

NEW ART examiner

The independant voice of the Visual Arts

FEATURES

THE MOLDING OF THE MOVING
IMAGE MAKERS.

THE WIDENING CHASM
BETWEEN ARTISTS AND
CONTEMPORARY ART

PARTNERSHIP WITH PLYMOUTH
COLLEGE OF ART

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TRICIA VAN ECK



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

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

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

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

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Editor,

In Chicago for a week to continue research and interviews for my New Art Examiner project. I managed to see only three shows (not counting a zoom through the Chicago Surrealism show at the MCA). But it was otherwise hugely productive. I did interviews with Jim Yood, Jeff Abell, Annie Markovich, Lynne Warren, Corey Postiglione, Fern Shaffer and Tom Zurfluh, and had conversations with Michiko Itatani, Linda Kramer and Richard Siegesmund, in addition to my hosts Lena Thodos and her daughters Diane and Christina.

Janet Koplos

Editor

If artists cannot and will not stand up for their own and their fellow artists' rights and refuse to acknowledge their own exploitation how can they be effective or even convincing when standing up for others? Here Nina Simone is speaking not from a trendy political agenda but from her own deeply felt experience with injustice, "I choose to reflect the times and the situations IN WHICH I FIND MYSELF. That is my beauty."

Artists: be political but get real, stand up, get angry, get a clue and stop pretending you're somehow different or more insightful and righteous as a human than everyone else.

(Search Youtube 'Nina Simone: An Artist's Duty' for video)

Bill Roseberry

Editor,

Question:

What practical use is Tate St.Ives to artists living and working in Cornwall.....?

Just to get the ball rolling.....

In the 25 years Tate St.Ives has been open

for business (I use that word advisedly as I consider it a cynical commercial operation) it has had one exhibition in 2007 that involved some local artists. After this one exhibition the idea of using local talent was permanently shelved.

Please discuss ...

Dr.Julian St Clair

News Briefs

II New £2,000 Prize

The Contemporary British Painting Prize offers winner a solo exhibition at Swindon Museum and Art Gallery plus a £2,000 purchase prize for their work. The prize's judges include: Michael Peppiatt (Art International 1985-1995), Amanda Geitner (East Anglie Art Fund), Grant Scanlan (Huddersfield Art Gallery) and Sophie Cummings (Swindon Museum and Gallery).

<https://www.a-n.co.uk>

2 NAE at the Penwith

On Friday 8th April Peter Davies of the Penwith Gallery, Michael Gacza of the Belgrave Gallery, Derek Guthrie, Publisher and Daniel Nanavati, UK Editor, both of the New Art Examiner, will be fielding questions at Penwith Gallery. This is your chance to have your say about the art world in Cornwall and internationally. Further details available from the Penwith Gallery. Title:

"Should The Future Of The Penwith Be Its Past?".

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.

Off-Grid

Daniel Nanavati

Derek Guthrie once told me that people like to think of the art world as nature, free and open, but actually it is a Game Reserve where the animals are controlled and regularly culled. And where the money is in the hands of the hunters.

In his younger years Derek had three sell-out shows in London, UK and he is in two public collections. But like many another artist he knew his personality and way of working would never do well in the game hunting art world.

We will talk about personality traits another time but here I think we should reflect on what other artists have done in the face of this controlled art world.

It is one of the facts of Cornwall that it is home to the largest number of self-employed artists and craftsmen / women in the United Kingdom. Drawn to Cornwall for the magic of the landscape, inspiration, healing, and its own history. Manifested amongst the villages and towns scattered on the landscape. The maturing of this process does not happen

overnight. It is quite possible in Cornwall to finally meet somebody you have heard of for 20 years who lives but ten miles distant.

This is made possible because these artists and artisans have retrenched into finding their own fan bases. These fan bases are initially supported by community and extended by digital publishing.

In effect they have gone off the established art world's grid.

You can go off-grid in a city. It is not so much the place as character that determines what and how you do it. You will be closer to Community than the art market and for the most part, happily so. Following your star and those inner energies that drive so many artists is harder to do when you begin to think you have not had your chance to be in the Tate or shown in a major museum. Once off-grid achieving the ideal of independence other certainties change their shape and the lure of wealth can diminish.

The Art World elite call this Community Art.

SHOULD THE FUTURE OF THE PENWITH BE ITS PAST?

AN EVENING SYMPOSIUM AT PENWITH GALLERY 7.30PM 8TH APRIL 2016

PENWITH
SOCIETY OF ARTS IN CORNWALL
GALLERY

BELGRAVESTIVES
Modern & Contemporary Art

THE NAE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
PENWITH GALLERY
BELGRAVE GALLERY
NEWLYN SOCIETY OF ARTISTS

NSA
NEWLYN SOCIETY OF ARTISTS

ON THE PANEL:

DEREK GUTHRIE, PUBLISHER, NEW ART EXAMINER
MICHAEL GACA, DIRECTOR, BELGRAVE GALLERY
PETER DAVIES, PENWITH SOCIETY
DANIEL NANAVATI, UK EDITOR, NEW ART EXAMINER

**NEW
ART**
examiner

QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE FROM 8 PM
HAVE YOUR SAY ABOUT THE ART WORLD AND THE ART WORLD IN CORNWALL
(AND IN THE PUB AFTER)

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CAN YOU HELP?

**Janet Koplos has recently been
 awarded an Andy Warhol Grant to
 research the history of the New
 Art Examiner.**

**She is looking for original material
 dealing with the Examiner -
 letters, journal / diary entries,
 photographs and the like from
 1973 to 2002.**

Contact:

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 mail at:

**987 Como Blvd. E.,
 St. Paul, MN 55103. USA.**

From DEREK GUTHRIE's Facebook Discussions

IN RESPONSE TO THE MEMORY OF THE COCORAN.

Derek Guthrie:

It is not plight at funeral to mention defects of the deceased. The Cocoran was not all things to many. When the grief or nostalgia is over I do think this is an golden opportunity to examine the failure of Museum Culture. Including the failure of DC as a cultural centre, the Nations Capitol..Other than chasing the bad guys, the board. There are more important questions. For example why has the US lost Cultural Leadership, that it attained post WW2. In my opinion a vibrant culture cherishes important questions. In so doing it renews itself. Waving ones own credentials of sincerity, good intentions, is not enough. I in Art History can see in a declining culture good Art. I suggest that the first step is to consign PR to the trash can. Or at least recognize that PR may get dumb people,or Charlatans , or professional manipulator's of Public opinion, into the White House, which will earn any president a place in History may be a bad footnote, but PR will not ensure any artist a place in History as Artists die when the fashion becomes out of date. Who Knows the super starts of yesterday other than Art Historians?

"I come to bury Caesar and to praise him."
DC version of Shakespeare.

Carolyn Campbell:

Wassup with the PR bashing? Were it so easy to lay it at marketing's feet. It's fairly evident if one goes back into the founding of this country as to why culture is not a priority. Pursuits such as panting in pre-colonial times was seen as only valuable in documenting a person through portraiture. Landscape or still life painting was looked down upon as slothful and not a valuable use of one's time. Religious refugees from Europe fled to this country. It was a motley crew. Through the ages, artists emerged but the government nor society saw it as an important contribution. Look at

WW Corcoran, for example. His collecting American art in the 19th century was scoffed at since collectors of the day saw only value in European art. With the election of JFK in the 60s and a golden age of culture through the construction of the Kennedy Center and its programming, great musicians performing at the White House, the US celebrated a new age. President Johnson's continuing support of the NEA with Congressmen such as John Brademas, Sidney Yates, Livingston Biddle and many others - Nancy Hanks comes to mind as well cemented this commitment. Then the culture wars of the 80s and 90s hit and the party was over. Then the BIG money and conservatism in governance stepped in. I will leave that fall out up to your Google expertise Derek. It's no mystery. And it isn't about PR. Lo that it were that simple an explanation.

Jessica Buben:

Ummm.. I was an employee of NAE once, and uh, you are one pretentious dude. No offense.

Derek Guthrie:

Hi Caroline ,

I claim no expertise on Google. In fact you are infinitely more expert than I am. You blogging in memory of the Cocoran has no match. You are a great wordsmith . Either as PR person or as a activist. I am a secret artist that fell into publishing by accident. You contribution to the memory of the Cocoran is reveals great passion and love of Art. How I wish the NAE could print your thoughts.

Yes D.C, had its golden era as you mention. My sad point it has faded. My other attempted point is that I feel that PR has become a liability in American life and culture which is the flip side of the demise of media which has sold out to political management. Chris Hedges and Noam Chomsky great American thinkers have well explained this.. I point to a phenomena I witnessed the demise of the National Endowment that should never have happened. In fact the New Art Examiner printed many articles in this lost cause. As you have written there are significant problems in Museum Culture. This was clear when the Cocoran canceled the Mapplethorpe show and when the association of Museums put up

little or no resistance to the absurdly of Jessie Helms who rallied a few religious bigots to attack artists. Artists and Art writers were sacrificed by the National Endowment and the Museums stood by. They still get grants to hand out to so called High culture. . The question is what caused this absurd collapse.

. For the record unnoticed and not acknowledged, Jane Addams Allen resigned her livelihood as Art Critic from the Washington Times. As the Culture wars led by Patrick Buchanan attacked artists. The PR set loose in that time swept the board clean and DC has been in decline ever since. Politics have taken over art funding, also in History, and that means Political PR has won the day. This I think should be discussed. I repeat the Cocoran was not all things to all, also The National Endowment for the Arts had lapsed into its own Pork and became an Insider club. The culture of the mutual admiration club is well embedded in D.C. and control is the game of the social circuits. Time to move on if possible. Social requirements or PC ,both sides of the aisle are the lead blanket that produces the deep cultural sleep. . So we have a deep sleep dreaming of never never land of yesterday. I do not believe in fairy's but want to believe in artists and offer a chance to them to speak out., They do not. WHY is the question.?

John Link:

Derek Guthrie said: "want to believe in artists." That's the crux of it all. When art decays, it comes down to the artists. It is artists, ultimately, who let art decay, not any or all of the other usual suspects. Just as when art in and for itself flourishes, that is also the "fault" of the artists, not the hangers-on. Admittedly, this is seems oversimplified when one attempts to trace the trajectory of any such art that flourishes. It does not all "make it" nor does it need to "make it" to be good. The art of the French caves waited a long time to "make it", except among the very small tribe that created it. But if the good stuff does not exist, somehow, somewhere, culture cannot be transmitted because it is not possible to transmit nothing.

.....

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Derek Guthrie:

Dear Friends once again I post from ICH Newsletter. My main source of news and comment. I suggest to all of you to read this dynamic and fearless publication that gives detailed news not found elsewhere.

"My own concern is primarily the terror and violence carried out by my own state, for two reasons. For one thing, because it happens to be the larger component of international violence. But also for a much more important reason than that; namely, I can do something about it. So even if the U.S. was responsible for 2 percent of the violence in the world instead of the majority of it, it would be that 2 percent I would be primarily responsible for. And that is a simple ethical judgment. "

- Noam Chomsky

"Wise and good men are, in my opinion, the strength of the state; much more so than riches and arms." - Benjamin Franklin

"Few men are willing to brave the disapproval of their fellows, the censure of their colleagues, the wrath of their society. Moral courage is a rarer commodity than bravery in battle or great intelligence. Yet it is the one essential vital quality for those who seek to change a world which yields most painfully to change." - Robert F. Kennedy

Annie Markovich:

Yes, great courage to ignore the criticism when doing what is not popular or the norm. Thank you for the reminder.

www.facebook.com/derekguthrie

The Widening Chasm Between Artists and Contemporary Art

David Houston

Not long ago contemporary art was simply the art of our time, the art of now. This is no longer the case, as the designation of “contemporary art” has become a new art historical category distinct from time, place, and cultural continuity.

Like its predecessor, “modern art,” contemporary art has become a clearly defined movement. Unlike modern art, the new contemporary art is not distinguished by stylistic unity, Utopian yearnings, or avant-garde chic. Instead, it is a carefully crafted arena that is a telling reflection of our times driven by the extreme concentration of private wealth in the hands of the few, the homogenization of a globalized world, the outsized privilege of celebrity, and the hyper-commodification of culture. As children of Warhol, and harkening back to the magisterial playfulness of Marcel Duchamp, these artists often value the idea over the object, and find a great deal of inspiration in the mechanisms and images of mainstream commercial culture. In hyper-conceptualizing the lingua franca of the media, contemporary art acts like a shadow world to the consumerist model, intellectualizing and mythologizing the simple concepts of branding and marketing that have come to permeate our everyday world. Duchamp's playfully subversive conceptual resistance has been transformed into academic tropes and multi-million dollar marketing strategies.

The old contemporary art has always been a bit of a cypher for the media. Unable to unravel the complex genealogy of an art whose sources and ambitions were beyond the limited realm of commercial culture and easily digested popular sentiment, the mass media framed art as either an extravagant high-cost item or a freak show. One of the big moments for this new direction in culture was the “Sensation” exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum in October 2, 1999 - January 9, 2000 that solidified the attention grabbing ability of contemporary art in both the institutional and popular minds. Playing on the business strategies of Charles Saatchi, a collector also prominent in the public relations business, “Sensations” signaled a carefully calculated approach to contemporary art-as-spectacle, the ascendancy of institutional cultural

branding, and the problematic interlocking of public/private economic interests as a new norm. It was also one of the first prominent, but increasingly bold and common, partnerships between a staid older museum and a powerful collector/promoter that exploited the public relations potential of contemporary art.

If institutions follow the money, the arc from the openings of the Tate Modern in London (May of 2000) and in New York City, the New Museum (December of 2007), the new Whitney Museum at the High Line (May of 2015) and The Met Breuer (March of 2016), leads directly to contemporary art. The desire to garner the interest and

*As a new international
commodity of exchange,
contemporary art has come to
function like Bit Coin for the
international elite,*

support of collectors and garner larger and younger audiences is one driving force in the institutional swing in the direction of the art of now. While many museums eschewed the art of their time in the first three quarters of the previous century, today it is an absolute necessity to collect and exhibit contemporary art, effectively making public institutions powerful players in the volatile contemporary art market.

How times have changed; the old prices now look charmingly affordable and many old masters are still affordable compared to living artists of the new contemporary art. The six figures paid for the Neo-expressionist paintings of Julian Schnabel and David Salle in the 1980s, so shocking at the time; seems sane by the standards of today's stratospheric prices for living artists. The fifty-four million dollars that the Australian Business man Alan Bond paid for Van Gogh in 1987, seen then as a rich man's folly, today looks like a great bargain.

The new contemporary art, with low or no

content, is most appreciated as such when it is superficially bright and shiny, a clever parlor trick, or an over-inflated simplistic idea. Not by chance, the new contemporary art succeeds in radically different hemispheres and plays well in both the mass media and the digital arena. It has succeeded as its own self-created brand as typified by the uber contemporary branded artists like Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst. But this brand identity also inadvertently becomes a trap for other, more thoughtful, artists. It seemed that in the 1990s Cindy Sherman was trying to make images so aggressively ugly and confrontational that no one would want to own such uningratiating photos. But, already branded as one of the greatest photographers of her generation, they did.

With the current trans-valuation of values driven by the recent consolidation of private wealth, contemporary art has earned a new status as a meta-commodity of exchange, laden with the lingering aura of prestige and power of traditional art.

The commercialization of culture and resulting inflated value of contemporary art signifies that the old humanistic values of creativity, meaning, and transcendence (personally, socially, or spiritually) were finally liquidated by the ironic relativity of postmodernism. Nor is it enough to own collections boasting the same contemporary artists as others in the collecting classes. In the last decade, over 300 private museums appeared around the world to house these new collections, solidifying the trends for museums to advance private agendas over

being public trusts.

The new contemporary art, like the new politics, the new economy, and the new global culture, is a conscious creation formed in the image of the financial market, that uncontrollable, unexplainable, impersonal force that has been imbued with god-like powers, but speaks only the international language of money. As such, contemporary art finds new function and meaning as one of the currencies of one of the last major unregulated markets in the world, a market that has replaced cultural values with the predictable metrics of exchange value.

As a new international commodity of exchange, contemporary art has come to function like Bit Coin for the international elite, call them the one percent, the oligarchy, or whatever name you see fit. Like elite travel, health care, fashion, and real estate, the new contemporary art operates in a micro-economy of wealth, substantially closed off from the rest of us except as spectacle. This is why many current practicing artists increasingly no longer identify with the motivations, values, or context of contemporary art, and in such terms, are not really contemporary artists in the newest sense of the term.

How this trajectory will play out no one knows. As one of the current economy's most visible bubbles, this separation of function from value, and value from meaning, is a profound cultural shift, and will likely not outlast the next major economic downturn. Speaking recently with *Die Ziet*, Gerhard Richter, one of the celebrated artists uncomfortable with the apotheosis of money in contemporary art, puts it succinctly when he comments on "how insanely the art market has developed . . . how prices have nothing to do with the work . . . the whole art market is hopelessly excessive . . . as incomprehensible as Chinese or physics."

Chinese and physics people can grasp. As for the current art market, different sets of hidden rules apply. While it is hard to imagine a return to the pre-market driven art world, it is easy to imagine a post-market dominated contemporary art where the majority of working artists can once again recognize themselves as participants in our visual culture. ■

the arc from the openings of the Tate Modern in London (May of 2000) and in New York City, the New Museum (December of 2007), the new Whitney Museum at the High Line (May of 2015) and The Met Breuer (March of 2016), leads directly to contemporary art.

David Houston is the Curator and Art Historian at The Bo Bartlett Center, College of the Arts, Columbus State University, Georgia. He has curated at the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and The Ogden Museum of Southern Art, University of New Orleans

THE OSCARS MFA

John Stepling

'There is no right way of living the wrong life, for a formal ethics [of disposition] cannot underwrite it, and the ethics of responsibility ... cannot underwrite it either.' Adorno

The shift toward University trained artists and writers has been going on now for forty years. Most acutely, however, for the last twenty five. Today, if you are a playwright, for example, you have to get an MFA if you expect to even be considered for a reading, let alone considered for a production.

MFA programs are the new apprenticeship in a sense. I imagine there are many who will argue that this is just fine, and a natural evolution of some sort. Others will see the Balkanizing influence of institutional exclusion at work. Going to a blue chip program such as Columbia or Brown costs a lot of money. But there is another aspect to this system, and that is how a regressive populism has utterly infected the Academy. It comes in the form of mass corporate owned cultural product (TV and film mostly) now treated on a par with Shakespeare.

Universities pursue TV show runners and producers. Not film departments, but literature and theatre departments. There are other versions of this that cut across disciplines. Graphic design is barely considered separate from painting or installation art or sculpture.

The entire scaffolding on which culture now rests is manufactured by vast telecoms and studios and networks and all of them with varying links to the U.S. government.

One might see in this the end of a certain bourgeois monopoly on the arts, and I suspect that would be correct. This is often viewed as a positive blurring of the artificial dichotomy of high and low art (sic), which is also true. But it comes via a corporate structured delivery system. The entire scaffolding on which culture now rests is manufactured by vast telecoms and studios and networks and all of them with varying links to the U.S. government.

In TV for example, a quick perusal of shows such as Madam Secretary or House of Cards, or even shows such as The Good Wife, or any Aaron Sorkin scripted piece, and you will see a uniform political vision. And often there are direct links to the Democratic Party. A show such as Madam Secretary might as well have been written by Allan Dullus. In fact Dullus was mentioned in glowing terms on this show, a show that had Madelaine Albright as a guest star. The Good Wife repeatedly promotes anti Arab sentiments and anti Chavez story lines. The total absence of an avant garde today has resulted in (and this is a chicken and egg question) an absence of radical voices, but more, an absence of working class voices. And this can be seen in academia, in various panels and symposiums, in fields like philosophy and psychology and political theory. Find me a symposium to which a non-accredited speaker is invited.

In place of the avant garde today one has a new faux branded radical. Molly Crabapple is the perfect example, who besides informing on critics often willingly fabricates and invents her first person narratives. The pernicious influence of the VICE and GAWKER outlets is huge, or the reactionary non art of a Marina



Abramović is the new branded outside. In effect there is no visible outside. And increasingly there is little desire to separate the fantasy from the reality.

The overriding sensibility today is conformist and reinforcing of the status quo. The co-opting mechanisms of advanced capital are acute but in a sense the corporate co-opting no longer has anything to co-opt because everything is pre co-opted. Young artists and thinkers often begin from the default position of management. And one of the ways this occurs is to manufacture a false opposition. Identity politics plays a part in this.

Various issues, usually quite narrowly defined, are given space and siphon off radical energy in the service of tepid reform. There is scarcely a show on TV today without a gay character or gay married couple. On the one hand, yes, this is progress and certainly better than the previous homophobic tenor of work from the 50s. But it also serves to obscure the fact that there is still a huge problem of poor trans and queer minorities, and secondly, that it helps distract attention from issues such as poverty and police violence and Imperialist war. The followers of Hillary Clinton are rightly aghast at her open lies regarding Nancy Reagan and the AIDS crisis, but had no issue at all, and in fact were mostly unaware of, her orchestrating a coup in Honduras to put in power the most repressive regime imaginable.

The short form version is to simply point out that mass culture serves as propaganda today. The well known fact that Hollywood works in consort with the Pentagon to promote positive views of the military is only the most obvious example.

Jamie Taraby writes,

"The U.S. military offices usually ask to see the entire script, not just the parts that relate to military involvement and, based on the entire script and the portrayal of the troops, will move it forward in the approval process. If based on a historical event, it also needs to pass muster with the Pentagon's historians."

This sensibility trickles down to non profit work and University writing programs because nobody born after 1995 has ever seen narratives critical of U.S. imperialism.

David Walsh back in 2007 wrote,

"No doubt, in many cases, a sincere desire to

This sensibility trickles down to non profit work and University writing programs because nobody born after 1995 has ever seen narratives critical of U.S. imperialism.

see social reform and improve the general conditions of life motivates such people in supporting liberal politicians, as well as environmental and charitable causes. The war in Iraq and the criminality of the Bush administration have clearly disturbed many in Hollywood. There has been a certain change in the tone of American film-making over the past several years. However, this is a privileged layer that sees the world and the political process in the US through a thick haze. Its particular brand of liberalism is shaped by a terrible distance from the working population and its concerns, the degree to which it is shielded from everyday life in general by managers, assistants and intermediaries of every sort, and its essential satisfaction with its own lot ... For such individuals, the US population is essentially a mystery, most often a malevolent or menacing one. Pleased with their own economic situation, they have no real sense of the devastation that has been wrought by the closure of factories, the destruction of decent-paying jobs and the gutting of social programs—often at the hands of Democratic politicians like Bill Clinton—and the resulting levels of frustration and outrage with both Republican and Democratic politicians that widely prevail.

The hypocrisy, emptiness and anti-working class character of Democratic policy over the past several decades, which has stunned or even driven into the arms of right-wing demagogues considerable numbers of people, is a closed book to the film and entertainment industry liberals. How else to explain the attraction of a Clinton, an Obama or an Edwards, who promise more of



James Franco and Seth Rogen in The Interview
(image: Sony Pictures)

the same?"

and more recently Gavin Mueller, writing about the Seth Rogen comedy *The Interview*, "The Interview" builds its butt jokes on a platform of criminal activity. It tells of a plot by the Central Intelligence Agency to recruit two journalists, played by Rogen and Franco, as spies — a widely used agency practice that journalist groups have repeatedly condemned as endangering the lives of reporters. The two are tasked with assassinating North Korea's head of state, which, while it may have once been illegal and even thought immoral, has long been a part of the CIA toolkit. The depiction of their mission's ultimate success was so grisly that Sony's CEO demanded that it be toned down.

With this setting, "The Interview" effectively naturalizes such dangerous and illegal acts, making Americans more amenable to them. This is by no means an exaggeration. Former Vice President Dick Cheney's favorite television show, "24," helped normalize torture by presenting outlandish scenarios of ticking time bombs. Soon even the enablers of torture envisioned their job as part of the show's plot. Sony has contributed to this whitewash: "Zero Dark Thirty" perpetuated the CIA's lie that torture produced actionable intelligence. Hollywood helps lay the groundwork for excusing the atrocities of the future. And bumbling man-children may be an even more effective vehicle for this than Jack Bauer's steely resolve.

After all, we like to think of ourselves as saviors of the world, but only reluctantly so, without guile or malice. Hollywood and

the American state are intertwined. While the U.S. film industry is heavily subsidized by all manner of incentives and tax breaks, it uses international organizations, such as the World Trade Organization, to thwart other nations' attempts to protect their domestic cinema production and to enforce intellectual property laws favorable to U.S. companies. The result is a worldwide saturation of American-made media as Hollywood productions capture audiences and profits abroad at the expense of other countries' film industries. In 2013, U.S. films took 75 percent of the global box office."

If you applied to the MFA program at one or another elite University and submitted work that countered the prevailing narrative on, say, NATO bombing the former Yugoslavia or the recent coup in Honduras, or worst of all, suggesting the Soviet Union was the single biggest reason the Nazi's were defeated, you would be rejected. There is a uniformity of opinion in today's culture that is stunning.

This saturation of American made media effects is a hegemonic cultural template that shapes the consciousness of every young artist working today. If you applied to the MFA program at one or another elite University and submitted work that countered the prevailing narrative on, say, NATO bombing the former Yugoslavia or the recent coup in Honduras, or worst of all, suggesting the Soviet Union was the single biggest reason the Nazi's were defeated, you would be rejected. There is a

uniformity of opinion in today's culture that is stunning.

Brad Evans and Henry Giroux wrote recently "The expansive politics of disposability can be seen in the rising numbers of homeless, the growing army of debt-ridden students whose existing and future prospects remain bleak, those lacking basic necessities amid widening income disparities, the surveillance of immigrants, the school-



Theodor Adorno d.1969

to-prison pipeline and the widespread destruction of the middle class by new forms of debt servitude. Citizens, as Gilles Deleuze foresaw, are now reduced to data, consumers and commodities and, as such, inhabit identities in which they increasingly become unknowables, with no human rights and with no one accountable for their condition."

The teaching of all things related to art and culture today is overwhelmingly consistent with the values of the ruling class. This is true even if the individual program intends it to be something different.

Raymond Geuss, writing on Adorno:

"Art is critical through its form. The most radically negative kind of art would be one which did two things at the same time. First, it would, through exclusively artistic means, turn the most fundamental, received laws of a certain kind of artistic activity upside down or inside out, and do so precisely by treating these received laws, principles, and rules of procedure with the highest seriousness and developing them consistently in a non-arbitrary way into their opposite. Second, a fully radical form of art would be one

For the mostly white educated affluent class today even the idea of sub-text is akin to a conspiracy theory. So deeply runs the distrust of anything not easily measured and catalogued.

which by its internal negation of the artistic tradition also succeeded in inculcating into people an appropriately cognitively grounded negative attitude toward their own society."

The complaints that serve as social criticism in much of today's art are delivered in non-radical form. If a character in a Hollywood sit com recited the Communist Manifesto it would only be a joke. But this speaks to something else, which has to do with an idea that somehow artworks are there for moral instruction. And this is the legacy of a society permeated with propaganda. Propaganda as an idea is now normalized and labeled spin or PR or marketing. The effects of what Adorno and Horkheimer called 'instrumental' thinking, a kind of positivist rationality, has had the ultimate effect of erasing anything not obviously definable. For the mostly white educated affluent class today even the idea of sub-text is akin to a conspiracy theory. So deeply runs the distrust of anything not easily measured and catalogued.

The secondary cause of this, or result (its hard to know which) is the normalized security and surveillance state.

The populations of most of the West are now completely accustomed to the loss of privacy. One is always being watched. And running beneath this acceptance is (at least in the U.S.) the legacy of Puritan/Calvinist distrust of complexity. If you can't say it simply, then its not worth saying. There has always been in the U.S. a hostility to art. It was seen as too feminine, not practical, and the province of the weak. There are currents of misogyny in this, but the collaboration of young artists with an administered culture, overseen by corporate management has erased the last

vestiges of anything like autonomy. And this loss is denied in large measure by many of the artists themselves. I hear more discussion about personal brands than I do about theory.

The final element here is connected to the ascension of a certain branch of post structuralist thought. The one that implicitly retreats from the political. And this retreat is carried out with two accompanying aspects: one is an increasingly private specialized jargon and the second with a devaluing of material reality.

The irony (if that's what it is) has required a gross mis-reading of a large number of thinkers from the previous century who were deeply invested in the political implications of culture. The criticisms of everyone from Adorno to Freud to Lacan even, has come with popular mis-critiques. And this from all sides of the political spectrum.

There is one final note on this; the cost of resistance, psychologically, is very high. Paul Street recently mentioned the high incidence of what he sees as clinically diagnosable mental illness in many of his friends on the left. Not just the right, perhaps because those of us on the left assume the indoctrinated only exist on the right. This is partly the cost of dissent. In a society increasingly given to adjustment and conformity, the act of refusal carries with it a huge cost. And a justifiable fear of the neo-police state. Those who survive are indeed very strong people. And I'm thinking of community organizers and activists here as well as artists, those who toil without career ambitions.

Fabian Feyenhagen, in his book on Adorno, writes..

"Roughly, to say that we are prone to being caught up in ideologies is to say that we are prone to hold a set of beliefs, attitudes, and preferences which are false or distorted in ways that benefit the established social order (and the dominant social group within it) at the expense of the satisfaction of people's real interests. The structure of our social world is such that by defending our behaviour or social position, we have to defend what should be criticized, namely, this social world or central elements thereof (such as its property system)."

The overriding sense of anxiety in

For the arts to reclaim something like relevancy today will mean a rejection of the system of institutional authority (connected at its root to the market) that dictates taste.

contemporary society is linked to a number of factors, beginning with economic precarity. But one aspect less often cited is the intolerable ugliness of daily life in most of the West. And this starts with the aesthetics of the home. This was written about by Bloch and Adorno and others as far back as the 1950s. And this is coupled to the bureaucratic weight of existence today for an ever more vulnerable population (what Evans and Giroux called disposable). The anxiety runs right up to the very wealthy who fear losing their grip on the throats of the underclass. A fear their boot-heel might slip. But for artists the guilt inducing sense of complicity in the antinomy of contemporary life is just soul deadening. The contemporary urban home has little to do with those who inhabit it. They had nothing to do with its making and often little to do with its maintenance. Their community is erased usually, and life is led among, mostly, strangers.

For the arts to reclaim something like relevancy today will mean a rejection of the system of institutional authority (connected at its root to the market) that dictates taste. And to find ways to distrust the new faux left critics who serve as stand-in droids for the missing avant garde movements of the 100 years ago. Until institutional authority is interrupted, and working class voices heard, and sensibilities of the working classes forwarded, the aesthetic tyranny one sees expressed today in the art market will simply continue.

One has to stop willingly choosing the false and counterfeit. ■

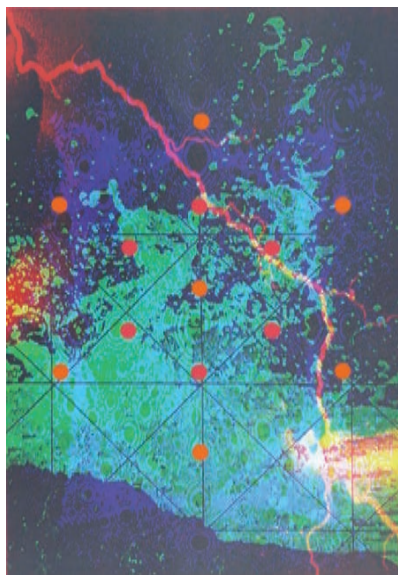
John Stepling is a two-time NEA recipient, Rockefeller Fellow in theatre, and PEN-West winner for playwrighting. He is artistic director of the theatre collective Gunfighter Nation.



John Emanuel - 'Figure', Oil on board



Mary Ann Green - 'The Magpie Nest', Acrylic



John Charles Clark - 'PostArtt', Digital print

Monday-Saturday
10.00-17.30

ASSOCIATES & MEMBERS EXHIBITION



Mark Verry - 'Untitled', Kerfagraph in Larch

You are warmly invited to the private view on
Friday 26th February 2016 at 18.30 - 20.30

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Partnership Between New Art Examiner

The New Art Examiner has a long and turbulent history. Being independent does not make for many friends and the Art World has built mega structures akin to international corporations. The idealistic Bohemia that this writer dreamed of many decades ago has faded and gone.,

The New Art Examiner survived as an independent voice with no resources except its wits. With the unflinching support, skill and dedication of the U.K. Editor, Daniel Nanavati, a more than well-educated scholar of religion and philosophy, and my accrued wisdom of the Art World, having served on the front line since Oct 1973, The New Art Examiner, in conjunction with Chicago Colleagues, has struggled and managed to publish 4 issues reporting on London, Oxford, Tokyo, Chicago, Los Angeles and St Ives over the last six months.

An achievement due only to the many writers who have great respect for the New Art Examiner and contribute quality copy for no fee. While the New Art Examiner has interest in Community as well as the upper reaches of the top heavy Art World the publication is designed for readers who care about art and are prepared to read about art. Unfortunately fewer and fewer people read these days, a fact also true of Artists. However, they do when reviewed as self interest and vanity are powerful human engines.

Plymouth College of Art has partnered with the UK office which means that with this partnership we can reach the level of professionalism required to be more effective and compete with other Art journals. To be in a situation with students and faculty will mean lively and informed discussion will take place every day. The New Art Examiner can now return to what it did before, which is not only to publish on Art, Artists, and the Art system – but also to will develop new voices. We will contribute well reasoned commentary.

Thank you Plymouth College of Art for partnership. It is good to come in from out in the cold. Chicago is not known for generosity of spirit or imagination. St.Ives a beautiful town by the sea once the home of artists was put on the art map as it had artists with vision and courage and produced its own informed art writing.

Modern Art in its nature and form needs words. An art community has to be more than the fantasy peddled by the tourist trade. In a spirit of openness, we will talk about this in a symposium at the Penwith Gallery, St Ives April 8thn 7.30 PM.

Derek Guthrie, Publisher

The partnership between Plymouth College of Art and the New Art Examiner is an exciting one for a number of reasons. Plymouth College of Art is one

of the last remaining independent art schools in England. Originally established in 1856, Plymouth's art school has become a hub of creative innovation and entrepreneurship in the heart of the South West of England.

The partnership will provide a unique opportunity for students on the Painting, Drawing and Printmaking programme not only to develop an understanding of arts publication, but also to be directly involved in the process. Working with staff from the New Art Examiner, students will gain a valuable insight into the publishing industry and will, we hope, produce a regular, student-run supplement.

As part of the Painting, Drawing and Printmaking programme at Plymouth College of Art, students are encouraged to contextualise their practice as artists through developing an understanding of the theoretical, cultural and historical frameworks within which their work is located. Through the partnership, students will have the opportunity to develop their critical writing skills, providing articles, essays and reviews for the New Art Examiner that will provide a unique perspective on the fine arts from the South West of England.

James Brown, Plymouth College of Art

Since its inception in 1973 the NAE has expanded its borders of serious art coverage from Chicago to include nearly 50 of the United States. Now the NAE begins publishing bi-monthly from the UK as well with the additional support and contribution of Plymouth College of Art.

The NAE will provide an opportunity for students and faculty of Plymouth College of Art to collaborate. This partnership can take the shape of exchanges not only of writing and art production but also the collegial exchange for students interested in studying about Art here locally in Chicago. This cross cultural dialogue serves to increase the space for all opinions and writing about Art, something the NAE fostered for over 30 years. The independent voice of the visual arts combined with the support of an Art college as Plymouth, will serve to amplify the audience participation, and as community involvement is one of the important factors in support of Art, this building together of two voices will be significant in developing critical analysis and perhaps the words, ..."what happened to art criticism" will be mute.

Annie Markovich, Managing Editor, Chicago

And Plymouth College of Art, UK.

AGREEMENT OF COLLABORATION

In accordance with a desire to promote cooperation in areas of mutual interest for the benefit of both institutions, Plymouth College of Art and the New Art Examiner (individually „Party“, together „Parties“) hereby enter into the following agreement:

Article 1

The Parties recognise that each of them is pursuing educational, research, cultural and training activities in various areas of common interest and shall engage in collaboration in the following types of cooperation:

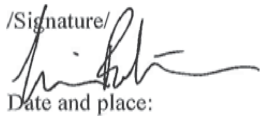
- 1.1 Development and implementation of joint research activities;
- 1.2 The mutual development of opportunities for students and staff for professional development and discipline –specific practice.
- 1.3 Joint workshops, curriculum areas, seminars and symposiums, mutual visits;
- 1.4 Exchange of scholarly publications and other information in areas of interest to both parties.

Article 2

- 3.1 The Parties are responsible for implementation of the collaboration agreement;
- 3.3 The Parties understand that all the financial agreements will have to be negotiated and will depend on the availability of funds.

Article 3

- 4.1 The agreement will come into force upon signing by both Parties and will be valid for 3 years from the date of signing by both Parties.
- 4.2 The agreement can be cancelled by either of the Parties during the 3-year period by writing a notice by January 1st.
- 4.3 The agreement will be automatically extended for one year unless it has been violated during the previous period. All amendments and changes of the agreement must be discussed with and confirmed by both Parties.

/Signature/

 Date and place:

15 / 3 / 2016

 (SMT to sign etc)

/Signature/

 Date and place:

11 / 3 / 2016

SPEAKEASY

In Betweenness: State of Place, Art & Mind

Museums and commercial galleries appear to be a straight-line star generating system for artists and curators. But in looking for stardom, we lose sight of art as a power struggle over voice and position. Whose voice is heard as words? Whose voice is marginalized and defined as peripheral noise? Power lies in the margins waiting to be awakened. To challenge and redefine borders, curators, artists, and organizations have to be catalytic vectors, triangulating and mediating between power and marginalization. As Homi Bhaba has written, 'in-between' spaces are the terrain where new identities and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation are elaborated in the act of defining society.

I began my art career as Director of the small but influential New York Willoughby Sharp gallery. After a circuitous path of teaching and obtaining my MFA, I came to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, (MCA), at the time it was attempting to reposition itself and contemporary art by broadening its audience.

Museums have a conflicted relationship to audiences and the "rise of the audience" is a relatively new phenomenon, one which I have championed. Many of my MCA shows focused on the immaterial – performances, audience interactions, or sound. Although these mediums were accepted as contemporary art in the 1960s, by 1999 when the new MCA was built, silos had formed, even in its architecture. Since borders are spatialized, contesting them requires reconstituting how space and objects are utilized.

Artists' books – often marginalized as art objects since they are usually small and inexpensive – are filled with voice. Truly democratic, visitors can interact with an artist's thoughts over time, like video. Compact, they can fit in any space. For Sol LeWitt's retrospective and for the main exhibition artists Ed Ruscha and Cathy Opie, I transformed the MCA's introductory video space into companion artists' book exhibitions. Ruscha greatly appreciated the show because



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

most curators ignored his artists' books, even though he thought his books at the time were more conceptually advanced than his paintings.

Since the MCA was grappling with criticism of rarely featuring local artists, this space became the site for a new monthly series for emerging Chicago artists. 12 x 12: New Artists/ New Work was a rare entry-level museum show. Aiming to catalyze a new ecosystem of young artists, audiences, and collectors, it caused a bizarre role-reversal since artists such as Curtis Mann and William O'Brien were given gallery shows after their museum show, rather than typically the opposite.

The work I was most interested is that which hinged upon the audience for its fulfillment, so the audience became the mediary. Many underutilized spaces are liminal passageways, perfect for audience engagement. Upon entering the MCA in 2005, you could see Tania Bruguera's *Study for Endgame #7*. Microphones were placed on the atrium's balconies for people to speak into, but not hear (unless next to the speaker) people speaking across the balconies. Audiences, particularly teens, flocked to the balconies. In 2007 in the Lake gallery, Tino Sehgal presented *Kiss*, where visitors crossing through to the Collection show were thrust into an intimate encounter between two dancers.

This unmediated encounter is highly contested. Before a viewer even steps into a gallery, layers of institutional mediation from marketing to press, deny an unmediated experience. The curator balances the needs of the institution, artist, and the audience in writing labels and gallery guides, which Tino's work eschews. His strategy concerns immediacy and the environment, unlike a knee-jerk assumption that people should simply "get it."

I see myself not just a mediator between artists and audiences, but a triangulator

between them and the art world. I have no problem with people who do this and call themselves curators. People who do are defending boundaries.

Because of the then bias against performance, the Here/Not There series asked emerging performers how to present performative work – even when they were not present – within a visual context in the gallery and throughout the MCA. Neither purely visual art nor performance, this in-betweenness opened up options for performance artists to work within a visual context and vice versa. Theaster Gates's work is a perfect example of in-betweenness, his work was not considered art for 2 years by the Curatorial department. Theaster's 2009 Temple Exercises, his first museum exhibition, was an installation and performance that also traveled to the South and West side, forcing the MCA to go to community. When Francesco Bonami directed the Whitney Biennale, he included Theaster's Temple Exercises setting him on a new trajectory, further advanced when we hosted Mark Bradford's residency donor event at Theaster's studio. When vectors, institutions, and those on the edge align, they triangulate to shape new possibilities.

But the center was not pleased. Some saw these series as preferential to young artists and in 2011, when the 12 x 12 series changed and 'Here Not There' ended, I developed

6018North, located in a former mansion slated for demolition. The space asks how a home can be a site for collaboration between artists and audiences to build community and advance new modes of artmaking. 6018North's first events were not exhibitions or performances, but dinners. We wanted to literally bring to the table emerging and established sound, performance, and visual artists, with writers, non-and for profit programmers, collectors, and funders to discuss needs.

Whether curating the MCA's smaller spaces or large galleries or 6018North's projects, I look for boundary busting art and unique, intimate encounters with the viewer. In many ways, 6018North does what the MCA aims for: to directly connect art with the public, but with no fee barrier.

On the flipside is 6018North doesn't have the MCA budget and the corresponding staff. Nevertheless, we currently have Sara FitzSimons's House on Ohio St. beach, Amanda Williams's and Chelsea Kulp's mural at the Lawrence red line viaduct, and at 6018North, accessible from the street are Jim Duignan's Seesaw and Luftwerk's window light installation. All are unmediated intimate artistic encounters. Money is a boundary, but in-betweenness is transgressive. ■

Tricia Van Eck is Artistic Director and Founder of 6108North (in Edgewater). Previously, Van Eck worked 13 years as a curator at Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

Thoughts on The Internet Café

Tom Nakishima

I need the night. The sounds and voices from the street below, hooting owls, crickets, frogs, even the stillness. I need some time alone, where I can sit and think. It is a Heideggerian dictum that one can glean only so much information from a conversation with one's self. At some point a hermit must leave the cave in search of observation and conversation. In Japan there is a saying, 'If you want to catch the tiger cub you have to go into the cave.'

Conversation was a seminal contributor to the robust intellectual and creative activity of 14th Century Florence, 19th Century Paris

and mid-century New York. The convergence of cultures encouraged breaks with tradition that hastened the development of bohemian culture. What was it about the Parisian café culture and the New York bar atmosphere that so comfortably accommodated social interaction and the rise of the avant-garde? The answer is free and continuous access to conversation; being able to sit for long periods of time while drinking and talking. Certainly these were not conversations generated or regulated by class, nationality, profession, religion or political philosophy. Under such

constraints conversation would not flow easily, and language would by necessity be reduced to a pidgin vernacular that could be encoded cross-culturally and cross-linguistically in order to be accessible to all participants. Astrophysicists/theologian John Polkinghorne says that true novelty only occurs at the juncture of chaos and order. He is referring to such cosmic phenomenon that occur at the centers of galaxies (event horizon) and the macrocosmic events in the environment adjacent to volcanic vents. The human version of such collisions used to occur in cafés and bars. That would be the place where one would walk on the edge of chaos and order, and enter into the cave of the tiger. There, the confusion of languages, religions, arts and science drives the participants to the discovery or invention of metaphor. It is an ideal device that can serve as a cipher to decode those big ideas that float easily in the of winds café culture. The metaphor is a Knight of Faith, providing and encouraging a leap of an idea across cultures.

Back in the 1980s when I lived in Washington, artists were constantly waxing nostalgically for the Washington Color School (not really a big idea). In an effort to recreate café culture or at least bar culture various groups were formed with high-minded hopes of talking about things that might prove revolutionary. The hope was that such forums would be the places where world-altering ideas could emerge. It never happened. Why?

1. These groups were hand picked (for the most part) and therefore they never really approximated the zeitgeist of that time and place. (Café society evolves by serendipity.)

2. Many of the subjects were pre-planned and one had to prepared for each discussion. (Café conversation evolves spontaneously with many juxtapositions contributing to shifts in direction and content.)

3. The language was academic, which brings with it two major problems. Academics are always guarded with their words (that's why they read their papers at CAA), making the accidents of genius and products of extemporaneous conversation virtually impossible. Academic conversations are class warfare, employing cryptic language denying participation by all but the elite. Many of the best artists are academically challenged often rendering true genius, mute.

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Café culture is unguarded because Bohemians admire and envy outsiders. For people like Gauguin, Van Gogh, Picasso and Pollock, "naïve" artists were envied.

There are not many new exciting ideas floating around in the art magazines. Most of the good art ideas are regarded by magazine culture as passé or naïve. The "good" ideas, the fertile ones, are elsewhere, in aboriginal mythology, in physics, chemistry, literature, philosophy etc. These are the ideas of people who speak and think differently. Their ideas are of the kind that fester up from the brew of café society. Ideas that appear disjointed and lack linear order.

But there is no longer a café culture Nor are there bars or meeting places where artists hang out speaking and thinking freely. Any bar successful enough to survive has live music and conversation is impossible. Street corner loitering is outlawed. So the coffee houses (Starbucks) have become the cafés, along with the Internet cafés! These do not exist as a place in any geographic sense. They are located in hyperspace. There is not much probability that novelty can emerge from an insular art culture like New York. We all use the same Internet. Were it not for banking and fashion, cities like New York, Berlin, Tokyo and London would have died long ago. The present day prime movers "are" things like fashion, real estate and banking. These are not "big ideas". Their tenure is fickle and limited to whims of a few. Like Indra, they sit tenuously on the fragile nap of Vishnu. That is not to say that observations about the power of fashion and banking by Warhol, Mary Boone and Saatchi are not genius-- but it is to say that a system is culturally bankrupt when its only source of inspiration is a mediation on one's own naval. ■

Tom Nakashima is a painter who is included in numerous collections including The Smithsonian Am. Art Museum and The Mint Museum. He is a recipient of numerous awards including The Joan Mitchell Award and AVA11.

MONSTER ROSTER CURATORS INTERVIEWED:

John Corbett & Jessica Moss in conversation with US Editor Tom Mullaney



Leon Golub---"Siamese Sphinx II"--1955

The Monster Roster was the first original movement in Chicago art. The current exhibition at the Smart Museum of Art is also the first-of-its-kind retrospective devoted to a group of artists who, though they did not work together, exhibit together or call themselves by that name, shared affinities of influences and artistic outlook.

Most Americans, in the late 1940s, felt a sense of post-war optimism and new prosperity. Yet, in Chicago, a group of artists felt otherwise. As curator John Corbett wrote in an introductory catalog essay, "they created artworks fueled by the anxiety and undercurrents sweeping beneath the nation's dominant sense of enthusiasm".

Monster Roster artists (dubbed such by critic Franz Schulze in a 1959 *Artnews* article) instead were painting dark, grotesque images in earthen tones depicting disembodied limbs, distended figures, scraped surfaces, vacant eyes, searing icons of an existential drama.

To gain greater insight about these artists and their art, NAE's US editor, Tom Mullaney, interviewed two of the show's four curators, Jessica Moss (JM) of the Smart Museum and John Corbett (JC), an independent curator and co-owner of Corbett vs. Dempsey Gallery, which gallery represents the work of Robert Barnes, Dominic Di Meo and Seymour Rosofsky

NAE: What made Chicago the destined home for the Monster Roster?

JC: There are a lot of reasons for why this was an appropriate place. I mention in the essay things like the stockyards and the precursor that Chicago had been an Indian trading post. Just the idea of a very rough, frontier backdrop. On the other hand, there are much more art historical reasons that this was an appropriate place. Probably most evident is the fact that Ivan Albright developed the work that he did here. He was a loner, an eccentric, in the sense that he was not part of any school, at a time (1930s) when there was a lot of art with a collective vibe among WPA artists. The kind of gruesome imagery that was a mainstay of his work interested all of the Monster artists, more or less.

NAE: The exhibit title is "Existentialist Art in Postwar Chicago". What did you seek to convey with the use of the adjective "existentialist"?

JC: Existentialism was a philosophical and literary movement that came into prominence during that postwar period in the United States and dealt with the absurdity of life, the meaning of humanity and its future. You're dealing with people like (Albert) Camus and (Jean Paul) Sartre and, on the literary side, (Samuel) Beckett and (Antonin) Artaud. People who were dealing with feelings of terror, anxiety, dread, questions of interior motive. That all made up a kind of milieu that all those artists were really interested in. They were reading these writers and looking at artwork that reflected back on that postwar European standpoint, people like (Jean) DuBuffet and (Alberto) Giacometti.

NAE: John, you cite a large number of influences on the Monster Roster in your catalog essay: World War II, psychoanalysis, Jean DuBuffet, the Field Museum and Oriental Institute, primitive cultures, existential writers. What shared

influences mattered most or was it a matter of different influences on different artists?

JC: That's a good question. It's always a matter of different influences on different artists in the sense that these were really individuals. However, there was a lot of overlap in their interests. Some were interested in psychoanalysis, like Golub, who underwent psychoanalysis as a form of research for his paintings, and Cohen, who used rich symbolism with a Freudian orientation. Others were particularly interested in non-Western or ethnographic art; you can see this in the totemic sculptures of Ted Halkin and Dominick Di Meo.

Classical Greek and Roman art was a common influence for many of the artists, particularly the low relief works of Halkin and the late '50s monumental Golub paintings. And many of the artists were interested in Surrealism – Evelyn Statsinger, for instance, and Robert Barnes – while others like Fred Berger, Seymour Rosofsky, and June Leaf were deeply impressed by German Expressionism. They each had their own particular take, but had a joint pool of resources. What interested us was to look at what things they had in common. What did that commonality mean for a group of artists who didn't call themselves a group and who didn't work collectively and who didn't exhibit collectively but nevertheless had a shared set of interests.

NAE: Jessica, could you speak about the avowed leader of the group, Leon Golub, and his monumental works in the exhibit. What was about his art that attracted attention from the New York art world?

JM: Golub was a very charismatic figure. He was able to spearhead this group, starting with Exhibition Momentum. He started it as an alternative exhibition in 1948 after students at the School of the Art Institute were not allowed to enter the C & V (Chicago and Vicinity) show of 1947. Golub brought in a whole lot of big artists from New York- Jackson Pollock, Philip Guston- who juried that exhibition.

And then his work was so ambitious in scale. His works, at that time (late 1950s) were monumental. He was very adventurous in terms of his technique. He used his body a lot in his process. He would scrape his



Dominick Di Meo--"Fallen Hero"--1956

canvas with meat cleavers. A lot of destruction was involved in the creation of his work. He would take two wet boards together, wait till they dried and then tear them apart. That would create craggy, uneven surfaces and he would start his work at that point.

NAE: How important were the Momentum shows for these artists?

JC: The artists of the Monster Roster already knew one another for the most part. But the big thing that happened there was that the Momentum shows invited everyone, even people they might have had terrible esthetic differences with. From the Institute of Design, for instance, people on the verge of being crafts people. But that provided people with a much broader sense of what was going on in the city.

NAE: How did you choose the 16 artists as members of the group since you say they never identified themselves as such and some—Cohen, Spero, Leaf--disavowed such an association?

JC: It's an interesting curatorial dilemma. How do you include those who had no roster, no sign-up sheet? We could have done one of two things-- gone narrow or gone broad. Narrow in the sense that you absolutely, positively could not have had a show called Monster Roster that didn't include them. Broad as to what did it mean to have this group of artists who

didn't define themselves against outsiders and instead had porous borders. We went broad.

NAE: A question of attitude?

JC: I think the ultimate defining feature was a question of attitude. I think the reason that somebody like (Robert) Barnes is in the show is as a way of pointing at the transformation from the Monster Roster into the next group of artists that included Kerig Pope and Ellen Lanyon. So we wanted one painting at the end of the show that transformed into what Franz Schulze called "image-fantasy artists" out of the "image-expressionist" Roster artists.

NAE: Since there weren't many galleries in Chicago at the time showing modern art, were they getting support from collectors? This must have been a hard time economically for these artists.

JC: It was a tough time for everyone, even people in New York. The art market that we think of now, that sustains and nourishes the work, really didn't exist in the same way that it does now. It was a different world. If you go back and see what DeKooning was paid for the painting, "Excavation", now at the Art Institute, you'd be shocked at how little he was paid for it. I think it was a thousand dollars.

NAE: So, Monster doesn't fit the European/East Coast evolutionary model of Art History. Will they always be seen as outliers?

JM: That's a hard question to answer. It's something that we're not trying to answer...

JC: Another way to look at it is to look at the stranglehold that New York has had for a long time on American Art History, let's say from the 1950s forward and retroactively, that history has been written to make New York the center of the universe. But there have been significant incursions into that way of thinking.

If you look at what Los Angeles has done in taking a group of artists from the 1960s and putting them more significantly on the map, partially by having Artforum originate there. But go up that coast to San Francisco at the Bay Area Figurative Artists who make a very good model for rethinking the singular New York path of Art History. That is a group of artists who, if you are doing a really serious

history of American Art, you can't not include them. In a way, that's how we have to approach the reassessment of these artists. Understand them as part of a much broader, more variegated history than the unitary, linear model that we've been fed for a long time.

NAE: Even in Chicago, Schulze, writing about the 1997 "Art in Chicago" show, claimed that MCA curator Lynn Warren valorized the Hairy Who movement over the first imagist movement. Shouldn't we speak of one Imagist movement, spread over two generations, instead of two?

JC: I personally have spoken with Franz about this. I don't think even Franz sticks to the idea now that these artists should be seen as one movement. It's too broad a moniker to cast over all of those artists. The '60s have so many different things they are concerned with that don't have anything to do with the concerns of these Monster artists. You can't mistake the Monster Roster work. The esthetics are different. The assumptions about mass media, about viable resources, all of that stuff is so different. I don't think they can be categorized under the same rubric.

NAE: But you could write about it as a 25-year period --from 1945 to 1970--in which Chicago occupied a central position with both movements. It doesn't have to be one or the other.

JC: I think that's a good point. People like Jim Yood have spent decades arguing exactly that. And that the figure under stress is a unifying feature that we can talk about all of these artists together. That's a valid and reasonable



Fred Berger--Untitled--1958

position to take, if you want to back up that far. That's not a position I would take.

NAE: Since there were so few galleries showing modern art in the early '50s didn't these artists struggle economically? When did Chicago collectors begin supporting homegrown art?

JC: Well the Shapiros, the Horwiches, the Newmans were collecting in the Fifties. Into the Sixties there were the Manilows, the Meyers (Golub, Spero & DiMeo), the Bergmans (Cornell and Surrealists).

NAE: What was it about the Monster artists that appealed to those collectors?

JC: I think that Surrealism was the through-line. A lot of them were collecting DuBuffet, a lot were collecting Giacometti, the French and Italian scene of that period was very familiar to them and they were collecting then in a way they couldn't do now. Matta, for instance, taught at the School of the Art Institute and Barnes painted backgrounds for Matta when he was here.

NAE: What accounts for so much of this art being in the Smart Museum's permanent collection? Does it reflect institutional resistance at the Art Institute and MCA to this day?

JM: We actually have very significant loans from the Art Institute and the MCA for this project. One of the strengths and emphases of our collection is work of artists with connections to Chicago. There's the H.C. Westermann Study Collection, a wonderful collection of Imagists. It makes a lot of sense for the Smart to be hosting the show.

JC: Probably the biggest connection is curator Richard Born. He had a very-longstanding and deep involvement in this work through Dennis Adrian and through whom some of the work in the show ended up at the Smart Museum.

JM: We also have a wonderful Roger Brown collection given by Brown's partner, George Veronda.

NAE: I'd like each of you to pick a favorite work from the show and describe its allure and power for you.

JM: We have a piece by Cosmo Campoli, called "The Birth of Death". It is a bronze



Cosmo Campoli--"Birth of Death"--1950

sculpture with a horizontal orientation. We have three different iterations of the piece in the show. We have a plaster cast, a promised gift to the Smart, and two vertical orientations, one belonging to the MCA. Ours is more lying down, the female giving birth. The artist, we found in our research, wrote a handwritten letter in which he describes his process. He arrived at the idea of changing the sculpture from a casket-like shape to a more placenta-like shape pierced by the four legs of the stand. I think it's such an interesting way to look at an artist's process—his thinking and how that might change over time.

JC: I'm going to do Nancy Spero's 1958 piece, "I Do Not Challenge". From the time we set out to do the show, we wanted to include it and it took a lot of doing. But I think it's a painting worth showing because it says something about her relationship of challenge with New York.

What you end up with is this tombstone which she described as a phallic tombstone in the middle of the painting inscribed with the initials of all the major New York School artists, men and women. And, on either side of it, you have a jester figure—her with a dunce cap on and little ears and sticking her tongue out at New York. She doesn't give herself initials but her full name. When you go one step beyond that, it's a beautifully painted work. It's got this washy quality, this metallic paint, which is not a feature of a lot of painters at that point. You think of Pollock. So, you get this gesture as she is about to move to New York, a gesture of defiance coming out of Chicago.

NAE: Very ironically saying, "I Do Not Challenge" (laughter)

JC: Very ironic. The whole painting is a challenge. ■

*Monster Roster is now on view thru June 12, 2016
at the Smart Museum of Art, 5550 S. Greenwood
Avenue*

The Cornubian Arts and Science Trust, known as CAST, became a charity on 5 November 2012 and provides space and services for artists as studios in the old Passmore Edwards building in Penrose Road, Helston, Cornwall. The group has been awarded £500,000 by Arts Council England.

Cast chairwoman Teresa Gleadowe (wife of Sir Nicholas Serota, Director of the Tate art museums and galleries) said she was thrilled at the news and it would make a huge difference to the work they already run in the community. The cash will go towards a three-year project called Groundwork. The Arts Council said: "A series of commissioned field trips and works during 2016 and 2017 will build towards a high-profile festival in 2018."

"Rooted in contemporary art, the festival will be interdisciplinary, involving science, music, performance, film and dance in collaboration with arts organisations in Cornwall and beyond." It takes a Rasputin to get through the Art Council grant here in the UK. If your face fits, or better still, if you have contacts you are far more likely to receive a yes. If you hit the fashion, if you cultivate the exact profiles the Art Council wants to see - accessible, multi-ethnic, politically correct, you are far more likely to get a yes.

Some people follow the meanderings of the present policy very carefully and right now rural arts and inclusivity are being given more importance.

Yes it is good that Cornwall has more funds given to it but after 20 years of hundreds of millions of investment Cornwall is still the poorest part of the UK. An Arts Council Grant of £500,000 will achieve nothing for the community but it will make a lot of people feel good for a while and the festival promised in 2018 as the crown of this imitative will no doubt have several private dinner parties at which the real money will be on the table.

The Arts Council has become the patron to immense fortunes being made by everyone but the local population who only get to buy tickets in someone else's lottery. ■

Daniel Nanavati

Twenty years ago my daughter went to ballet classes in a handsome edifice built for Helston by the philanthropist John Passmore Edwards in 1897 as School of Science and Art. It was already derelict in the 1980s.

The place was eventually boarded up and finally sold by the council. It then gets very interesting, for it was acquired or, rescued, depending on your point of view by some people of heavy clout in the art world. Artists were moved in, repairs made, and culture returned to the core of the 'Quaint old Cornish Town' that in my TV days I used to satirise as the Athens of the South-West for its deficiencies. £500,000 has now been made available to the The Cornubian Arts & Science Trust (CAST), the four year old charity that's done the business.

Now, it's all too easy to chuck bricks at this one; Teresa Gleadowe in the chair is of course the spouse of Sir Nicholas Serota, and the other board members are not exactly local farmers, fishermen nor artists or scientists. Oh dear, these outsiders have come here and are going to import International artists and Arts-Council approved Art – for it is the Arts Council that has provided the dosh, and with such a Board, how could they not? – Art which is not always or even often to everybody's taste, certainly not mine

But the point is, the building and, the opportunities have been sitting there for long enough for owls to move in, and we locals did **nothing**. I know from my own brief chairmanship of a local arts organisation that it takes people of experience and vision to achieve what has been achieved; it will benefit Helston – has done so already – and if it has not embraced our native artists, could this have anything to do with a tendency to churn out faux-naïf boats on harbours for the tourists rather than produce work that means something? One of the approved artists backed catastrophically into the pretty façade of my parked retro Jaguar but, he was a gentleman, left a note and paid for the repairs. The invaders may not be Barbarians after all. ■

Jonathon Xavier Coudrille

Milwaukee Museum's New Design:

Lots of Creative Bang for the Buck

Tom Mullaney

Museums are usually wedded to an addition model. They build more wings to accommodate their growing collection. The Milwaukee Art Museum's recently successful renovation, instead, followed a design strategy of subtraction. It compressed three earlier, independent, segregated structures, built over a 45-year period, into a single unified whole. The result: a brand-new museum.

Last November, the Milwaukee Art Museum (MAM) unveiled the outcome of a six-year, \$34 million reimagining of its Collection Galleries. The renovation integrated its two older buildings—the 1957 Eero Saarinen War Memorial Center (12,000 sq. ft.), the much larger David Kahler addition in 1975 (80,000 sq. ft.—with the Santiago Calatrava Quadracci Pavilion, opened in 2001. It also built a two-story addition whose floor-to-ceiling windows give visitors a stunning panoramic view of, and access to, Lake Michigan.

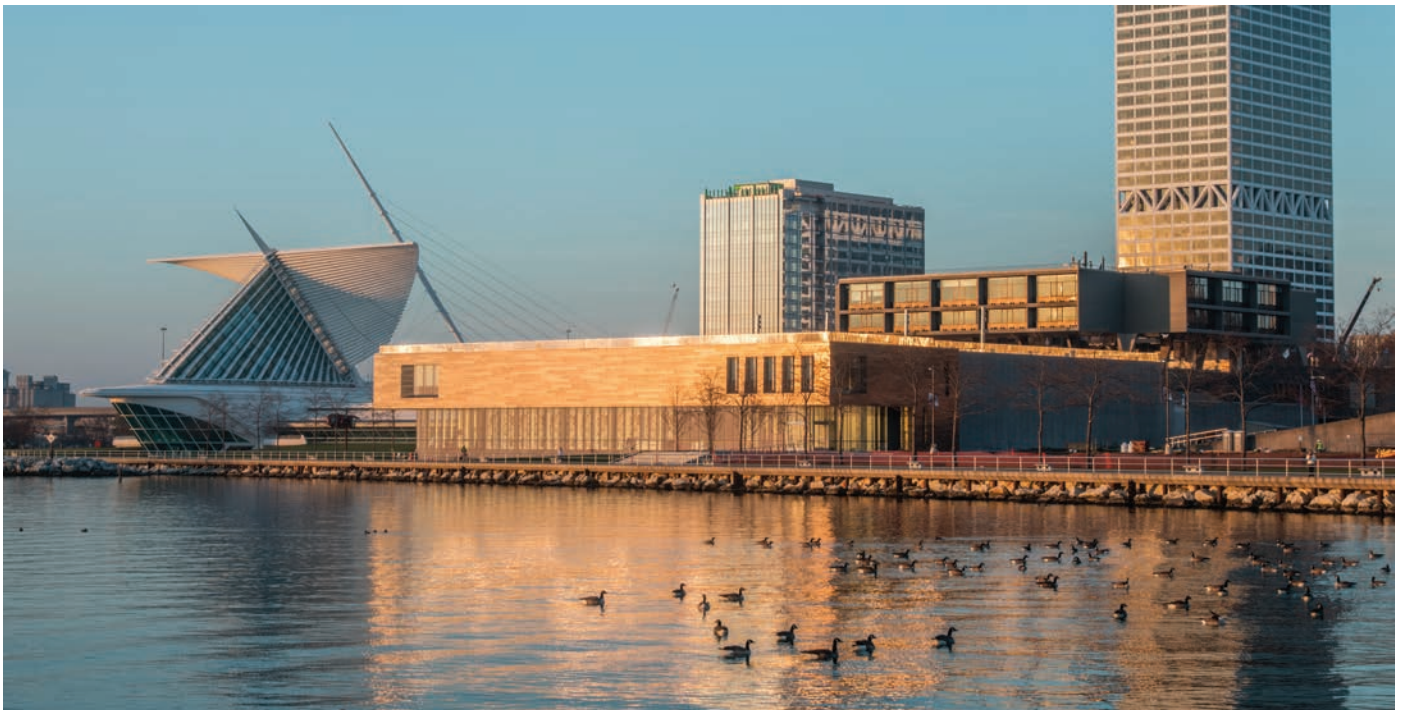
The Calatrava, with its arresting 217-foot

louvered sunscreen, that opens like a giant bird's wings, came to unfairly define the entire enterprise. This modern icon by a starchitect gave Milwaukee certain bragging rights. While attention was lavished on the new pavilion, the older units suffered from neglect. Water was dripping from the ceilings of those buildings, warping some of the wood floors.

A reordering of priorities was necessary. As museum director, Dan Keegan, remarked, "People shouldn't come to a museum just for the architecture and this (renovation) brings back the balance to the art."

The museum, one of the Midwest's finest, not only increased its footprint with the addition of 30,000 square feet of new and reclaimed gallery space but the renovation made room to display an additional 1,000 artworks, putting 2,500 of its 30,000 work collection on view.

For the past six years, I regularly attended their excellent traveling exhibitions but was stymied in navigating the facility. It had



East Addition to the Milwaukee Art Museum



(Front to Back) Claire Zeisler's "High Rise" Fiber Art, Richard Serra's "Rift I" on wall, "Northwood 3" by Kenneth Snelson and Robert Morris sculpture on back wall.

always been possible to proceed down the eastern Galleria walkway into the modern and contemporary collection in the Kahler wing but the path down the western Galleria had always been blocked. I learned I was not alone.

Many spaces between the various buildings had been given over to storage and offices over the years--some with locked doors--that created "an impenetrable logjam" according to chief curator Brady Roberts. "The floor plan was a maze. Even staff people who had been here for 10 years would get lost".

In September, 2014, the museum closed access to the entire collection, save for special exhibitions, to start construction. Roberts spoke about the planning process behind the entire collection's reconfiguration and rehang that arose with planning consultants, HGA Architects of Milwaukee and lead architect, James Shields AIA.

"We began with the idea of celebrating the three architectural chapters of the museum. So, we have the oldest collection, the Layton Galleries, in the Saarinen building along with older European and American Art while, in the Kahler, the Bradley Collection and Modern and Contemporary is in the newer part."

This past January, I walked with Roberts through the latter spaces and the new addition,

the sites of the most dramatic transformations, to experience the reimagined gallery layout and improved traffic flow pattern. An exhilarating sight was to stare down an uninterrupted, 200-foot longitudinal span in the addition--from its southern end through to the Bradley Gallery at the north end. That space currently features an exhibit of master printmaker, Sam Francis.

Roberts began walking down the Calatrava's eastern Galleria into the contemporary collection. We entered the first of three Great Halls that focuses on Pop Art and Photo Realism. In the foreground, on the floor, was an Andy Warhol box of Brillo and ten Marilyn Monroe silk screens on the right wall. Continuing down the long room was a Roy Lichtenstein on one wall. Behind that was a Chuck Close 1968 work, Nancy, a life-like Duane Hanson sculpture, Janitor, leaning against the left wall. At the far end of the room was a Christopher Wool lettering canvas that spelled F O O L.

From Pop Art, we veered right into the second Great Hall that featured Minimalist artists such as three striking Donald Judd pieces, before moving into galleries featuring newer 21st Century artists, like Larry Bell and Kahinde Wiley.

I'd never seen most of these works in prior visits. It only confirmed how strong a modern and contemporary collection Milwaukee has assembled. All the requisite masters are on the walls along with a rich assortment of emerging artists. The rehab has eliminated any danger posed to its signature, 400-work Bradley Collection by early 20th Century artists including Picasso, Kandinsky and Giacometti. The museum holds one of the largest collections of work by Georgia O'Keeffe, a Wisconsin native.

As we walked, I expressed surprise that two 1980s artists, David Salle and Julian Schnabel, had works on view. Though their time had passed, Roberts believes in presenting a true art historical narrative. "That's the epitome of Julian Schnabel in the '80s. It's a chapter (in art history) so why not tell it."

When we moved into the third Great Hall, Roberts became visibly excited. He pointed out key changes to Kahler's original Brutalist design that make the space feel totally new.

I'd never seen most of these works in prior visits. It only confirmed how strong a modern and contemporary collection Milwaukee has assembled. All the requisite masters are on the walls along with a rich assortment of emerging artists.

Gone were the dark floors and the old concrete ceiling, with exposed utilities, and lighting that cast a dark, cave-like shadow on the art.

In its place were blond wood floors and a white dry wall ceiling with improved track



(Front to Back): Brillo Box and Marilyn silk screens by Andy Warhol, paintings by Roy Lichtenstein and Chuck Close, sculpture by Duane Hanson and Christopher Wool's "Fool" on back wall.



European Galleries

lighting that created a brighter “white cube” space. Most of Kahler’s fluted concrete columns had been removed, giving the room a more spacious feel.

At the north end, two major works of sculpture, a tall hanging of fiber art by Claire Zeisler, a color etching on the wall by Richard Serra, occupied space that had previously been a lecture hall. To the right of the sculptures was a new space devoted to 20th and 21st Century Design, a field the museum was previously unable to exhibit. Gone was a concrete wall, erected in the 1990s to keep out damaging light rays but also shutting out any lake view. That eastern part is now bathed in light.

The effect of all these changes has made people see the works anew. Roberts noted that “Even the works that have been on view before, the curators come up to me and say it looks new. I tell them you just didn’t see it before because the building didn’t allow it.”

We next walked up the stairs to the Mezzanine. Though this level has a relatively small footprint, the museum has replaced the Prints and Drawings office (which had a locked door saying “By Appointment Only”) with two collections that are among the strongest in the nation--American Folk Art and Self-Taught Artists. The impressive Michael and Julie Hall Collection of American Folk Art and the fascinating Anthony Petullo Collection of Outsider Art. The Flagg Collection of Haitian Art moved from the Saarinen wing into a new mezzanine space as well.

The second floor contained more surprises, not those hanging on walls. HGA’s Shields adopted an architectural technique, “Enfilade”, that situates a series of galleries across several doorways in perfect symmetrical alignment.

This allowed me to look directly from the middle of Kahler into the American Art rooms, far down the hall, without any obstruction. Visitors can now quickly orient themselves and not get lost in what a staffer called “mystery moments”, a common museum malady.

We passed through a room devoted to great German Expressionist artists, such as Gabriel Muntz, George Grosz, Otto Dix and entered the East Addition. A stunning view of Lake Michigan and the Calatrava wing to the right greets us. The room contained an upside-down Claes Oldenburg’s “Eraser” along with not one but four Harry Bertoia sculptures and, farther down the long hall, three Barbara Hepworths.

Returning to the mezzanine, I confronted a real show stopper: a two-story high installation by a self-taught artist, Albert Zahn, called “Bailey’s Harbor”. It depicts a gigantic photo image of his home in Door County with a profusion of hanging carved wooden birds flying in the foreground. It’s a breathtaking and not-to-be-missed attraction.

I did miss seeing what sounds like another star attraction: a rooftop terrace, 42 feet above the Lake, that replaced a sunken courtyard that once served as a sculpture court but was not well-situated and, worst of all, leaked.

We ended the tour with Brady on the north end of the new addition. This long space houses a cafe where one can sip wine, eat small plates of food while staring out at majestic Lake Michigan, only 30 feet away. More importantly, this lobby gives the museum a critically-needed second entrance to let visitors enter from the adjacent parking lot or the lake’s waterfront path.

For the remaining part of the tour, we followed David Russick, the museum’s chief space designer. We began in the American Galleries at Kahler’s far west end. Russick noted that its arrangements of walls and gallery spaces were all new, having replaced previous office space and the outdoor sculpture court.

“Basically, every wall in the museum is new, every floor has been redone,” Russick said. “There were no ceilings in this space. We did everything but knock the building down to the studs.”

Visitors can now traverse the western Galleria and not hit a wall. They can access collections in the Saarinen structure that they once skipped,

due to the museum's labyrinthine maze. They now walk into the oldest part of the collection containing Egyptian, Greek and Roman and Renaissance Art on the ground floor. There is also the fascinating Flagg Collection of rare northern Renaissance clocks.

The second floor continues a linear art historical journey, beginning with the historic Layton Gallery of Old Master works of 17th through 19th Century art, displayed against handsome colored walls of purple, green and ruby reds. We then stepped over a seam in the floor, which was the only clue that we were back in the Kahler's American Gallery rooms with modern and contemporary art in the distance.

The lower level held a final surprise. A 10,000 sq. ft. gallery was created for the museum's first dedicated space to its near 4,000 print photography collection plus home to an expanded palette of video installations, film and digital media. The Herzfeld Center for Photography and Media Arts is headed by curator Lisa Sutcliffe, who came from the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, to conceptualize the new center's possibilities from scratch. She has installed three mesmerizing video works that are truly state-of-the-art.

Milwaukee's success greatly improves the

museum experience for its visitors. "We got a lot of creative bang for our buck," says Roberts of the project's modest \$35 million budget.

Former director, Russell Bowman, who led the museum from 1985 to 2002 and is now an art adviser in Chicago, is a fan. "It seems to be an entirely successful rethinking of the collection and its presentation. It's a pleasure... to see the museum continuing to grow and be exciting."

I asked architect Shields what had been the design's main challenge. "Trying to figure out how to design an elegant work of architecture in the space between a Saarinen and a Calatrava", he said. "I was given the task of doing a background piece in which access to the lakefront was respected." This modest addition blends in well alongside the other architectural elements yet makes a powerful design statement within.

The challenge now for the museum? "How do we connect with the community", Roberts replied. Milwaukee hopes the new North entrance and lakeside stepped staircase will boost attendance past the current 400,000 mark. "The question now is how do we do even more, how do we get more diverse audiences. This definitely sends a clear visual signal that the museum is for you, the community." ■

Tom Mullaney is US editor of the New Art Examiner. He has written on museums and museum directors for over 20 years for The New York Times, The Art Newspaper and Chicago Magazine.

Too Much Information

Ian Everard

The image of an artwork can linger. For me this is usually because the experience of looking has provoked associations more wide ranging than formal considerations. One such experience began for me while visiting the National Portrait Gallery in London, in November 2015. I write this a mere three months later from where I live near Silicon Valley, in California, but the memory of viewing a single artwork remains so vivid, it is as though I am there still.

The National Portrait Gallery is a bit of a guilty pleasure for me. To walk through it is to walk through time, encountering mostly celebrated individuals - the celebs of their day - who lived through the upheavals of history and somehow, despite it all, kept their heads ... or didn't. I have a particular fondness for the portraits of the Tudor era - the sitter staring directly at us, isolated against a stark black background - but the portraits from other eras have moved me too - even the Victorians. We



Tim Berners-Lee

know these people are hanging there because they have witnessed or shaped history but we also know they were blood and flesh. I look at them and wonder what they might be thinking now.

On that day in November, having traversed the galleries chronologically, toward the modern era, we found ourselves at the end of a passageway. In the distance, we saw what appeared to be a man standing on a pedestal. I thought, initially, of Gilbert or George. Intrigued, we approached. As we got closer, it became clear that this was, in fact, a sculpture of a rather ordinary looking person. He was dressed casually, in jeans, with a sports jacket and a backpack over one shoulder. Was this a piece by Duane Hansen? It was shorter than life size, though, so - Ron Mueck perhaps? On closer inspection, it was too roughly hewn a work for either of them. Despite that, the effect of this painted bronze sculpture was oddly life like. Who was this ordinary looking middle aged man, not larger than life, but smaller?

I read the description on the wall. It read "Sir Tim Berners-Lee (1955-), Inventor of the World Wide Web...". Well, of course! The sculptor's name is Sean Henry. The work itself is not that remarkable; rather conventional, actually. At best, it is the sculptural equivalent of a painting by Lucian Freud. It is the knowledge, though, of who and what it represents that is remarkable. We had seen the likenesses of kings and queens, courtiers and composers, politicians, poets and philosophers - Henry VIII, even, for whom people did lose their heads - but at that moment, and even now, I don't think anyone represented there has had

such a profound effect on the world. Although accomplished, by reputation he is self-effacing. He is represented because of what he represents.

At another moment in time, not that long ago - in 1989 - Sir Tim made a decision that, for better or worse, would lead to one of the most profound changes humankind has experienced. Looking at his likeness, I wanted to ask, "What are you thinking, Tim Berners-Lee?"

The sculpture is mute. He's not saying. But I tried to imagine what he might say - and then, more importantly, how I would feel if I were in his shoes? I would feel breathless, bewildered by unintended consequences and wonder if I might lose my head. Maybe Berners-Lee doesn't, but I would. The changes wrought since that decision have been so all encompassing and continue with such increasing and irreversible velocity that even he must have trouble comprehending them. If I were he, would I be glad the World Wide Web exists? I don't know.

As I stood there my head spun, running through the changes, thinking of the current unease. What sphere is not unstable? Are the net effects positive or negative? Does connectedness cause disconnection? Is social media antisocial? I imagined the scales of justice. On one side would be the spread of ideas and information, education, entrepreneurship, new markets, instant connectivity, decentralization, democratization, popular movements, mass entertainment, streaming media. On the other would be displacement, social dislocation, income disparity, distraction, cognitive changes, mass surveillance, mass entertainment, terrorism and streaming bloody media. I wanted to tell this mute, bronze, painted sculpture what I was thinking: The jury is out, Sir Tim Berners-Lee: too much information. Like me, it's too distracted to decide, but I'm still thinking about it. ■

Ian Everard is an artist and writer who was born in St. Ives, Cornwall and lives in Santa Cruz, California. When he's not too distracted, he tries to think about things he's experienced in visual culture and how they relate to the world at large.

Pinterest: Education for the Digital Age?

George Care

There is a simple, naive pleasure in collecting things. I seem to remember that fantastic summer when Laker and Lock, not to mention Colin Cowdrey and Peter May played Cricket so well against the West Indies and recall collecting cigarette cards with their heroic images. Another series of cards carried the proud images of Her Majesty's ships many of which I first saw in as the Fleet assembled in Mount's Bay in about 1952. The cards were sometimes ranked with stars with battleships carrying the full 5 stars and light cruisers maybe 3. Innocent of both imperialism and the devastation of weaponry we carried collections that stuffed into our school blazer pockets.

Just a few years before intellectuals such as Walter Benjamin and Stefan Zweig were being impounded by the fascists in Germany, Italy and Austria. Zweig has written a moving story over a collector who became blind as his family were forced to deceive driven by the dire necessity for bread. His valuable etchings in his "Sammlung" (collection but also interestingly composure) replaced by plane paper which he takes lovingly from his folder and extols the detailed wonder of each image. Whatever the pleasures of making collections, John Fowles has reminded us of the darker side of the psychology. On the whole a masculine foible, because it was the men that had the money to pursue their interests, in their great salons clever women as varied as Rahel Varnhagen and Lady Ottoline Morrell collected persons to cultivate the exchange of ideas. How far such aspirations are from the hurried pinning of electronic images onto simulated pin boards!

However, being now just short of 250 followers myself on Pinterest, have I acquired any useful knowledge of paintings and photography? Might it serve as a useful vehicle for learning, even though the collections of great museums are shrunk to just the size of an i-phone screen? There are at least three ways in which I might attempt to justify to myself the outrageous amount of time building my own portfolio collection has taken.

*Might it serve as a useful vehicle
for learning, even though the
collections of great museums
are shrunk to just the size of an
i-phone screen?*

Firstly, it has enabled me to discover significant new artists. Looking under the heading of "Works for further consideration", I find the delightful sketch of a city street by Anton Pieck. The person who originally pinned this usefully informs me that Pieck was well known for the nostalgic and fairytale quality of his work which included sculpture and graphic art. He was Dutch and lived from 1895 until 1957. The image which I have pinned vaguely reminds me of the street in Truro which runs beside our relatively recent Benson cathedral. Next to this in the random manner of my collection I have pinned the wanly evocative sculpture of a young girl with a suitcase by Berit Hildre, a French sculptor who I now go on to discover has a delightful and tender portrayal of her work on You Tube. Then there are the delightful colours of the work of Hope Gangloff and I notice that I have pinned several of her pictures because their bohemian portraits thoroughly engaging. This time the person who first mounted the work has usefully added the comment, "Stumbled into this exhibit in Chelsea the other day. I have never seen her work in person. Quite enjoyed the pattern overload! Hope Gangloff at Susan Inglett Gallery".

In addition to aiding the discovery of new artists, I find that some of my so-called pins are a stimulus to my own attempts at sketching. For instance, I enjoy the work of the Neue Sachlichkeit, particularly Christian Schad. This by a series of events led to my discovery of the print work of the Dresden painter, Conrad Felixmuller. I have done some printing in the recent past and the lyrical

lines of Felixmuller's 1927 Woodcut portrait of Christian Rohlf's prompted me to making a copy in red biro and red ink. Because the images are so easily available and to some extent a prompt to experiment, it is a useful encouragement, at least to someone rather lazy like me to get sketching. As I am sure many find that sketching, for someone whose is perhaps stimulated enough by language is a delightful change.

Stimulated by a course of lectures by the cultural historian, Robin Lenman I have taken a deeper interest in photographic history. Pinterest provides a useful resource for those who are interested in the stage and screen, entertainment and political change throughout the twentieth century. Black and white photographs have their own appeal. Here, I already knew of the work of Roman Vishniac of the vanished world of the Stehl but was fascinated to find photographs of many favourite artists, composers and indeed

scientists. It can clearly be seen that Man Ray and Tzara's work influenced photography as well as art. Film stars influence how bathing beauties are portrayed. It is curious but perhaps not surprising to notice how similar the photographs of Egon Schiele and Paul Klee actually resemble the work of their paintings.

Can Pinterest benefit education? I am not entirely sure; the wealth of imagery would be useful to many designers. It may well form an entry point for students who are reluctant to go into galleries, especially if these are expensive on in foreign cities. Certainly, the galleries could themselves make better use of this technology. However, the lack of detail and face-to-face discussion of paintings and their techniques provided by "pinning" are evident drawbacks. As Pinterest is so easy to use, it provides a mechanism which encourages its users to exchange images of Rembrandt and is then prompts them to see the original has got to be a very useful tool. ■

Thomas Newbolt: Drama Painting – A Modern Baroque

29 JANUARY – 13 MAY, King's Place,
London

This exhibition comprises fierce, expressionistic works – many of single female sitters on couches. Apparently his models arrive at twilight and he paints them when he cannot quite see the exact colours clearly on his tubes of oil. As the introduction to the exhibition at King's Place, London states,

"Opening in conjunction with the Baroque Unwrapped music programme, Piano Nobile presents Thomas Newbolt: Drama Painting – A Modern Baroque. Immense paintings by contemporary artist Thomas Newbolt explores the very essence of painting: the paradoxes of light and dark, psyche and body, figure and ground. Such liminal spaces are where Newbolt finds a vital potency: 'I'm interested in the emotional area the painting opens up, so when I stand back I feel it's true'. Layering undiluted

oil paint in vigorous impasto, the paintings have a physical depth mirroring their expressive complexity."

Indeed it is the case that these paintings, in impastos of pure colour, have an impressive presence and dignity.

The figures have the sense that they are apprehensively awaiting a tense psychoanalytic session. Their long and elegant dresses have a timeless elegance about them perhaps reminiscent of Christian Schad but painted with an intensity approaching Francis Bacon. The colours are rich and vivid with an accent on vermillion or verdant dark greens against an equally strong background of intense blue or brown. There is an interesting triptych and smaller studies of heads. Dramatic, indeed, so if you are in London to see a play, take the short walk past the Guardian offices in Kings Cross to see these intriguing works. ■

Since retiring from school mastering in various schools, including Holland Park and Alleyn's GC has worked as a reviewer and art critic. He has broadcast on local radio and visited major galleries across Europe.

The Oakland California Temple

by R Kay

I like gallery hopping. I really do. I just don't expect to see art that I like. Maybe because there's so much of it. There's a proliferation of art schools, art spaces, art fairs, and art makers providing a constant stream of images and objects. And they aren't all wonderful. I'm not immune to the power of art though, or its ability to leave a lasting impression. Just now I'm remembering visits to the Detroit Institute of Arts when I was too young to know how old I was.

Recently we were back at the car after a full day of gallery hopping in downtown Oakland, California. It was rush hour and we'd be stuck in it. My friend, and the driver that day, suggested we visit Oakland's Mormon temple instead. Excellent! I had never seen this massive landmark up close.

The Oakland California Temple, in the Oakland Hills, sits high above the streets of downtown Oakland. It has a commanding view of the San Francisco Bay region. My friend grew up in the Oakland Hills, an affluent area with many parks and horse stables. She wound comfortably through the neighborhoods, and as we passed her high school, mentioned that Tom Hanks had been a classmate, and yes, they were in drama class together.

At the entrance to the temple's parking lot is

a large fountain and larger white gates.

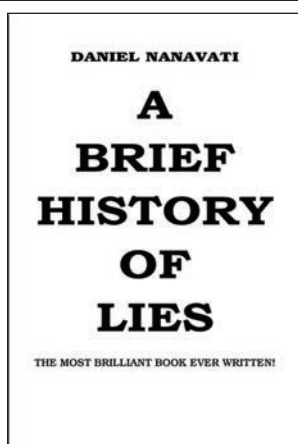
The temple, designed by Harold W. Burton and dedicated in 1964, is the best of a 1940s Hollywood stage set. This Jew was giddy in its presence.

Built of reinforced concrete and faced with white granite, the temple rises one hundred and seventy feet. Five carved and gilded, pyramidal spires top it off. Above its entry doors, and almost midway up the facade, live palm trees are planted on the building's elevated terrace. They flank a grand frieze in which Christ preaches to a small crowd, arms outstretched in a christly pose. Outside the front entry's garden courtyard is an expansive, formal, man-made stream with multiple footbridges and two fountains. Irregular carved white stones dot the stream. They rise above the surface of the water looking a bit like tiny icebergs, though I'm sure that wasn't the intention. Rose bushes, boxwood hedges, and more palm trees line the 18.3-acre property. The feeling here is something like Frank Lloyd Wright meets Arabian palace meets Cecil B. deMille.

Not much in the galleries that day, but the Oakland California Temple was spectacular. ■

R. Kay is a visual artist living in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. When not in the studio, R. Kay roams far and near absorbing visual hits and stinkers along the way.

Ad



A 20,000 word survey of a wicked, irreverent, serious, harmful, cruel and enjoyable (for some) side of human civilization. Including quotes on lies and lying (good, bad and indifferent) from famous people down the ages who should know better.

Illustrated with 8 original cartoons by Calvin Innes.

Kindle \$3

Each day a few more lies eat into the seed with which we are born, little institutional lies from the print of newspapers, the shock waves of television, and the sentimental cheats of the movie screen.

(Norman Mailer)



The visionary lies to himself, the liar only to others.

(Franklin D. Roosevelt)



A Feast of Astonishments: Charlotte Moorman and the Avant-Garde, 1960s-1980s

Rachael Schwabe

Charlotte Moorman was an artist of many guises: champion of the cello, muse of the avant-garde, a master networker of “New Music” and an early practitioner of 1960s mixed media “Happenings”.

This beautiful and utterly charming, woman, moved from a traditional upbringing in Little Rock, Arkansas to classical training at Juilliard and, eventually, became a leading performance artist of New York’s avant-garde scene for more than two decades. Critics have long debated whether an artist’s biography should be independent of his or her work. But in Moorman’s case, biography feels imperative for Charlotte *was* her art.

This misunderstood figure, known for such transgressive performances as “TV Cello” and “TV Bra”, is now receiving a long-overdue re-examination of her artistic career in a comprehensive exhibition, “A Feast of Astonishments: Charlotte Moorman and the Avant-Garde, 1960s to 1980s” at the Block Museum in Evanston.

Upon entering the main gallery, one is confronted with a kaleidoscope of sound. One hears, and sees, excerpts of Moorman’s performances with non-traditional instruments kazoo and metal, intermixed with the classical pull of her cello. Moorman’s warm voice, speaking about her performances, is woven through the fabric of sound.

As with most “Happenings” documentation, the exhibition presents artifacts from her performances - her wardrobe and avant-garde cellos, photos and memorabilia from the fifteen Avant-Garde Festivals she organized in New York City. Photos show a lovely woman performing her musical pieces with dignity. Her face betrays no trace of any awareness of acting ridiculously. All the documentation is drawn from her archive that is housed at Northwestern’s Library.

The Sixties and Seventies were crucial decades



3-Ex12 1969 Art By Telephone

when artists challenged the contradictions of art’s canon and when art historians began investigating radical approaches to art. The avant-garde has long been classified as meeting the need for a new visual language. Charlotte, “A Feast of Astonishments” argues, was a translator, transmitter, and the “Joan of Arc of New Music” as composer Edgard Varese called her.

Moorman’s collaborations with such noted artists as John Cage, Nam June Paik and Yoko Ono share a particular mix of tradition and nihilism. In particular, the Saint-Saens solo performance piece that Paik created for her is representative of his tendency to interrupt classical pieces with irreverent action. It required her to pause midway through the work, then jump into an oil drum filled with water, emerge and resume playing.

I found it striking that Moorman would wear classic concert dresses when the composer or notes did not require otherwise, and insisted that the cellos she played be functional. Such an attitude attested to her loyalty to her medium, even as she broke its rules. “I don’t feel that I’m destroying any tradition,” Moorman once said. “I feel that I’m creating something new.”

In another performance, ‘One for Violin’,



P. Moore © 8.26.65

Moorman gracefully raises a violin over her head and smashes the instrument over a table, predating The Who's Pete Townsend by more than 20 years. The splintered remainders are on display in a glass box and completely encapsulate Moorman's esthetic: respectful of the instrument but disruptive of its structure.

After a multi-instrumental performance on Mike Douglas' talk show, Moorman was asked "Are you serious about your music?", to which she replied evenly, "Oh, very definitely, but it's not music. It's a mixture: theater, environment, cooking, lighting, everything is important. The cello sounds are only one thing."

Viewing the precious artifacts that clothed Moorman's body, such as her electric bikini or her TV bra, I sought a deeper conversation with Moorman's body which was especially exemplified in her topless performances. While performing Paik's infamous "Opera Sextronique," Moorman was arrested by New York City police and charged with lewdness and indecent exposure. Moorman famously countered that she needed to be topless because that's what the piece called for.

Moorman's body was integral to her art. Her body was her instrument, whether it was her Sky Kiss, where she was lifted into the air in a balloon and floated over the town while playing her cello or Yoko Ono's Cut Piece where viewers could cut away at Moorman's dress while she sat primly on a low stage. In the end, Moorman would submit to her body, dying in 1991 after a long battle with breast cancer.

The Block's exhibition is appealing in that it

fits in with other post-modern revisions of art history wherein women are finally given their due for all that they put into their art. For this revision in particular, with all artifacts of Moorman's art on display, her significance speaks for itself.

The Block asks visitors to take Moorman as seriously as she took herself, that she did not fall back into irony. Moorman was so fluid in these pieces, constantly opening herself up as a performer. Throughout, she was always herself, a classically-trained musician carving out genuinely new notes for both herself and the avant-garde.



Moorman Neon Cello.



P Moore ©10.4.65.

"A Feast of Astonishments"

The Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art'

January 16th - July 17, 2016.

Free Admission.

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For more information
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www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu

Rachael Schwabe is a fourth year art history student at Loyola University Chicago. Her academic focus is on picturing women and gender in art and literature.

Exquisite Corpse: Chamber Music for the Eyes

Michel Ségard

To celebrate the 35th anniversary of Printworks Gallery, directors Bob Hiebert and Sidney Block asked 105 Chicago artists spanning three generations to participate in creating 35 exquisite corpses (the surrealist drawing scheme that assigns head, torso, and legs to a separate artist without the artist seeing what the others have done), one for each year the gallery has been in business. Sadly, the show also became a memorial to Sidney who passed away at the age of 91 shortly before it opened.

On first scanning this exhibition, one is struck by its musical quality; the works resonate like intricate chords of a fine piece of chamber music. Then they begin to separate into three categories.

About a third of the corpses are especially harmonious. Number 24 by Jeanine Coupe Ryding, Judith Geichman, and Eleanor Spiess-Ferris is so stylistically coherent that, at first glance, it looks as if it might be by a single artist. In number 26 abstract painter Roland Ginzl's head, sporting bright red glasses, sits atop Pamela Barrie's playing card torso and Fred Wessell's ornately skirted legs, strongly evoking the feeling of a Lewis Carroll character.

Another third of the pieces can be described as fugal. They incorporate contrasting themes or styles that seem to play against each other and yet ultimately come together. The best example in this group is number 11: John Rush's open-jawed alligator head surmounts a swirling torso with clapping hands by Barbara Cooper and a pair of gambolling legs by Heather Becker. Even though the drawing styles are dramatically different, the unifying rhythm of the three segments marries them into a coherent whole. Number 13 has a dance-like quality. Alexandra Kowerko's animated bright orange feet are contrasted by L.J. Douglas' calm, static, female torso, which is surmounted by Gladys Nilsson's multiple heads that appear to sway to the rhythm of the feet.



26-Roland-Ginzl--
Pamela-Barrie--Fred-
Wessel

The last third are largely dissonant in tone and evoke grating harmonies like those of Arnold Schoenberg. The most striking of these is number 25, Diane Simpson's finely drawn feet (in ballet's third position) are topped by Kate McQuillen's smudged torso with burning hands, which in turn is topped by Nancy Barnes' threatening wolf's head of Little Red Riding Hood fame, making it a truly frightening piece. In number 12, Bruce Thayer's grimacing head sits on Winifred

Godfrey's submerged torso partially enveloped by a floating floral cloth. They are all supported by Paula Campbell's crossed legs surrounded by attacking fish — another equally disturbing image.

The animated discourse among the exquisite corpses, and their individual segments, create a salon-like atmosphere of congenial interplay. And although a few of the pieces fail to coalesce in any meaningful way, overall, the exhibition resonates with a civilized charm seldom encountered in today's harried world. ■

Michel Ségard is a past reviewer for the New Art Examiner and a freelance author and designer of exhibition catalogs. He taught desktop publishing at the School of the Art Institute for 11 years.

Peggy Guggenheim: The Shock of the Modern

Tom Mullaney

History knows Peggy Guggenheim (1898-1979) primarily as a generous arts patron who amassed one of the greatest collections of 20th Century Art, now housed in her former palazzo residence on the Grand Canal in Venice.

However, until she was almost forty, Peggy was someone with no clear plans, an insecure woman who hated her looks and was still in search of her identity. Up to that point, she had sought emotional comfort in the arms of a series of lovers and marriage to an abusive husband. She told a friend, Emily Coleman, that she felt her life was over.

When her mother died in 1937, she came into a small fortune (relative to the other Guggenheims) of \$450,000. She made the decision to open an art gallery based on a friend's suggestion to "do some serious work". Guggenheim viewed art as a good way to make use of her natural gifts, her money and her connections.

Though unschooled in art, she turned to Marcel Duchamp for advice. Duchamp exposed her to modern art and Surrealism in particular. He introduced her to many artists in his circle and guided her on what to show at Guggenheim Jeune, her first gallery. Throughout her short career as a gallerist, she relied on wiser advisers: the critic Herbert Read, Max Ernst, Howard Putzel and Nelly van Doesburg, a good friend.

Peggy's fame as a collector is based on two short, intense periods of acquiring art: from 1938 to 1940, mainly in Paris, and from 1941 to 1946 in New York at her 57th Street gallery, Art of This Century. That gallery was the epicenter of the postwar New York art scene.

When she had to flee Paris and the Nazi occupation in 1941, she offered her collection to the Louvre for safekeeping in a rural hiding place. The museum refused, as not worthy, an art cache that contained works by Kandinsky, Klee, Miro, Braque, Mondrian, Magritte and sculptures by Brancusi, Giacometti, Moore and Arp.

Guggenheim enjoys the rare distinction of having been the champion of two art movements: Surrealism in Paris and Abstract Expressionism in New York where her most famous discovery was Jackson Pollock.

She grew tired of running the gallery and left the United States in 1947 to relocate in Venice, her home for the next thirty-two years. She is buried in the garden of the palazzo along with fourteen of her beloved dogs.

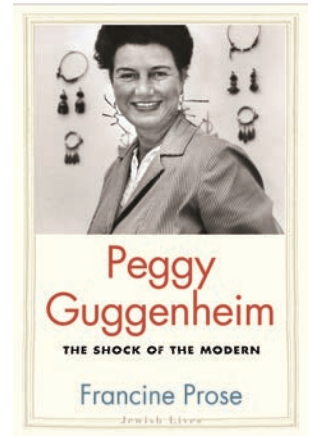
Guggenheim led a fascinating, overflowing life, full of famous names (Emma Goldman, Paul and Jane Bowles, Clement Greenberg) and Prose tells her story with equal gusto. Her talent as a novelist helps her shape Peggy's life into a breezy, compelling narrative.

Prose digested a large archive of prior Peggy materials, including her subject's own memoir, and has distilled the essential from the incidental in vignette-size chapters.

The result is an engrossing read that captures Peggy's tumultuous off-stage persona with friends and family alongside endless love affairs. She no sooner left one lover than she was on to a fresh conquest, believing women should enjoy the same sexual freedom as men. She once carried on a torrid, 13-month affair with Samuel Beckett.

Unlike Anton Gill, an earlier, more critical biographer, Prose paints a balanced, heartbreaking portrait of an uncompromising, yet lonely, woman who sought love all her life and was often hurt by catty friends, unfaithful husbands and her troubled daughter, Pegeen, who committed suicide.

I was sorry to turn the final page. I must turn to Peggy's memoir, "Out of This Century", to get more of the juicy details. ■



Peggy Guggenheim: The Shock of the New is published by Yale University Press

Van Gogh's Bedrooms: Colors don't do the job

Michel Ségard



Chicago Bedroom



Recolored Chicago Bedroom

Vincent van Gogh painted three versions of his bedroom at Arles between 1888 and 1889. The first painting was done in 1888 and now hangs in the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam. The second was painted in early September, 1889, and is now owned by the Art Institute. The third dates from late September, 1889, and is in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris. The Art Institute's latest exhibition, *Van Gogh's Bedrooms*, centers around this trio of paintings that have not been seen together since a show at the Van Gogh Museum in 1990.

But just three paintings in an exhibition would be too academic to appeal to the broader museum audience. So, they have been augmented by a biographical presentation of Van Gogh's life with a representative selection of his other works, enhanced by objects and artworks that influenced his aesthetic. Presented in chronological order in a series of galleries, the show attempts to place the "Bedrooms" in psychological as well as biographical context.

Each gallery is devoted to a place where Van Gogh lived and worked, starting with Nuenen, his parents' home town in the Netherlands.

Here we see the early works— dark, somber, and monochromatic. Next is a gallery devoted to his time in Paris, where Van Gogh became influenced by post-Impressionism, especially Pointillism, here represented by his *Self-Portrait* of 1887.

It is in the Arles room that we see his three famous chair paintings. They are presented as a triptych on one wall with Van Gogh's *Chair* on the left, Gauguin's *Chair* on the right, and *Madame Roulin Rocking the Cradle* (Madame Roulin pictured seated in Gauguin's chair) in the center. The *Madame Roulin* painting stands out with its Gauguin-like rendering style. One is left wondering what symbolism is at play in these three paintings.

The next gallery is devoted to the little yellow house at Arles that contains Van Gogh's bedroom. One first encounters a projected video of quotes from Van Gogh's writing about his longing for a simple, cozy place to call home. Across the gallery is a partial reconstruction of the bedroom in the yellow house with two more video projections on the same theme—very poignant, but overdone. One video would have sufficed.

The next gallery houses the three versions of *The Bedroom*. Like the chair paintings, they are presented on a wall by themselves. In chronological order, the Amsterdam version is on the left, the Chicago version in the center, and the Paris version on the right. A video presentation highlights the differences between the three, while two interactive kiosks allow viewers to explore these differences on their own. Another video presentation documents the scientific analysis and recent conservation work done on the paintings by the three museums, including the highly significant digital recolorization of the Amsterdam version in 2010 and the Chicago version in 2015.

Van Gogh was very fond of two red pigments for their intensity: geranium lake and cochineal lake. Both pigments turn white with extended exposure to light. He used these pigments to create the original lavender colors of the walls and the muted red of the tile floor. The walls are now a light blue and the floors have turned brownish—even gray—in the Chicago version.

Van Gogh's original intent (as documented in letters to his brother Theo) was to present a quiet, peaceful room by emphasizing the purple-yellow complimentary color pair

(lavender walls, yellow bed and chairs). As he said to his brother, "the colours have to do the job here." With this relationship now eradicated, the bedroom paintings look garish and a little "mad," especially in the Chicago version where Van Gogh used green to suggest shadows on the floor. Now that green dominates and contributes to the chaotic feel of the painting—the opposite of Van Gogh's documented intention.

The digital recolorization occupied only a few seconds of the conservation video. It would have been helpful to have life-size prints of the digitally recolored paintings included in the exhibition. One could then have compared the original color schemes with those now existing in the paintings. Viewers would have been better able to understand the artist's original intent. (How many of Van Gogh's paintings are being misinterpreted because of dramatic color shifts with time?).

One of the exhibition's goals was to place the bedroom paintings in psychological context. However, downplaying the color shifts hampers that goal by inviting continued misinterpretation of the artist's intent. To paraphrase Van Gogh, the colors should have been allowed to do their job. ■

Laura Lovelace in St Ives: by Adrian Banbury

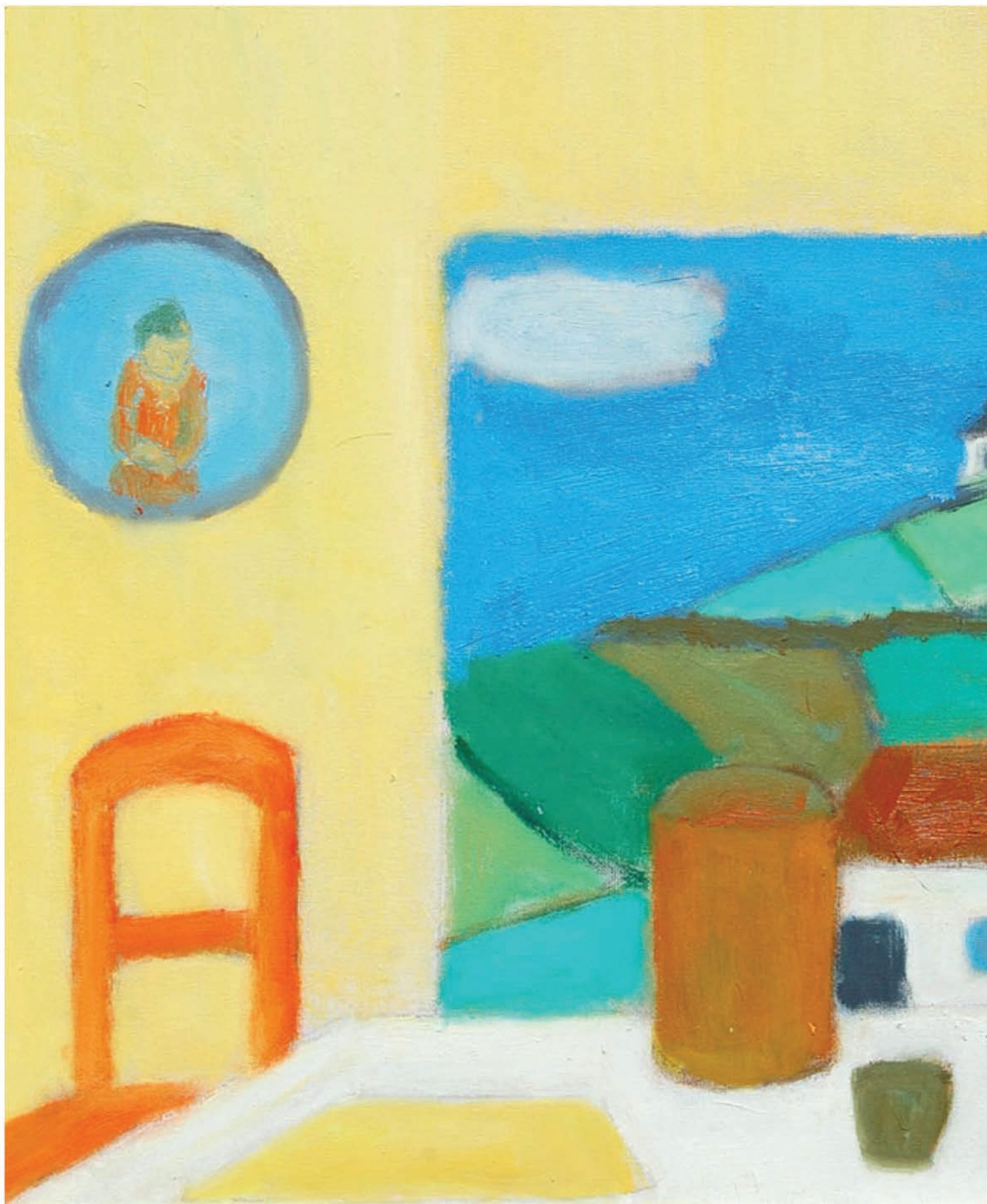
Marcel Duchamp once remarked art has its sell by date, being cynical but also wise about the marketing of art. Previous Dadaist, and cultural saboteur par excellence, he continued the anti art tradition of Dada which was a profound disquiet with the great slaughter of world and the taste and culture of those who affected it. History now has proved World War 1 was not the war that ended all Wars.

Ms Laura Lovelace's exhibition at the Sea Lane Gallery is an example of an artist in pursuit of good taste wrapped inside the trappings of the local avant garde tradition that died in St Ives many years ago. The ghost of Ben Nicholson Barbara Hepworth and Patrick Heron are present in spirit but not in the paint surface or even the painterly flesh of flesh of application, in this exhibition of 15 watercolours and 9 oil paintings. This exhibition is the nearest it is possible to get to a gift shop and have the tag of advanced art, a variation on themes of paint and abstraction that had meaning in the 50s but not today.

Ms Lovelace is a technically accomplished painter and occasional print maker. Her affection for the environment is clear. Her colouring reflects the unique quality of light that is present in the Tt Ives bay. They are a little too intense to pick up the finesse of Cornish Landscape which has spoken to legions of artists for two hundred years. However beauty is a dangerous game, which has trapped Ms Lovelace as many others.

Fashion is not a many splendid thing. Mrs Lovelace is on the edge but not quit there yet. ■

Sea Lane Gallery 14, Upper Tremeare Hill, St.Ives
Price range £40 - £350



Bob Bourne; Still Life with Window 2015

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