words for Regina to say this was a aspect of her culture she lives with, is like saying a decorated powder horn is part of mine. That is not to say the work is uninteresting or unattractive, but one sees the work through the lens of open field painting of a modernist genre and enjoys it as such, hence it is safe to assume it has been "seen before". At least that is how we felt. It's entire "look" into our contemporary aesthetic has been well pre-marked, the image is not foreign to our eyes. Indeed all of the work seems modernism relived and pre-introduced, none of it is "strange", at this point. Another work is that of the decorated Larrakitj Poles. These designed and painted tree pole/trunks once served as marked burial places of ancestors ... they have not been used for quite some time. Yet, as once common familiar utilitarian structures, now gone to this culture or how they live today ... perhaps they thrive in distant memory-- they have been brought back, reinitiated as art by Nonggirnga Marawili in the piece known as Yurr'yun. And here they are recreated as "ART", decorated in careful earth pigments as distinctive as any contemporary pole-like sculpture may be and devoid of



'Tjitjiti' Carlene West 2015

their utilitarian identity. So in a sense they were once commonplace as profane-sacred they have been brought out of "retirement" and are now sacred-profane aesthetic at the Phillips Art Gallery. And curated as such. I am glad these artists and their curators have such deep understanding of the cross-roads of art and spiritual transcendence.

The rest of the show, although handsome and attractive, amid design and pattern painting and wall hanging, runs the route of resurrected spirit "cosmology" for the church-museum goer, at least that is what we are told. Although I responded to the designs and looks, colors and patterns, my spirit was not saved nor did I find great wonder, especially after I became apprised of the manufactured origin of this work and the pretense that was laid on for the show.

Al Jirikowic, Washington Editor

Contemporary Women Artists from Aboriginal Australia
The Phillips Collection, June 2 - September 9, 2018

Detroit

Entrepreneurship 407: White Supremacy, Benevolent Institutions, and Shinola

There was great clarity in the post-Civil War Confederate monument. Solid materials erected in a city's central square to carry an unambiguous message: honor white supremacy and intimidate African Americans. While we celebrate the removal of these granite and bronze statues from plazas around the country, it's worth considering whether their messages find new, unsettling, and implicit forms in places where we don't expect them to materialize.

One of the most surprising sites is the university classroom. Almost every university now has "entrepreneurial" programming that partners with businesses claiming to be creative and innovative. These centers offer curriculum posing as education, though without pedagogical complexity, intellectual rigor, criticality, or historical perspective, and without questioning the social values implicitly expressed through the company's messaging. These interlopers into education adopt the manner of cheerleaders, rather than of skeptics, carelessly draping collegiate gowns over values such as white supremacy. When white privilege is celebrated and validated by universities, how can we possibly ask students to acknowledge and confront racism?

Entrepreneurship 407: Shinola LLC

On March 15, 2015, Jacques Panis, then-president of the company Shinola LLC, was invited by the Center for Entrepreneurship to present to the hundreds of students enrolled in their Entrepreneurship Hour, a one-credit class offered for elective credit at the University of Michigan. Shinola has been hailed as an American success story — proof that "high-end" manufacturing can successfully return to the United States and benefit workers and the urban communities in which they live. All Shinola watches are assembled in the U.S., although most parts are manufactured in Switzerland and Thailand.

During the hour-long presentation, Panis celebrated himself and the other white Shinola designers and managers as leaders who had the vision to see that "There is no reason why this quality that we have already achieved [in Europe] can't be transferred to Detroit." In Panis's telling, these intrepid, "crazy" white people ventured into the "heart of Detroit ... where you used to go get your drugs" to open up

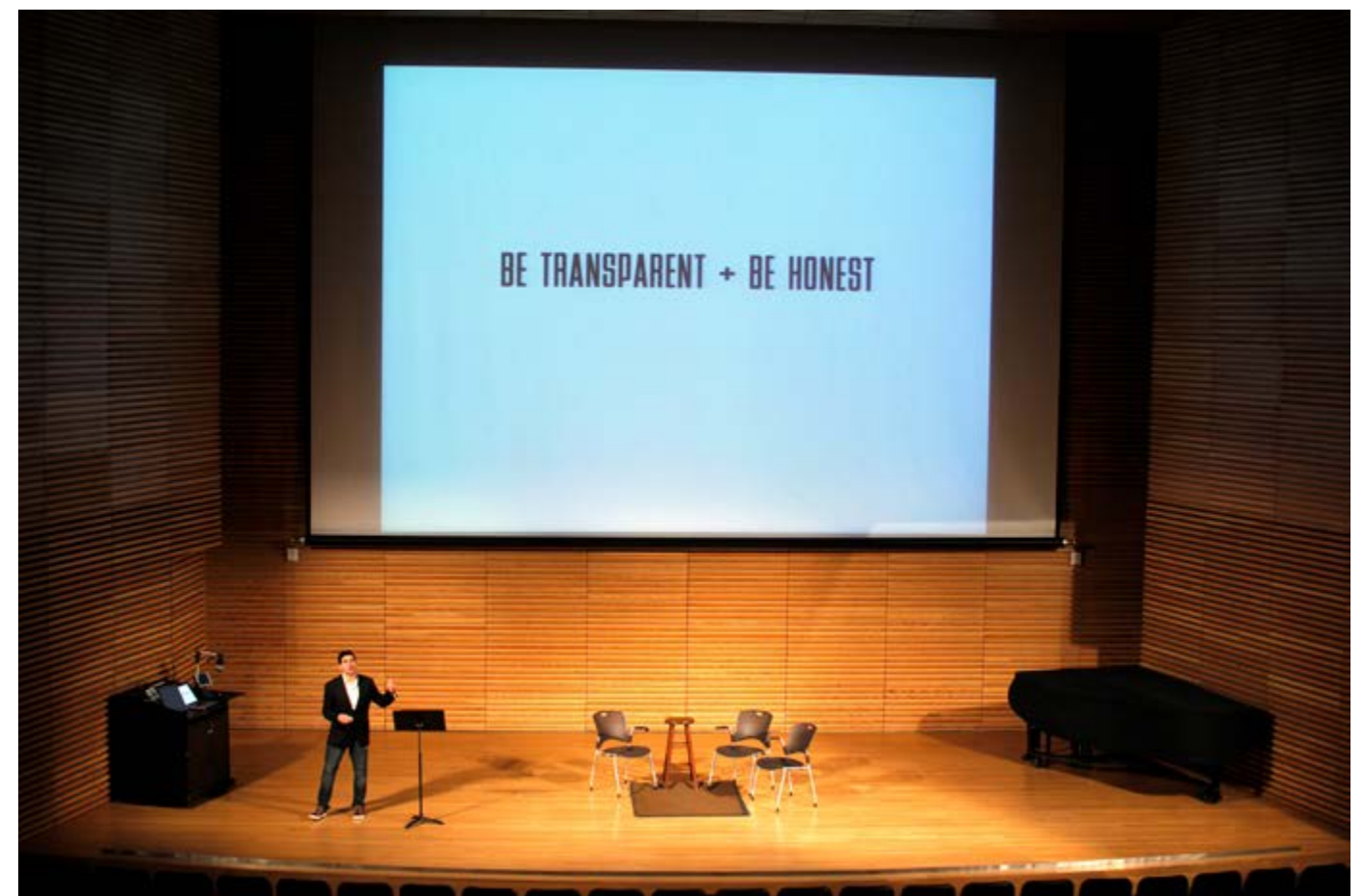


Rebekah Modrak, Rethink Shinola. 2017 - present

a "factory" where luxury watches are assembled by Detroiters thankful for the jobs. Panis touted Shinola as a job-creation company, a claim at the heart of their marketing campaign, which presents the company as a noble philanthropic effort to "raise up" Detroit.

Panis made it clear that the extensively imaged African American employees (the indigenous people at the heart of Shinola's visual marketing) only became employed at Shinola once they had "passed vision and acuity tests." Here, Panis asserts dominance by evoking the scene of inspection at the auction block and describing African Americans as a compliant group that can be trained to be useful workers, very different language than he used to tell the U-M students about the white designers whom Panis said he relentlessly pursued until they joined the company.

In another brand video presented during Panis's lecture, Shinola asks: "Why not accept that manufacturing is gone from this country? And why not let the rust and weeds finish what they started?" Detroit's ruin is presented as the natural and innocent progression of forces, like dandelions and crabgrass, rather than the consequence of intentional disinvestment in the city (by the same sorts of companies now gobbling it up) or the product of institutionalized, racist forces that decisively obstructed and sabotaged the accumulation of wealth in the African American community. The "failure" of Detroit is no failure for white investors; in fact, Panis talked about it with the same glee that radiated from him during his summing-up of Detroit's 2013 bankruptcy: "you get to wipe the slate clean and start over and it sounded great to us." In this "Let them eat cake" moment, Panis expresses to students the true lessons of the day. First, Detroit's ruin is the bread and butter of Shinola: the more tragic the city, the easier to sell its souvenirs. Second, while the African American community might lose



Photos pages 19 - 21: Rebekah Modrak

half its wealth as a result of the housing crisis or lose its political capital after being forced into bankruptcy by a white state legislature, our institutions protect rich white men from financial trauma: they always have a second chance.

Panis ended the talk with a Shinola brand video, a poem recited by a young African American to an elder, describing her love for Detroit, a city of empty houses and abandoned fields that will rise from the ashes. Presented in black-and-white amidst a montage of clips showing an imported, New York, blond supermodel hugging a black child and bicycling through the streets with an interracial entourage, the video depicts Detroit as a city where fifty years of disinvestment and lack of quality education and substandard services, like garbage removal, policing, and transportation, are salvaged through poetic optimism and the caress of a white woman, transforming Detroit into a land of harmonious racial relationships. Shinola sells white supremacy with a twist — the luxury watch simultaneously serves as a symbol of white oversight and ingenuity and as an opportunity to be associated with the grit and resilience of Detroit. In his final moment on the stage, Panis deceptively reframes imperialism as "community," using the word twelve times within forty-six seconds, before sending the students off on

their own mission, challenging them to start their ventures in Detroit by considering: "how do you get those people to be your ambassadors?"

This monument to white supremacist ideology, was erected, not in a tree-lined roundabout in Charlottesville, Virginia, but on the stage of the Stamps Auditorium at the University of Michigan. Presented as part of an educational curriculum, without opportunity for public commentary or questions, the Center for Entrepreneurship effectively gave Panis the platform for an infomercial on Shinola products and how value can be extracted from indigenous communities. While Panis told students that "the consumer wants a story," he simultaneously presented Shinola's manufactured story to them as fact, not as an honest discussion of the marketing campaign. The omissions are as glaring as the fabrications. For example, Panis never informed the U-M students that Shinola's parent company, Bedrock Brands, based in Texas, did extensive research before choosing Detroit as their subject and location, polling consumers to find out which city had more street credibility. Nor did he acknowledge that Bedrock chose Detroit because they saw that white-owned entrepreneurial efforts in the city generate free national press coverage.

Educating Impartially, Without Fear or Favor

If the basis of education is the attempt to honestly present information in order to analyze it with the distance that enables candid and critical reflection, then the Center failed that day. When an institution of higher learning begins to present brand messaging as truth — without commentary, dialogue, or criticism — we become no different than unfiltered commercial media channels. Moreover, our Hail to the Victors irresponsibly validates these sources. In that

sense, this “lecture” and other negligent opportunistic collisions between education and commerce are the academic version of “fake news,” although presented by the academy rather than by Russian operators sabotaging from the outside. “Fake education” presents misinformation and spin as fact, within the context of education but without the processes: learning, thinking, questioning, reflecting, and growing.

That day in Stamps Auditorium, I looked around for signs that others were stunned by the rhetoric of the talk. I saw none. Students casually gathered their backpacks and flocked around Jacques Panis, presumably to ask about internship opportunities. It’s possible to assume that the students were not prepared to respond critically or to ask serious questions, even if given the opportunity. Is this because the director of the Entrepreneur program closed the lecture by encouraging students to shop at the new Ann Arbor Shinola store and by commending Panis for inventing new processes and challenging the status quo, thus, again, cloaking this rhetoric in the jargon of innovation? Had students in the program been indoctrinated, through isolationist tactics that separate business from social criticism, or with influence techniques like “high-five Fridays,” into a rah-rah mentality toward business practices? Or, having witnessed the Great White Hope being erected on stage, was it just not comfortable to try to take it down?

Rebekah Modrak

Background

Artist and writer Rebekah Modrak created the artwork *Rethink Shinola* in order to provide the public with an accurate version of the Center for Entrepreneurship’s Jacques Panis lecture. *Rethink Shinola* analyzes, critiques and exposes a complex and patronizing agenda of marketing white supremacy, Black labor, and authenticity with Detroit as the central subject. The work features a meticulous re-creation of the lecture, re-performed by an actor in the original lecture hall. An earlier article “Bougie Crap” analyzes the links between design, education, corporate culture and the appropriation of images and symbols of labor and blackness by luxury producers. Rebekah is the lead author of *Reframing Photography*, a book critically exploring photographic representation, ethics, re-enactments, and other issues within the image-based world. She is the creator of *Re Made Co.*, an artwork posing as a “company.” *Re Made* recreates actual company *Best Made Co.* to critique their appropriation of working class identities and the revitalization of traditional male roles. Rebekah is an Associate Professor in the Stamps School of Art & Design at the University of Michigan.



Rebekah Modrak, Rethink Shinola: restaging of the Jacques Panis, then-president of Shinola, lecture for the Center for Entrepreneurship, University of Michigan. 2017- present

Chicago

Huong Ngo, Reap the Whirlwind at Aspect Ratio (West town)

How are representations of the female body visualized and introduced to the western gaze in colonized southeast Asia? How do these representations sustain the programmes of colonization? How do these representations grant or deny subjectivity to subject of the gaze? And perhaps most importantly, how do we reconsider these women as subjects seeking political agency rather than remain as flattened images of a historical moment?

These are the questions posed by Huong Ngô in her most recent show, *Reap the Whirlwind*, at Aspect Ratio Gallery in West Town, and are responded to by great effect on the part of the artist. By pairing early 1900s popular media from colonial Vietnam with her ongoing research of women involved in the concurrent anti-colonial movement through the use of pulp novels, handmade books filled with ominous black pages that reveal their text through human touch and life sized prints obscuring female figures through a patina of obsidian black. The show is highly polished and immaculately conceived.

While her previous projects concentrated on the history of women who were a part of the resistance movement and their tactics of counter surveillance, *Reap the Whirlwind* focuses on their foil—the hyper-visible, exoticized concubine that was the subject of a number of novels and widely-circulated colonial postcards of the time. By deconstructing the hyper-sexualized female subject, Ngo delivers an exhibition worthy of deeper exploration on the part of the artist and repeated viewing by the show’s audience.

Spencer Hutchinson, Chicago Editor

Black is flat at Roots and Culture

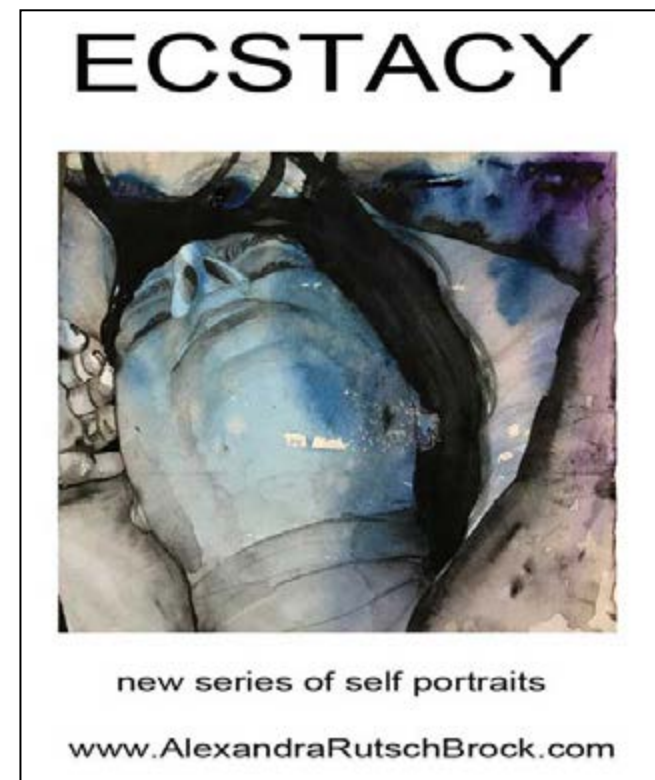
Gonzalo Reyes Rodriguez and Darryl DeAngelo Terrell’s two person show, currently open at Roots and Culture brings together the work of two very different artists. Terrell’s text pieces act as a striking foil to Rodriguez’s photographic works which explore the legacy of documentary photography drawn from the legacy of the Sandanista National Liberation Front and declassified

School of the America’s psychological operations manuals. By exploiting the ambiguities inherent to legacy of documentary forms from recent history, Rodriguez attempts to lay bare anomalies that affect the materiality of pictures and documents when transposed from their historical context as well as the relationship of textual and visual information to ask deeper questions.

Terrell’s work is concerned with the dangers inherent to being black in America during a time when the black subject is under attack from police and private citizens, a time when it is uncertain whether or not black bodies will make it home. Terrell considers the collective anxiety of the black community and exposes them through stark works of plain text. Terrell’s fascination lies in making the thoughts and words of mothers to black sons and daughters the center of the work carried by these texts in the form of prayers, as well as fragments of conversation.

In spite of the show’s compelling subject matter, the entire exhibition over all falls a little bit flat. The deep subject matters that these artists are exploring would perhaps be best addressed in separate shows. Nonetheless, both artists deliver bodies of work that warrant a good thoughtful viewing.

Spencer Hutchinson, Chicago Editor



Cornwall

Why Cornwall Sold Out

Being asked to write an article on such a topic is rather like asking a man if he has stopped beating his wife.

Cornwall. We have to go back a little. Perhaps as far as the Vikings with whom we were on friendly terms, often fighting on the same side. Jolly Vikings. To the Romans who didn't quite get here, at least not Down West and, anyway what have they ever done for us? The Saxons. Don't mention the Saxons. They made it to North Cornwall, which is evident in the difference in place names between North and South and they are generally acknowledged as being responsible for establishing the River Tamar as the border, presumably between us and them. The Normans? We didn't seem to mind them very much and I suspect that with the sequence of tenants of tenants of tenants that nothing much really changed, especially for the serf at the bottom of the pile and I will leave it to your imaginations to visualise what sort of pile he was actually in.

Move along to 1497. Busy times with the An Gof rising in St Keverne and Perkin Warbeck later in the same year. Move along to 1548. Archdeacon Body came to a sticky end in Helston engendering a certain amount of bloody aftermath and 1549 brought the Prayer Book Rebellion, definitely a bloody ending to that one. Some say that our grievances did not end there but rose again in the Civil War 1642, 1644, 1646 and the Gear Rout in 1648. That really was the end. We were finally crushed and that was when we lost it, when we lost our separate identity, when we became, deep breath now, English.

But I suspect that as this magazine has the word Art in the title, Art is what I am supposed to be talking about. But Cornwall is not that simple. You have to go back in order to understand why we have arrived where we have arrived and why it is not going well.

Now we are a Tourist Industry and are fast becoming a victim of our own success. We are a tiny county and we have definitely over-sold the whole 'Holiday Destination' thing. Have we created a Monster Tourist who blows in from the North once a year and destroys us? Does it, perhaps, sound familiar?

Richard Dawkins' memes might apply here. A cultural memory of bad things coming down from the North, a meme that has been passed through the generations, a meme that makes us resentful of the invaders, the holiday-makers, the bringers of money – ah, yes, you see that is definitely where the buck stops. We need the tourism as we



Alfred Wallace. (Tate)

have lost everything else. We have lost the mining industry to cheaper tin and copper in other parts of the world, our fishermen face a constant battle against foreign competition, our farmers simply cannot function in a climate of rules and regulations emanating from Whitehall and Brussels – well, one of those might be solved in the next, ooh, let's say, 30 years?! Not.

We have destroyed what we have to supply what they want. We have sold out. We have lost respect for what Cornwall has to offer and have attempted to provide what we think the visitors want. We have well and truly killed the goose that laid the golden egg. We have desecrated the land, the villages, the towns, the coastline, the architecture. Oh, dear, don't get me started on architecture. Wonderfully old and solid granite buildings have been 'converted' unsympathetically in the name of the 'Tourist Industry' and it is an Industry, although one is tempted to ask what it is that it actually produces.

Some say that our grievances ... rose again in the Civil War 1642, 1644, 1646 and the Gear Rout in 1648. That really was the end. We were finally crushed and that was when we lost it, when we lost our separate identity, when we became, deep breath now, English.

What do we have left? Well, finally, we come to it. We have Art. Art that can give the visitors what they believe Cornwall is, the dream, the fantasy, the Celtic Myth. Visitors, as we have now been taught to call them, appear not actually to look at Cornwall when they are here, and who does look in this day of mobile phones, of quick photographs to record one's existence in such and such a

spot on such and such a date without actually having to spend the time looking. (I am considering the necessity for a modern day Art Highwayman who would waylay people and relieve them, for their own good of their mobile phones while shouting 'Stand And Stare' in order to try to encourage people actually to look at things.) Art now provides the Cornwall that may or may not have been there. Art does the looking for you. Art reproduces what should be there. Nice little sketches, watercolours of the seaside, nice little pastels of fields delicately dotted with sheep, nice little idyllic memories of what wasn't actually there and blue, above all, blue and buckets of sunshine. There are not many pictures with rain in them but we do have it even in August – often.

Cornwall is chock full of Art and Artists and Artisans and Craftsmen and Galleries for the aforementioned. We have the high, middle and low brow, we have brows of taste that have never even been thought of in your far away Saxon lands.

We have the Tate Gallery in St Ives, we have Barbara Hepworth's Studio in St Ives, we have the Bernard Leach Pottery in St Ives – approaching its 100th anniversary. We have more galleries per square inch here than you could ever shake a paintbrush at and not just in St Ives. Everywhere where there is a shed or a disused chapel or an empty school or an old bakery, in fact anything that has escaped conversion into holiday homes is up for grabs by the artistic community.

And what do we produce here in these tiny cottage industries? There's that word again, industry, but this is a real one, a real stick of rocky arty industry because a lot that is produced here is bad, or at best, repetitive. There are many very good artists here who are almost forced to paint what the visitor wants in order to survive. 'Have you got any more of the ones with the sea in them?' 'Have you got any more of those blue bowls?' The number of times I have heard artisans say, 'Well, this is my bread and butter work but I get a chance to really let go on the occasional big piece now and then.' How does this affect their work? How does this injure their artistic integrity or is it more important to feed the inner man? Literally.

Do they teach this at Art College, if there are any of those left, that is, I am sure they teach them all about industry, but do they teach them about the vileness of survival in LaLa Land? In the sweet little end of the world that Cornwall has become. But Cornwall is not a pretty, pretty place, but a tough, rugged, battered rocky end to a landmass jutting out into a hostile sea, pointing to many parts of the world - but not to England.

What of the good Art? It exists. What of the new-fangled installationistas? How do they sit within this struggling



Bob Bourne at 80 (Belgrave Gallery)

industry? The answer is that they do not sit within it but install themselves quite apart from the Local Art. They are above such things and create their own rocky outcrops upon which to sit like patience on an empty plinth. Bless!

In short. There is a lot of Art here and there are many factions within that Art here and there are many styles within that Art here but, and this is our one salvation, it is all here. The artists, sculptors, workers of metal and glass, the potters – although nowadays they prefer to be called 'ceramicists' – they are all here. There is no end to the number of artists that Cornwall can sustain and no end to the amount and variety of Art that they can produce and, it sometimes seems that there is no end to the amount of would be artists who come to live the alternative life, and stay and, somehow, live it. This is where it is all happening on this tiny, rocky, edgy outcrop of an Island set in a suitably azure sea. We are here on the edge and that is where the artistic community has always been.

So here's to Art. Long may it flourish on this kicking and screaming rocky boot of England. Long may it be sought after in its many splendid shapes and forms. We have finally found an invader we are willing to accept, even cherish. Whether Saxon, or Roman or Kentish, or Scot, if you can wield a brush, kick a wheel, blow a goblet, carve a stone, write a sonnet, install an installation, then we love you and will keep and honour you as long as we both shall live.

Maxine Flaneuse de Cornouaille

Dancing with Myself - The Artists Represent Themselves

Flowers made of salt, very fragile compact masses that emerge from the walls of the warehouses of Punta della Dogana in Venice, centuries-old witnesses of the salt trade that took place here, welcome the visitor to the exhibition of Dancing with Myself. There could be no better identity card to introduce a collective that on the presence/absence of the body of the artist or its substitution is hinged.

The focus of the exhibition is that, if each self-portrait is a representation of self, not all representations of self must necessarily be self-portraits.

The self-portrait, as an individualistic expression of the artist's self, originates in the European, Italian, French and Dutch Renaissance.

"Man with a red turban" by Jan van Eyck (1433), among the first, the self-portraits of Durer of the sixteenth century, up to the nineteenth century by Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, Vincent Van Gogh, Edvard Munch and Frida Kahlo, provide not only a physiognomic representation of themselves, but they are also descriptions of the psychology, the character and the social status to which the artist belonged.

With the advent of photography, canvases and easels disappear and the artist represents himself or a part of it through photographic images in black and white, in colour, in extra-large or miniaturized dimensions.

But there is much more: the "I", which philosophy had until then considered as autonomous and unified, is being questioned, at the beginning of the twentieth century in particular by Freud with the concept of divided subject and subconscious. Philosophers such as Althusser and Foucault consider the individual subject to the powers of the state, which determine its formation, the ideologies of sex and gender, of race and nation.

Cindy Sherman's works in the exhibition are an example of these concepts: in the series Bus riders (1976/2000) or in the more recent works Untitled (2016), the artist is always the subject of her photographs, but almost never recognizable, testifying to the impossibility of representing an essential identity, a unitary "self".

Also in the close-ups of John Coplans' body (parts of hands and feet), of Bruce Nauman, whose body can be seen but not the head, in the leg of Robert Gober, the artist wants to represent himself making himself unrecognizable.

The Swiss Urs Fischer is depicted as a wax statue that is consumed little by little and at the end of the exhibition his image will have disappeared.

The self-portrait of Alighiero & Boetti (as the artist decided to call himself, fascinated by the theme of double)



Inside Punta della Dogana

from 1993 is a bronze sculpture, which represents him while holding a water pipe over his head, with which he gets wet, generating water vapor. It displays the metaphor of the artistic creation, which must be cooled, and also the metaphor of a man diagnosed with a brain tumour (he will die the following year).

Maurizio Cattelan, in the operaWe (2010), represents two "oneselves" in synthetic material of reduced dimensions, which lie on a wooden bed in the classic position of corpses. As is customary in Italy, the two Cattelans are dressed in dark clothing, wearing brand new shoes. What is striking is that they do not have the typical position of the dead, but they look at us with eyes wide open, even if from different angles. They are two equal and different people, as if they had chosen to live in a non-coincidental way. The work is the metaphor of an artist who over the years has changed his person, dying and resurrecting in another body (Cattelan, inhibited by terrible shyness, is recreated by changing the angle of his teeth, posture, muscle mass).

The artists of this beautiful exhibition only "dance alone" apparently: in reality their bodies and images become the tools to address social, racial, gender or sexual issues and problems, to ask questions about the future of artistic creation and about its reasons.

The exhibition, which in some respects may appear disturbing, represents a significant cross-section of the new trends in contemporary art: alienating, able to astonish, reject or marvel. An art, after all, baroque: as Giambattista Marino explained 400 years ago, "e' del poeta il fin la meraviglia" (the aim of the poet is to astonish).

Liviana Martin, Italian Editor
(Punta della Dogana, Pinault Collection, Venice from 8/04/2018 to 16/12/2018).

Dressing for that Final Journey

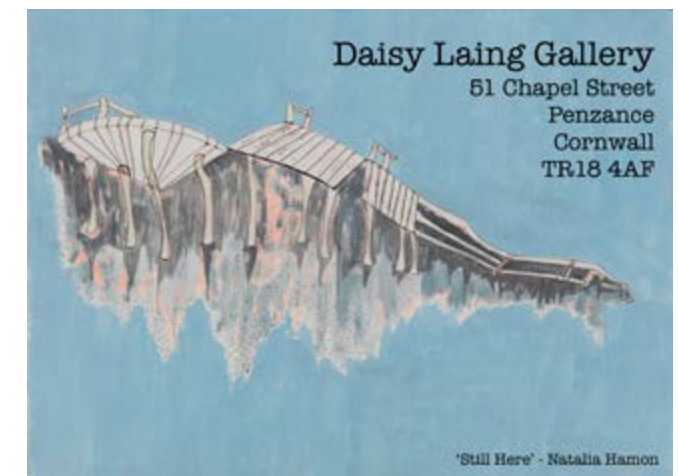
Have you ever wondered what you would wear on your last final journey? Though this is fashion at the extreme end, for this important moment nothing should be left out, nor any detail overlooked. Prepare your outfit or others will do it for you, perhaps leaving you slightly unsatisfied, to say the least. As the old joke goes, "Is he a good salesman?" "Well, he could sell a pair of trousers to a widow's dead husband and an extra pair at the same time!" That's what happens when others make the choices for you.

Think about it for a moment; here today, gone tomorrow with no time to waste. What would you like to be remembered in? Fancy dress or casual? Your favourite dress or shirt? An apron or a pair of work trousers? In your purple and blue bow-tie, flowered shirt and yellow jacket? Your dinner jacket? Your tracksuit? What about shoes? Shall we forget those, or do we want them too to complete the picture? Periodically check before you go to see if what you want to wear still fits; otherwise have it taken in or let out or decide on something else. In the end, or our demise, it's a final journey to where? Better to be happy with what you're wearing; you never know.

The image that we have of ourselves and wish to leave behind is a strong representation of our personality and the lifestyle that we led. Even though it is still somewhat of a taboo dinner party conversation, the trend today is more on the casual side, less dressy clothes. Fewer suits and less nice dresses are being worn as the tendency goes towards comfort. Gabriella dressed her neighbour in an apron, as the apron was like a uniform for her – without it, she went nowhere. Scarlett would like to be dressed in red and black underwear with black fishnet stockings attached to a black suspender belt, slightly covered with a short black satin robe. No mention of shoes, just the naked feet. Sexy.

In any case, don't leave this final fashion statement up to your family or friends, as they might get it wrong - not something you would want.

Pendery Weekes, Fashion Editor



EXTRAVAGANZA 2

ART ON TRIAL
The high Court of Justice will commence at 7pm
at
THE ACORN THEATRE
January 31st 2019
penzance

the comic and hilarious nature of art on trial is set to expose art to serious satirical questioning

contemporary and historical artists will be placed in the witness box to be questioned on their appropriateness to culture and contemporary life

the audience acting as jury will pass judgement as a final conclusion to the necessity of art or not

ticket price from Acorn £10 - door £12
organised by NewArt Examiner



Doggy-Do Miklos Legrady

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NEWS IN BRIEF

NEW ART EXAMINER TO BE AT ART BASEL, MIAMI

The New Art Examiner will be featured in the December 2018 magazine sector and you will have copies to read. Enjoy.

NEW HIGHS

The website is showing 500 unique international visitors a day with over 1,000 of you a month spending up to an hour reading.

WRITER'S MEETING:

The writers' meeting in Redwing on 6th was enjoyed by all eight of those attending. future dates were arranged 10 November, 8 December, 12 January, 2 February. If you wish to participate come along to Redwing and bring 250 word review to read out on any art topic you wish. managingeditor@newartexaminer.net

EMPTY SHOP

Shanghart Supermarket, which currently is showing in Shanghai, looks like any typical convenience store from the outside. Chinese shoppers often walk inside in search of actual supermarket goods, without the slightest clue that they won't find any content inside of the packaging.

Xu Zhen is a young, contemporary Chinese artist who looks to combine conceptual art with social critique.

FAREWELL, OLD FRIEND

NeotericArt will be missed. It was the more interesting side of the Chicago art scene.

2018 Hiscox / Art Basel Excerpts

62% Galleries favour advertising on Instagram to Facebook
 57% of new artists to auction houses failed to sell
 0.2% of artists have work that sells for more than \$10 million, such sales accounted for 32% of all sales by value
 China accounted for 21% of global art market sales
 The top 20 artists accounted for 4% of all solo exhibitions in 2017
 Of the top 100 artists whose works fetched the highest amounts at auction in 2017, just 13 were women
 New York, London, Beijing and Hong Kong accounted for 82% of turnover, on 17% of global lots sold
 The wealth management industry is facing a shift from mainly providing investment advice to a holistic wealth management model (Deloitte)
 The 51 Artists, Curators, Directors and Dealers Changing the Art World in 2018 at www.observer.com



It may look like a tranquil group of women ready to take on a sewing project for the autumn, but instead it was the New Art Examiner's monthly writing meeting held in Penzance. Though only 8 this time, writers came from Cornwall, the Seychelles and the US. Topics included land art/environmental art, Ayn Rand, the Lost Library Book, Robert Borlase Smart, The Children Act, recycled artwork for the disposable age and Seamus Moran at the Penwith Gallery in St Ives. Book your flight in time to come to our next meeting on 10 November; lunch is offered by the magazine.

Art | Basel Miami Beach

The Wolfsonian-FIU, Miami Beach

December 6–9, 2018

