

UNIVERSAL COLLECTORS

THE MAGAZINE FOR PROFESSIONAL MIGRANT ARTISTS



Sometimes I find
a place to sleep

But I never dream



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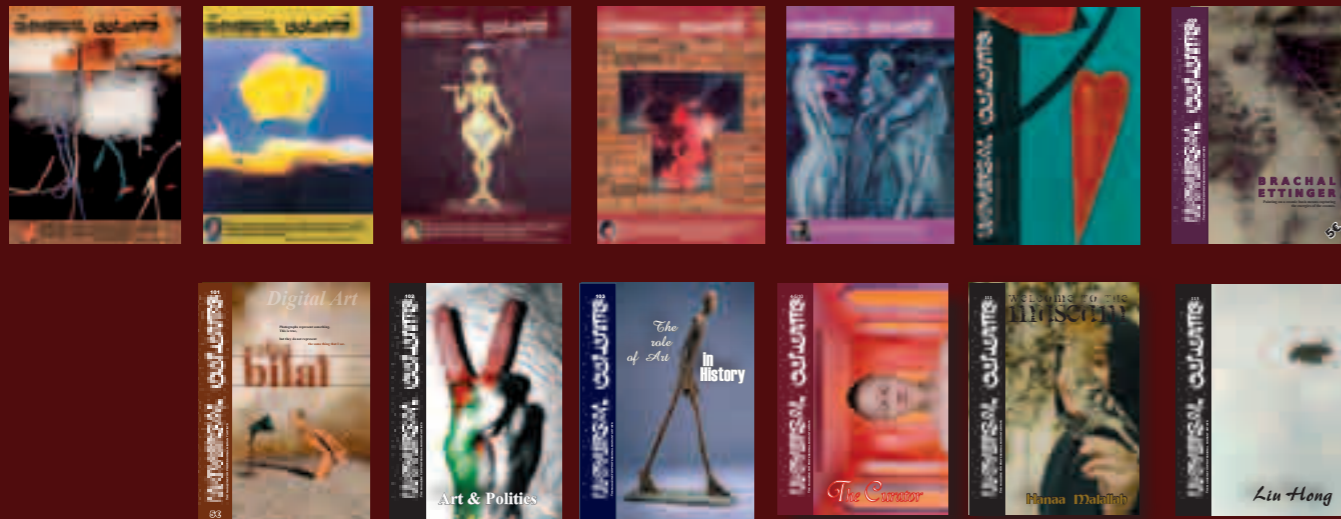
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AS WE ARE PREPARING TO OUR LARGE-SCALE PROJECT OF BOAT/VENE which is going to take place on August the 11th till the September 15, we are happy to announce this issue of the Universal Colours, that means because we are busy we can catch more than an apple in one hand as to say.

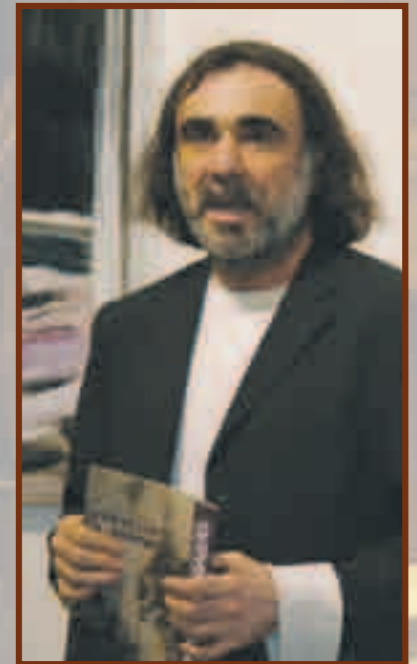
The work of our organization the European Union Migrant Artists Network is based on a voluntary work and it is all the time since we started we worked with many people and different type of profusions to make this dream come true.

Now we work professionally with this magazine beside our work in arranging the exhibitions both small scale and large/ scale, the work of the magazine reoccupies the big part of our work but we still try to make the obligations as we can.

The magazine is very important to all of us, it reflexes the shape of the whole work and give our public the exact picture of our work that is why we concentrated for the last three years of developing the magazine, of course we did not forget our aims but the necessity of the magazine was priority to us.

This time and we participate in one of the most important event Turku as European Cultural Capital for the year

2011, which this event means a lot to us because we did establish our work in the EU-MAN and it all started in Turku so it was and still dare to us to not participate this celebration.



We might be not able to keep the speed of the quality, I say might, which means not sure because of the financial situation, and it is know that the Boat project did not get any specific money and we depend only on the annual fund that we get from the Ministry of cultural and education.

This is not a warning neither it is running away from the responsibility, it is just a justification for the situation or rather it is explanation or declaration or one can say confession, I do now know exactly what it is but it is as it is.

Hope that we get some fund when we have another large-scale project, meaning that the fund organization can trust us when we say that we have this or that project which we need for it some fund.

We did apply for many organizations but we get a negative answer, that it not the first time and we know it is not the last time, but we are used to this situation and we can cop and survive with it “ notice I said survive not live” yes we cannot live with it.

Amir Khatib

Gemma Nelson - Hello Carousel

15 July / 13 August 2011
Private View: Friday 15 July 18:30 - 21:00

VEGAS Gallery is delighted to present 'Hello Carousel' the first London solo show of young British artist Gemma Nelson.

Since graduating the Slade School Of Fine Art in 2007, Nelson has received high acclaim. She was flagged as one of the most promising graduates of her year when featuring in the 2008 Bloomberg New Contemporaries Exhibition and since then has gone to be shortlisted for Saatchi Gallery's Four New Sensations and nominated as a finalist for the Nationwide Mercury Art Prize.

Working in Indian inks and employing a range of mixed media such as sequins, Nelson dares to cross the taboo boundaries between craft and fine art, using thread and hair as paint to stitch into work and weaving cellular shapes into a complex tapestry. The canvases of vivid colour and patterns incorporate hidden imagery to create intricate



layers of organic mythological creatures and landscapes in response to various themes such as female sexuality, fairy tales and notions of webbing and nets. Hello Carousel, sees Nelson further explore these techniques to create a fairground of works with crumbling roller coasters, abandoned helter skelters and carousels. The signature extrovert patterns sprawl organically across clean white backdrops holding an almost child like sense of play and naivety, but within these colourful fragments is a definite undercurrent of psychedelic discord. The distorted structures rise, the cells of colour bubbling and multiplying, only to keel over and collapse. Nelson using her distinctive method makes the works feel kinetic, growing and receding across the gallery walls.

ΑΝΗΣΥΧΗΤΙΚΕΣ ΜΟΥΣΕΣ DISQUIETING MUSES
DIANA AL-HADID • LARA BALADI • ΖΟΥΛΙΚΗ ΒΟΥΛΙΑΒΕΛΛΗ • ΜΟΝΑ ΗΑΤΟΥΜ • ΗΑΥΥ ΚΑΪΡΑΜΑΝ • ΜΑΪΙΔΑ ΚΗΑΤΤΑΡΗ • ΖΙΝΕΒ ΣΕΔΙΡΑ

Το Κέντρο Σύγχρονης Τέχνης Θεσσαλονίκης του Κρατικού Μουσείου Σύγχρονης Τέχνης σας προσκαλεί στα εγκαίνια της έκθεσης **Ανησυχητικές Μούσες** που θα πραγματοποιηθούν την Τρίτη 5 Ιουλίου 2011, στις 20:30 στο Κέντρο Σύγχρονης Τέχνης Θεσσαλονίκης (Λοσθίκη Β1, Λιμένα).

The Contemporary Art Center of Thessaloniki - State Museum of Contemporary Art invites you to the opening of the exhibition **Disquieting Muses** on Tuesday July 5th 2011, at 20:30 at the Contemporary Art Center of Thessaloniki (Warehouse B1, Port Area).

ΕΠΕΑΕΚ 2
ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΣΙΑΚΟ ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ
ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ ΠΡΟΤΕΡΑΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ
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ΕΠΤ ΕΠΤ3 ΕΡΤ NET 1000

International Art Academy - Palestine & Van Abbemuseum
Cordially invites you to the opening of the **PICASSO EXHIBITION**
At the International Academy of Art - Palestine, Ramallah
Friday 24 June 2011, at 5:00 pm

And the documentation exhibition of **PICASSO IN PALESTINE**
At Al-Ma'mal Foundation for Contemporary Art, Jerusalem
Saturday 25 June 2011, at 5:00 pm

Picasso in Palestine 24.06.2011

Fake Finn Festival of experimental live arts 2011

In Finland lives a big group of foreign artists. They are over-represented in performance art and other forms of experimental live arts. FFFela wants to present the rich variety of their contribution to Finnish cultural life. The artists are asked to focus on the festival's theme "Once a Guest, Always a Guest?".

Being an immigrant offers both possibilities AND impossibilities. An immigrant in Finland is encountered with curiosity, hospitality, suspicion, demarcation... He/She is offered maybe more freedom to express him/herself and at the same time he/she will never be totally part of the socio-cultural settings and structures of this country. He/she will always move in the fragile equilibrium of lacking the same cultural and linguistic background and the ability to provide fresh viewpoints for this society.

The aim of the festival is to offer an artistic contribution to this debate. We focus on performance art and other forms of experimental live art, because they offer the closest proximity to an audience.

The invited artists live from three to thirty years in Finland. They come from a variety of countries of almost all continents. 23 artists will present their works in a three day festival that will take place on Thursday, March 31st and Friday April 1st from 7 p.m. and Saturday April 2nd from 3 p.m. in Galleria Augusta, Suomenlinna B28, Helsinki.



Land Art

National Gallery Berlin
26.03.2011 - 15.01.2012

During the late 1960s, in the context of minimal art and process art an interest developed in work that was located outside the studio and art institutions. Work in exterior spaces is typical of land art, also called "earthworks" or "earth art." The term "landscape" here encompasses urban and industrial or natural landscapes. Although land art is usually site-specific, it includes sculptural interventions of the most various kinds: excavations of soil in the work of Michael Heizer, Nancy Holt's concrete tunnels, a path in the grass by Richard Long, sound in the work of Dennis Oppenheim, or Hamish Fulton's fleeting, immediate experience of walking. Often, these interventions in the landscape are subject to the effects of wind and weather in an enduring process of transformation.

On view here are objects, drawings, films, photographs, maps, and print matter from the holdings of the Nationalgalerie, Kupferstichkabinett, and the Kunstbibliothek der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, as well as from the Marzona Collection and Friedrich Christian Flick Collection at Hamburger Bahnhof.

Artists included in the exhibition: Joseph Beuys, Marinus Boezem, Stanley Brouwn, Jan Dibbets, Barry Flanagan, Hamish Fulton, Michael Heizer, Nancy Holt, Douglas Huebler, Barry Le Va, Richard Long, Walter De Maria, Dennis Oppenheim, Gerry Schum, Robert Smithson

Sneak Preview of Kiasma's ARS 11 in Turku

In January, audiences of the Capital of Culture Year 2011 in Turku will be treated to a sneak preview of the ARS 11 exhibition, to open in Kiasma in April. Kiasma will produce a two-part exhibition in the Logomo venue in Turku, with both works connecting thematically to the ARS11 exhibition. The artists in the ARS 11 exhibition are united by their relationship to Africa, and the works presented in the show will challenge our notions of both Africa and contemporary art.

ARS 11 will examine Africa and African identities through contemporary art. Challenging the narrow idea of contemporary African reality as nothing but a continuum of ancient traditions or their modern repetition, it will open up and question the myths and ideas associated with African identity and African contemporary art. ARS 11 will approach Africa as a cultural concept and a source of influences.

"ARS11 will be wide-ranging, open and diverse in terms of both content and structure. Instead of aiming to present a review of African contemporary art, it will focus on selected perspectives that have emerged during a two-year research process into hundreds of artists' statements and works," says Pirkko Siitari, Director of Kiasma.

The works in ARS11 will present individual, personal views of social events and processes. This is also the common feature of the works to be featured in Turku, both of which address the history of European colonialism. The first one to be presented in Logomo is WHERE IS WHERE?, a piece from 2008 by the internationally acclaimed Finnish video artist Eija-Liisa Ahtila. It was the first work to be donated to the museum by the Kiasma Foundation in 2009, and the exhibition in Logomo will be the work's premiere in Finland.

Saturday
9 April
9:30pm

World Music
Performance
by
Paulina Violina
vocals, pandero,
violin
Helsinki
vocals and
world percussion

The House of
Lartimeloon,
Pantteon
building,
Nicostr

€10
entrance
includes
sweet
drink

Gypsy Orchid

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Digital art in public spaces

Rome, 1973 Chiara studied at Salerno's Artistic Lyceum and at Fine Arts Academy of Naples and Rome. Then, she got a Master in "New Audiovisual mediums". She lived two years in Lisbon and several years in Milan. At the moment she is living and working in Rome.

Chiara's artwork combines different media as: animation and video installation, interactive projects on internet-art and digital art in public space and site-specific artworks.

Her animations and the video installations are characterized from a constant study on the shape, geometric and often essential, joined to a three-dimensional and dynamics vision of the virtual space. The interactive video installations force the spectator to confront himself with another 'oddity space'. A performance idea is the base of her artwork where people can watch a place that moves naturally beyond its functionality.

Other Chiara's site-specific projects such like "Art calling-Digital art stories", propose people to listen to stories about digital art through various phone booths placed around the city used as a communicative medium.

The internet-art project www.ideasonair.net is a conceptual artwork in progress that puts in evidence the concept of 'open artwork' getting to digital artists artistic ideas. She thinks that through the blog platform the ideas are the artworks and they can be transmitted... just like the thought! The iPhone APP "Virtual Prigione" is build like an interactive portrait video-sculpture inspired by the concept of the latest "unfinished" sculptures of Michelangelo, named "Prigioni."

Chiara uses the new technologies to comprise its intrinsic language. She experiments in rigorous and personal way on the unknown creative possibilities that they offer to her.

Chiara's artwork combines different media as: animation and video installation, interactive projects on internet-art and digital art in public space and site-specific artworks.

“ART AND CRITIQUE” (Arte e Critica), October-December 2001

Chiara Passa moves inside the digital planet, inventing virtual architectures, all with a circular geometric matrix and vividly using colours; mainly reds, acid greens, electric yellows. Compressed missiles, but also buildings referring to utopian architecture, spaces, which are apparently ascetic, futuristic, full of symbolically loaded truths: “The circle is the symbol of life for me,” says the artist. “It is that place inside of which everything has the same distance from the centre.” A meditation on living, which becomes a meditation on being and, lately, on being an artist involved in the Pipeline project. The project is an interactive four story house thought of as the artist’s house and designed as a place for everyone, a space of extreme freedom where the basic decor does not hinder, on the contrary, it highlights the purpose of the single areas, from the area of mental and spiritual exercise to the area of love joining. Universal themes and symbolism are vividly united, the images and videos link in the dimension of objects giving birth to energetic “compressions” of sense.

by Daniela Bigi.

COMPRESSIONS

The present communications’ system has allowed the passing from a passive to an active function of the informative message. Therefore, our role as information consumers has undergone an individuation process. Chiara Passa makes us ponder the mechanisms of this interaction, how each one of us can choose, manipulate and reinsert data taken from the ether, today. Chiara highlights the possibilities which modern digital technology gives us, today, to block and dispose of the information flow to our liking. Compressions is composed of extrapolated and manipulated stills, of a series of frozen images and forced to collapse until they lose their original identity. Thus, Chiara Passa, deviates the correct decoding of the missile-message, which is clearly visible in the computer created video movie named “time bomb the love” (’98). In order to dilate the transmission of a different image, in which shapes recompose themselves in bare and futuristic architectural prospects. The new architecture-message thus becomes independent from the initial source and acquires three dimensionality in space, like in “the acid house” (’99) a ceramic work of a house plunged in a natural context which accentuates its alienating dimensions. All of this is transmitted with a winsome and easily understood chromatic language, also because it is close to the visual grammar used by advertising companies, web designers and largely manifested in music videos. It could be the most effective and popular of the esthetical research of the last years.

Daniela Lotta. L’Officina, Vicenza 2000

Sabira Manek

The painter and the interior designer

SABIRA MANEK IS BORN IN UGANDA, she grew up in London after the expulsion of Asians from Uganda. She studied interior design and soon after set up her own business working mainly with property developers in some of London's most prestigious residential locations. Her work was based on key turn projects which involved all aspects of designing for interiors, bathroom and kitchen planning and working drawings, colour specifications, finishes and co-ordinations right through to site supervision. Being a designer and also artistic she found that there was now a very fine dividing line and that became her breakthrough to follow nobody's style but her own.

Born in Uganda of Indian origin. I was 13 when we were expelled during Idi amin's regime and found myself knocking on England's door. The trauma of being uprooted at such an early age and the culture clash found me without words again.

A professional background as an Interior Designer I have worked mainly with property developers in London's prestigious residential locations as well as New York. These were turnkey projects from initial preparation of working drawings, material and finishes specifications, bathroom and kitchen planning right through to site supervision. This challenged me to speculate in properties myself buying unmodernised places to refurbish and resell.

I ventured into many aspects of design including my own range of designer bedlinen. These were introduced to leading stores in London and became an immediate success. It was a concept I dreamt would lead from 'the bed to perfumes'. With that vision I came only as far as establishing my own bed and bath shop in London.

I have also taken several design commissions for paper and textile related products. Amongst my client profile are Unicef for greeting cards, gift packaging and christmas boxes, corporate brochure for De Bijenkorf,

Holland, paper table napkins for Duni, Sweden. My portfolio extends to magazine illustrations licensed by Bridgeman Art Library in London.

At the age of 26, I stood at the threshold of my one childhood dream. To be in Holland. Like a fairy tale I found myself in Amsterdam and knew this would become my home, like the Nile where I was born in Uganda, there was water everywhere. A dream come true, although I admit it was a bitter sweet experience and again without words which I could now only express through painting. So, for the first time I picked up my brush again since Uganda and became a self taught artist portraying a touch of mystery in my abstract works of art. I am fascinated by ancient symbols and the invisible which I bring to life with bold and passionate colours.

My book 'I AM' Heartworks is my latest adventure, a book I have published as a gift of life reflecting an Egyptian saying 'To think with the heart and feel with the mind'.

'I AM' is an art of life to colour your world inside and out. My paintings, available also as limited editions, are inspired by my love for astrology being a way to connect with kindred spirits and famous one line quotations as a tool for communication between the two opposites.



With this transpired my other passion, music as a 'Note for the Soul' that started only with Martika's 'Love Thy will be done' but became a whole playlist of East-West fusion that is sensual, thoughtful and inspiring. You can share my playlist or create your own on CD-R gift which is included with the book.

'I AM' is an invitation to embrace both our male and female aspects and experience the Oneness within our astrological blueprint.. My imagination ran wild as I discovered that

by taking the two opposite star signs they fitted perfectly into the circle of the Yin-Yang symbol.

There are blank pages to create your own personal affirmations, to be inspired by poems from Rumi as the soul searches for love.

It explains how to learn and teach aspects of love through astrology, where at last Love is Eternal...'It is written in the stars' that two halves shall make One whole.





Invoking the magic of 'I AM' begins here for our inner and outer journey as we experience spirituality and sensuality, or even both!
Did the Internet change your approach towards your work?

I realise I can work from anywhere, light as a feather 'shopfront' and portfolio. Mailing Information and images, photoshop are at my fingertips making connections globally more accessible of course. However it is still back to the drawing board when it comes to my real creativity with my brush in hand.

Is there a woman artist that particularly inspires you?

With an endless and commendable list of womens' achievements, my heart is full as it spills over to all those women in business, in fashion, art, music, right through to human rights, politics, etc. I am as inspired by Frieda Kahlo as I am by Iman. Music divas such as Aretha Franklin, Audre Lorde, the poet. How about Lady Diana, Sheryl Sandberg and so many more for me to then conclude 'We are All for One and One for All'.

What does womanity means to you?

Ashe!
Womanity is a 'Waking Dream' mysterious and sensual giving the heart a voice as it becomes One with our inner and outer world creating the life we have only touched in our dreams. Womanity is the dance and rhythm of Mother Earth as she nurtures and rocks her dual nature, playful but caring, tough but kind and tender. She laughs, she cries. She is the circle of life. ■



Who is who

By: Amir Khatib

IN ANCIENT GREECE TO VISIT THEATER WAS part of the worshipping; every citizen who did not go to the theater should pay a penalty because it was a holy matter and no one should cross that holiness. This way we do appreciate art and in this way we learn a lot how to give the art value and place in our life and that until came the Christianity which along with the history of art also developed and I mean music, paintings - icons and all type of arts that developed through Christianity.

The Renaissance urged a new class of people, a new need for the art, so the icons were marginalized and that type of art become a hand-craft necessarily, the new Brogue the land lords and all rich people gave the art a new value so when some artist like Rembrandt paint a piece of art the world at that time give value to the art itself as product of mankind not for the holiness, so I mean the value became popular and for the selected people who are the kings, landlords and all riches.

During the time of what we called it "Modernism" we went through the "Art life" because the art thinkers "if it is right to say" were theorizing the art as movement of life, a the best fruits of civilization, as type of high level of culture as all arts were so, so the music was to some extant so, theater, opera and even design and architecture. It was as they called it mantel revolution, so when Kandinsky worked out his theory and another artist Malevich did the same; the whole cultural life in Europe was involved in that type of revaluation, and we saw a lot of intellectual productions and in all levels.

Up till now, the movement of art was creative and innovative, that's what some people prefer to say until the time of the pop art who brought the art to the level of market, it is the time of consuming the Modernism, there is no use of the art, the museums do not make their duty as it should be because a lot of people want

some interpretation of the square of Malevich, the white square of the black one, Andy Warhol and Keith Hearing they turned the history of the art, they make it usable for all, so you can carry a picture on you t-shirt, you can enjoy the a picture of Picasso on your desert after the food, you can make fun out of the art, there is no need to that soled building which we rarely visit to show ourselves to others that we are intellectual.

Postmodernism returned the art to the museum, Marcel Duchamp could bring his toilette to show it as a piece of art, he expressed the emptiness of life, Jeff Konss could say that it is all about marketing, nothing is serious, just play the game if you can and the artist should see 360 degree and Julian Schnabel the multi talented person can just put a touch on any picture of anything that he could call

art, as Do champ dose when he said that art can be anything you see, all it needs just your touch to make it art.

anyway the whole scenery is consume of money, just that the government have what we call "dirty money" to spend it, so the national lottery of each country is the first support of art and sport activities and in the Middle East world they do so, so each government want to show that they are very intellectual and cultural orientated so they make museums in the desert when some high percentage of the population consider art as abused matter because it is not allowed by their religion.

I am no pessimistic at all but I think the role of the art is not yet taken in consideration, and when you see that art really educate people when you see some drama lessons unforced to the primary schools because they want to rise the self confidence to the pupils, then you say that art plays an essential role in life, when drawing and painting teaches the people how ten can plan their life, you can say that art is effective activity in life.

So it is all about money up to now and who knows what mankind can develop in the future time. ■

WHAT SHOULD ARTISTS DO ABOUT MARKETING THEIR ART IN A RECESSION?

By: Katherine Tyrrell
<http://makingamark.blogspot.com/>

SINCE MY OWN CLOSE CALL WITH Northern Rock and the sub-prime crisis, I've been reading the financial pages on a regular basis and then saying to anybody who'll listen that the financial and property markets and money matters generally were going to get a lot worse by the end of 2007 and that there might be the equivalent of a financial blood bath come the end of year results in January. Well, on Monday, it arrived and Wall Street approached meltdown.

What I've also been reading is what seems like an increased number of blogs posts about marketing art in the first three weeks of January. While some of these have been due to the fact it's the beginning of the year, it seems to me that the rest have been associated with or have also been anticipating a significant downwards shift in 2007 (and 2008?) of gallery sales and attendance at the trade fairs associated with selling decorative art in both the USA and UK the unfolding of the impact of the credit crunch on the property market (falling values everywhere) and everybody from the clearing and merchant banks, through mortgage and credit companies on downwards to the individual. (which led to the 'Monday Massacre' - where there was a major financial panic) what the BBC referred to as Carnage on Wall Street as loans go bad before yesterday's somersault.

This is emphatically not a blip in the market. If we all stop still and look for long enough, we are all staring at a recession in the making. Confidence in the marketplace is plummeting - on a global basis and many traders are biting their nails.

The United States has now effectively entered into a serious and painful recession.

The debate is not anymore on whether the economy will experience a soft landing or a hard landing; it is rather on how hard the hard landing recession will be. The factors that make the recession inevitable include the nation's worst-ever housing recession, which is still getting worse; a severe liquidity and credit crunch in financial markets that is getting worse than when it started last summer; high oil and gasoline prices; falling capital spending by the corporate sector; a slackening labor market where few jobs are being created and the unemployment rate is sharply up; and shopped-out, savings-less and debt-burdened American consumers who — thanks to falling home prices — can no longer use their homes as ATM machines to allow them to spend more than their income. Indeed holiday sales in the US were much lower in real terms than in 2006. As private consumption in the US is over 70% of GDP the US consumer now retrenching and cutting spending ensures that a recession is now underway.

Nouriel Roubini's Global Economic Monitor - Europe Will Be Hard Hit by the Recessionary Storm Now Sweeping the U.S.

The scope for defaults on loans of every sort from money market bonds to credit card bills is truly frightening. Yesterday the talk was all about the ripple effect around the world - or what happens when the US economy catches a cold. You can find more analysis of this on the BBC website's analysis of the Global Credit Crunch and yesterday's Financial Times article The worst market crisis in 60 years.

How does this all affect art?

Well anything which impacts on homes and stimuli for changes in decoration (like house buying and selling) and the amount of 'free' money which is around to spend on and invest in art is likely to have a very major impact on sales of artwork in 2008.

Plus, let's face it, at the end of the day unless you're involved in high end investment art, most

of the art which is bought is actually purchased to decorate a home whether or not the artists who produce it would like it to be called "decorative art". Which means both galleries and sales can be very vulnerable to economic shifts. It's just not the sort of thing which people buy when their financial status is uncomfortable or possibly under threat.

What are the possible strategies for artists in a recession?

I'm not active in 'pushing' my art within the art market - however I am very interested in the conundrum of what this all means at the moment and I have lived and managed through a recession before.

So what are the alternative options for artists? "Fight or Flight" is a dilemma for both investors and those marketing art at the moment.

Here's a few options for you to ponder on move upmarket: One option which a number of artists are thinking about is moving upmarket - towards the people who still have money and won't feel the pinch quite so badly.

Move out of galleries: Any gallery owner who says his sales won't be affected by what's happening should be avoided in my opinion. No matter how charming and nice they may be, naivete is not an asset in the current situation. Galleries will almost certainly become major casualties in a recession. You want to be doing business with those who are market savvy. Those who have experienced and ridden out previous recessions and know how bad it can get probably have 'war stories' which are worth listening to. Artists in galleries definitely need to make sure that they have reviewed how much of their business is vulnerable to the well being of their galleries, how much stock they have in each gallery (I've heard about and read a few stories about how getting stock back when a gallery goes bust can be really time-consuming) and they also need to know or find out which ones are doing well - and which ones aren't. An alternative to getting out of galleries is working with gallery owners to reposition supply and marketing in the current context.

Get into direct selling: artists can maintain similar income levels on lower turnover if they're able to market and sell their work effectively and on a direct basis at gallery prices. It's time to think about what might be the most cost-effective opportu-

nities in terms of direct selling from art fairs, studio, online galleries/sales sites (etsy/e-bay etc) or direct selling by an artist online (through website and/or blog).

The key here is probably to work out how to differentiate 'product lines' - the type and size of work and how well received it is. You don't need to sell all your work direct - but you might well find it cost-effective to sell a part of it direct.

Create opportunities for the risk averse to feel good: This is important - we all need to feel good when life starts to feel a bit riskier. Think about those people who are risk averse. One of the things that can happen if a recession does bite or people feel nervous is that they won't risk the expense of moving. However they might well decide to freshen up their home as the next best thing. The 'DIY' craze took off during the last recession precisely because people knew they couldn't afford to switch away from 'secure' jobs or move homes.

Invest in effective marketing - Marketing is about analysis as well as advertising. Know your markets and understand how they are changing. Then work out how you can raise your profile without blowing your budget. Remember that people who have bought from you in the past and 'word of mouth' is the cheapest and most effective way of your art coming to the attention of new customers.

manage your debt - and that's your own personal debt (avoid headaches - they dent creativity) and any debts owed to you. While I know it's not possible for everybody, my own personal preference is to live a life style which is far from 'flash' but which means I am and can remain debt free. However I had a father who often used to say 'Never a borrower, nor a lender be'.....

What do other people think about marketing art?

Here are some posts from various blogs about marketing that I've been reading

Alan Bamberger (ArtBusiness.com) writing last November was very clear

that The Art Party is Over and - more worryingly - was predicting that past investors will shortly be flooding the market with art as they sell up.

Art is generally the last item added to someone's list of discretionary expenditures when times are good, and the first to be lopped when times turn tart and those discretionary dollars commence to curtail.

Alan Bamberger - The Art Party is Over

Barney Davey (Art Print Issues) has highlighted a couple Ten Points to Ponder for your Marketing Plans - in which he highlights the need to keep a close eye on the home furnishing stores.

David Byrne's Business Strategies for Artists. This is a comment on and response to.... a very long and very interesting article by David Byrne (of Talking Heads) Survival Strategies for Emerging Artists which is actually about business models for the music industry - but with a little bit of imagination it isn't too difficult to see how this translates over into the art market - and already applies to some extent. The question is does it all apply? What do you think?

Sellout is a new blog launched by sculptor Deborah Fisher and recommended by both Edward Winkleman (Edward Winkleman) and Tina Mammoser (The Cycling Artist and Moderator of the Wet Canvas Art Business Forum). This all sounds very promising to me - and I really liked her second post about marketing.

SELLOUT is a dialogue about every practical aspect of being a visual artist--from saving money to resizing jpegs, and everything in between. It is more than a professional advice aggregator and hot-tip provider. We want any information we provide to be fleshed out as anecdote or called out as bullshit.

About Sellout and finally, I found Christine Kane (Christine Kane's Blog) through Alyson B Stanfield's Art Biz Blog (see Sunday's post), Christine's post on Monday was called Upheaval - A Field Guide and it offers some sound advice for those already personally affected.

Now over to you. What do YOU think about the current situation and what sort of response are you planning? ■



Art and the Economy

Resources for Artists

By: Makingamark

<http://www.squidoo.com/art-economy#module11807765>

MAKING A MARK - POSTS FOR ART- ISTS working in a dif- ficult economy. Making a

Mark: What should artists do about marketing their art in a recession?

Making a Mark: The art of economising - on art materials

Every morning I glance at the headlines in the paper that I read online. This morning's headline jumped off the screen at me - Economy: 80% fear we are heading for recession - ICM poll. As a result 60% are trying to spend less, with clothes and fuel costs heading the list of cutbacks.

But there was no mention of art materials.....

What does spending less mean for artists?
Making a Mark: Fine artists in decline in the USA?

Provides a summary of basic facts about fine artists - which tends to suggest that fine art is a precarious career.

The total of fine artists, art directors and animators is completely bucking the overall trend of growth and has been in overall and significant decline since 1990.
Making a Mark: Taking action after the bubble has burst

September 2008: Introduction to a series of posts about how to manage risk and/or recover from a truly dire situation.

Making a Mark: Art values - gold standard or more derivative rubbish?

Art values - gold standard or more derivative rubbish? (15th September 2008) - published on the day that Merrill Lynch was taken over, Lehman Brothers de-

clared bankruptcy and banking shares took a major tumble all around the world - and Hirst had his auction at Sotheby's I queried why top end art values have surged ever upward in the last 12 months.

Making a Mark: Contemporary Art as a Hedge Fund

Making a Mark - Contemporary Art as a Hedge Fund (September 2008) - in which I compare some contemporary art to the unwarranted valuations of derivatives - Warren Buffet's "financial weapons of mass destruction"

Making a Mark: Managing Business Risks as an Artist

Do you know what is the biggest business risk you're exposed to?

Have you ever thought about how likely it is to happen - or indeed what sort of impact it would have if it did?

Do you have any plans in place to address that risk - and any other major risks that you face?

Read this if you want to learn more about how to identify, assess and address risk

Making a Mark: 10 good habits for good times or bad

These are good habits for any time - good times or bad - but they're particularly relevant when the financial picture looks bleak and you need to know you're making the very best use of your time and resources.

Making a Mark: Bright spots in the gloom and doom

I thought it was about time to start pointing out some of the things we can be cheerful about as artists. So here's my list of bright spots. I'm really sorry they're not all going to apply to everybody but there are very definitely some bright spots in

all this gloom and doom

Making a Mark: Government seizes control of Singer & Friedlander

This post is about the impact of the banking crisis and the looming recession on the sponsorship of art competitions and prizes.

Making a Mark: What happens to artists in a recession?

What happens to artists in a recession? (16th October 2008) - which offers different perspectives on the practical impact of a recession from an artist's perspective

Making a Mark: Making art and selling art - communities of interest for artists

Making art and selling art - communities of interest for artists (24th November 2008) - looks at the rise of blogs and websites in 2008 which represent communities of interest for artists for selling and marketing art

Making a Mark: Art in 2008 - A Review (Part 2)

You may find some of the predictions for 2009 in this post to be unpalatable. However they are based on continuous observation, a considerable amount of research and reading throughout 2008 plus a good understanding of the dynamics of business.

In order to work out how to ride out the storm, my feeling is that it's crucial to become well informed and to understand the risks that will be present and the scope of what may well happen. There are no surprises when you appreciate how much could change.

Making a Mark: Selling art online - 10 benefits of a recession
Thursday, January 29, 2009

Part of the reason I've been prompted to do this short series of posts on selling art online is that I genuinely think now is the time to really look long and hard at the way we've been going about things. We need to 'abandon business as usual' thinking and get back to basics - whichever industry we're in.

So just as the recession is going to make sure that the car industry really get to grips with "going green" rather than "gas guzzling" so artists can really focus on their basics too. How does a recession impact on artwork and art jobs?

Monday, February 16, 2009

How does a recession impact on the art world?

- * What happens to the way artists are employed and remunerated?
- * What happens to the sort of art that gets produced?
- * Does subject matter change or stay the same?
- * Do sales patterns change?
- * What actually sells?

In my view these are not only fascinating questions, they are also ones that a lot of artists think about even if they don't always ask them out loud. For professional artists it's obviously essential to address such issues to make sure income continues to be generated and that they can survive the downturn.

Making a Mark: The Artists and the Economic Recession Survey

The survey sought to understand artists' financial circumstances more than a year into the recession, their strategies for adaptation, and their needs and concerns at this time. ■

This August EU-MAN presents the shore side installation "Boat" at Turku's Halinen Rapids. It is our contribution to the 2011 Turku European Capital of Culture festivities. This project features EU-MAN artists from Chile, India, Hungary, Greece, Iraq, Syria and Israel who will employ media ranging from paper plates to wood and bottles in order to present their impression of what a boat is, or could be.

The theme boat reaches into the migrant roots of EU-MAN presenting new concepts around an old fashioned way to cross borders, and move between lands over the seas that divide us.

This installation project has special significance to EU-MAN because it will be situated in the city of Turku where the organization was established. The theme of boat resonates with the city itself because Turku's development has been centered around it's port as an outlet to the Baltic sea. The multicultural aspect around the work brings an added flavor to the European Capital of Culture celebration, claiming space for and opening discussion around Europe's relationship with the rest of the world, and it's peoples.



ART IN THE TIME OF AUSTERITY

By Ben Davis

THESE ARE DARK TIMES -- but walking around Chelsea for the new art season, I couldn't get a hint of it. Maybe the scene feels a little less exuberant than in 2007. But as far as I can tell, no new mood has gripped the visual arts to match the mood gripping the country, the sense that we are living through an era of dramatic unemployment, economic stagnation, and some very ugly scenes of political reaction.

It's not just the plush nihilism of Dan Colen at Gagosian, who Jerry Saltz recently tagged for making "an event straight out of 2007." Remember "design art," that icon of the go-go '00s? Well, over at Gagosian's other space, you've got Marc Newson designing surfboards and rocket ships. You want glib, arty insider-ness? The big show of the moment at Gavin Brown's Enterprise and Maccarone is "Pattern and Desecration," a celebration of the artist as "unbridled human, indifferent to convention and with every avenue open to him," by Rob Pruitt. You want safe? Pace has an expansive, luxurious multi-gallery show celebrating its own storied history.

I'm not saying that any of this is bad art, necessarily; what I am saying is that it doesn't really have anything like the painful sting of now. And, behind this fact, there lurks a Tale of Two Art Worlds.

On the one hand, it is the Best of Times. This year has seen not one but two artworks sell for more than \$100 million at auction, an almost unheard of feat: \$104.3 million for Alberto Giacometti's *L'Homme qui marche I*; \$106-million for Picasso's *Nude, Green Leaves and Bust*. To put such numbers in perspective, the price of the Picasso *Nude* alone is a wee bit less than the entire annual budget for New York City's Cultural Institutions Group, which gets \$110 million to fund the city's storied museums.

Which, in turn, points us to the Worst of Times. Michael Bloomberg's 2011 budget for New York City featured a \$20-million cut for culture, though this was taken with relief because it was not quite as catastrophic as feared. The Billionaire Mayor is already back for more. In Los Angeles, smooth-talking Mayor Villaraigosa proposed a "crisis mode" arts budget earlier this year. The Illinois Arts Council is in such dire straits that it has had to chronically delay the delivery of funding. In Florida, the state arts council ate a cut of over one half this year. And so on.

This is how the "two-track economy" makes itself felt in the cultural sphere. Officially, the Great Recession is over. But corporate profitability has been restored mainly due to layoffs and wage-cutting. The economy has bifurcated, with one side doing OK, but this OKness coming at the expense of everyone else. Meanwhile, in a stunning display of trickle-down economics in reverse ("suck up" economics?), the banks have been

restored to semi-health courtesy government bailouts, but then have demanded austerity cuts to government budgets if they are going to continue to advise their clients to buy the bonds that fund the resulting deficits.

Of course, art dealers, even top dealers, are just doing their thing. Galleries are selling luxury goods -- contemporary art is maybe the all-time top luxury good, in addition to being a highly speculative investment -- so expecting galleries to offer some kind of organic reflection of the precarious reality of the 1 in 10 Americans who can't find work would be a bit ridiculous.

Still, complacency kills. The fates of the non-profit and for-profit art sectors may seem uncoupled, but in fact, they are intimately connected. In *The \$12 Million Stuffed Shark*, Dan Thompson gives a thumbnail sketch of the art world by the numbers: He estimates there are 80,000 artists in the art capitals of New York and London; of these, about 75 are "superstar artists with seven-figure incomes"; about 300 more are "mature, successful artists who show with major galleries and earn six-figure incomes from art." Below that, even artists who are showing are not really making a living off their artwork.

The notion that the commercial art world stands on its own is just another myth bequeathed to us by the art bubble. For the vast majority of artists, small nonprofits, government grants, teaching positions and encouraging curators at regional and local museums form part of the indispensable support network that allows them to sustain a creative practice. Without these, some will drop out, or will not find space to do things that

aren't already market-tested, and the pool of talent that the commercial section feeds on will contract. Robust public support is part of what makes a vibrant arts scene.

But here's the rub: To advocate effectively for public support for the arts, the public must actually believe that art is a public good. And this is where the sense of irrelevance that comes from passively basking in art's semi-privileged status as a luxury good comes back to bite.

To see what I mean, look across the Pond to England, where the shimmering Frieze Fair Week dawns as the country's cultural sector faces what the Brits like to call "swingeing" cuts, provoking considerable protest from arts advocates. The problem, as Guardian columnist Jonathan Jones points out, is that "the success of Britain's artists is a major reason many people will support cuts to visual art funding." It's a non sequitur to have Damien Hirst's name on a petition about how needy the arts sector is -- "He is Mr. Money. Who, outside the art world, is going to see him as a plausible voice against arts cuts?"

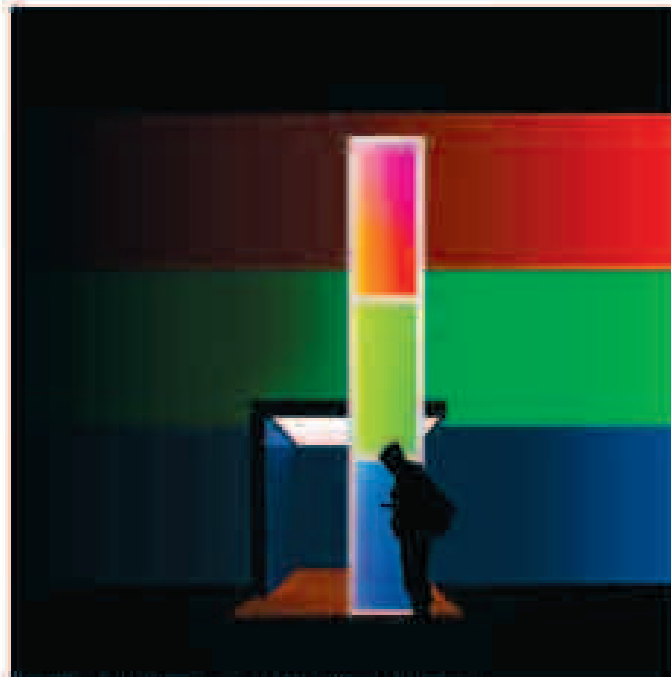
And that, in a nutshell, sums up where we find ourselves in 2010, with art being stretched on the rack of the two-track economy. Dire things wait unless this trap is seen for what it is. Particularly now, art needs to feel relevant and in touch with reality -- and not just rich-guy reality, or even just smart-set reality. Accepting success on the terms that are on offer is also a road to failure. ■

BALTAN SESSION: Baltan in the Bus Stop

Discussion evening De Stijl versus RGB

On Thursday, April 7, 2011 Baltan Laboratories and the Van Abbemuseum host an evening dedicated to the current project in the Rietveld Bus Stop on the Stadhuisplein in Eindhoven: *Baltan in the Bus Stop. DE STIJL versus RGB*. The artists, Maurer United and Geert Mul, will discuss the project, followed by a conversation between architect Bertus Mulder, who worked closely with Rietveld in the 1960s, and Arie van Rangelrooy, architect and board member of the 'Rietveld Bus Stop' Foundation. The presentations will take place in the library of the Van Abbemuseum, followed by a visit to the project on the Stadhuisplein.

On a yearly basis since 1990, the Rietveld Bus Stop Foundation invites someone from the art world to develop a project for the Rietveld Bus Stop at the Stadhuisplein in Eindhoven. This year they invited Christiane Bernoel, curator at the Van Abbemuseum. She worked with Baltan Laboratories, and together with Angela Pothman, director of Baltan, they invited artists Geert Mul and Maurer United Architects to present their vision on the significance of Rietveld and De Stijl today. The project is installed until November 2011.



Rietveld Bus Stop, 1967, Arie van Rangelrooy (left), 2011

Geert Mul and Maurer United were inspired by the map of Eindhoven made out of mosaic tiles located on the wall under the roof of the shelter. It is one of the first city maps in public space. The square tiles from which the map is constructed give the image a pixelated character that echoes the early imagery of the computer age. In this design, Rietveld strayed from the typical red, yellow and blue colours of De Stijl. With the colours he chose to use (red, green, blue), he inadvertently made a connection to the television and computer age. In the

column next to the shelter, Geert Mul and Maurer United placed images of universal worldviews and colour systems. They juxtaposed them with images of the practical counterparts of the colour systems in our daily lives: the screen, the television, the CD and the Pantone colour wheel. Furthermore, they replaced the original fluorescent lights in the column with LED lights in red, green and blue. Through the colour change of the LED lights, various layered images are made visible on the column.

Practical Information

Location: Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (library)
Date: Thursday, April 7, 2011
Time: 19:00 – 21:00 (including a visit to the Rietveld Bus Stop)
Language: Dutch

Baltan Laboratories

Baltan Laboratories is a design agency and a platform for innovative design and development projects in the field of art, technology and culture. Baltan actively pursues www.baltanlab.nl between disciplines and outside point of reference for cities working with technology in (art)science and design. www.baltanlab.nl

Van Abbemuseum

The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven is one of the largest museums of contemporary art in the world. In Eindhoven, the museum's collection of almost 1,700 works of art includes key works and comprises by Picasso, Pollock, Klee, van der Velden, Chagall, Boccioni, Malevich, El Lissitzky and many others. The museum has a reputation for its approach towards art, culture and society. Openness, flexibility and knowledge are top priorities. We challenge ourselves with questions to think about art and its place in the world, creating a range of subjects, resulting in a variety of activities. The museum also participates in various collaborations with other museums and institutions. For more information, please contact us via www.vanabbemuseum.nl or call 040 246 231 100 / info 4 11 206 1290 1794. Location: vanabbemuseum.nl

Van Abbemuseum

Wolff J. Bouw
Eindhoven, The Netherlands
www.vanabbemuseum.nl

For the editors

for more information and photographs, please visit:
www.vanabbemuseum.nl

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info 4 11 206 1290 1794. Location: vanabbemuseum.nl



And the show goes on!

By Thanos Kalamidas

I have to admit that in a theme that combines words like art, economy and recession I got totally lost. And I didn't get lost only in the meaning of the words and everything hinting behind them but I also got lost in the questions rising with the combination of those words.

Art and economy refers to investment and long term profit, refers to invest not only to profit money but popularity, fame become protector and indulge power. In the ancient times and especially in ancient Greece the rich were forced from the state to support the arts, it was a holy obligation not only to gods but to the people. I suppose in ancient times the rich had better sense where their wealth was coming from and they felt the obligation to return something to the consumers.

The enslavement of the art and the dependency from the wealthy started in the Roman times. Take for example Caligula's era. During that time all kinds of art raised as long they did nothing else than portraying and praise the emperor; any other application of the art was simply leading to death. In the Middle Ages art found two masters, the church and the wealthy. There was a certain limit of freedom in expression enough to create movements but again the life of the artists was dependant. But again it was always the wealth shared between church and power.

Who would ever remember the Archbishop Colloredo? An opportunist of politics and church with the intellec-



tuality of a mosquito will be remembered forever because of Mozart, his protégé. The same applies with Philip II of Spain and his protégé, El Greco. The new element is fame and popularity. This time the profit is even bigger and eternal just like in the case of the Archbishop Colloredo and the story continues until the modern times. Again the wealth is a motive but fame, popularity is the biggest profit and the combination of both makes it lethal occasionally literally. The emperors and the warlords are replaced by collectors. Occasionally these collectors are becoming the cancer of art surplus value or devaluing art masterpieces depending on their contemporary interests that often depend on the stock market of art.

And now the other combination. Art and recession. The nightmare not only because of the sequences an economy in recession has on art and the artists but because of the dramatic sequences it has on the society. All fascist political movements – by definition enemies of any kind of art – are results of recession and social poverty. The

same time and in a very twisted way, looking for the right ground to be free, art blooms in periods of recession expressing the passions of the people that suffer. These periods art becomes prey – for example the German recession before/during/immediately after the Nazi era – and the same time long term investment. Nowadays with most of the currencies losing even their meaning, not just their value, with most of the metals in high demand with gold getting to pre WWII prices art becomes a very valuable investment were software moguls with knowledge in art compared only to ants invest billions to painting and other forms of art launching hordes of art “experts” – mercenaries – in search of talents.

The artists in their defence have no many alternatives from the state. Even writing that I felt that it was a joke. The states have long failed art and artists mainly because they also have an agenda. A small example? Most of the national galleries promote works that endorse national pride than expressions and if a local artist gets the deserved fame finds a way to the national galleries always under certain conditions and carefully not to provoke social taboos and political balances.

The saddest thing? Artists have to survive and tolerate all the above if they want to continue creating and expressing themselves. And the show goes on! ■

The Artist's Recession

By **Kathleen Baker**

<http://calgaryartblog.com/artists-resources/the-artists-recession/537>

Art is one form of creativity that will never lose its stamina in modern society and will instead encourage more and more young artists to prosper over the years, even in a time of recession. Any form of art, whether it be music, poetry, or art itself, all rely on a predetermined emotional state which helps to contribute to great art. The writings of Sylvia Plath or the art of Van Gogh would not have been the same had they been completed by a person who was generally happy with their life and the way it was going. It has become commonplace to note that many artists label themselves as "tortured artists" in the sense that it is this emotional aspect of their psyche that causes them to produce fantastic works of art. The emotional state of many artists during the recession however, jumps from optimistic to pessimistic, but all still continue to create works of art, even through the most dire of conditions.

The recession, rather than hinder artistic efforts, has only encouraged artists to become more diligent with their labors. There will always be a market for works of art regardless of the state of the economy. The "bourgeoisie" class will always exist to purchase rare works which they can hang in their dining room while attending openings of art galleries. These little luxuries are in no danger of entirely fading out, just maybe experiencing a dip in sales instead, as has been the case for many retailers around the country. If anything, the recession can only add to the stigma associated with the "tortured artist" as the artist who has to survive on ramen noodles until he sells one piece.

Many recognizable artists were not appreciated in their time, and it was only post mortem that their works became known to the world. While this is not an encouraging fact for many young artists, it can serve to prove that maybe modern society is not ready for their form of art and one day a large audience will view their work in galleries around the world. Most artists have remained greatly optimistic regarding the recession and do not seem to be suffering in the way that they are painted to be. The market may be momentarily down, but there are many large circles that help take care of such artists down on their luck, as well as encourage them not to give up their hopes of painting or drawing works of art. Many artists see the recession as a challenge to get through and have therefore released a new realm of creativity through their optimism. Many recent college graduates see this time as a period in which to perfect their craft, given their free time completing odd jobs in order to make rent. While artists may suffer now, their works of art serve to demonstrate a future that is recession free and still full of art.





The Anatomy of Controversy

By Alison Hird

http://www.rfi.fr/actuen/articles/111/article_3039.asp

A CORPSE SITS PONTIFICATING IN FRONT of a chess board, reminiscent of Rodin's *Le Penseur*, another strikes an athletic pose and memories of the Bionic man come to mind. Close by, the man whose arm and leg muscles have been cut away from the bone and flayed out to look like feathers gets you thinking Icarus and tales of flying that bit too near the sun. When we reach the two cm thick head-to-toe slices of human body, I had to push away thoughts of beautiful pieces of walnut.

You have to keep pinching yourself to remember the 20 specimens in the recently-opened "Our body, à corps ouvert" exhibition were once walking, talking and perhaps playing chess like you or I. It's both a strong point and a source of polemic here in France. A strong point because for the first time visitors can see what has previously been the reserve of forensic scientists. And it's fascinating says exhibition-organiser Pascal Bernardin as he shows me the complexities of our chess player's spinal cord. "You can spend half an hour just staring at this. The human body is a beautiful machine".

In addition to bodies in various everyday poses, some 250 body parts, including organs like the brain, heart and lungs are displayed in glass cases like museum pieces. Healthy lung specimens for example, are placed next to unhealthy ones. In one case two placentas are side by side – one showing the outer ivory-coloured sack, the other only the plethora of red arteries interspersed with a few blue veins: it looks like a fine piece of orange coral.

All the specimens have a plastic sheen to them, thanks to the technique developed by Gunther von Hagens called polymer impregnation. It involves replacing body fluids with reactive plastics that prevent decay and decomposition, while the organs, muscles and nerves are maintained down to the microscopic level.

The bodies look more like very life-like sculptures than corpses, making them a lot easier on the eye, and conscience. And yet humans they are. Chinese to be precise. While their exact identity has not been disclosed, Bernardin says he has no reason to doubt the assurances given by the Anatomical Sciences and Technologies Foundation in Hong Kong who designed the exhibition. "There are 200,000 surgeons in China... Just like in Europe they study the art of dissection. And thousands of people donate their bodies through hospitals so the medicine world can study. We've got all the proof that everything was done legally."

Yet many French scientists were not convinced and Bernardin struggled to find a venue in Paris. Both the Cité des Sciences and Musée de l'Homme were deterred by a report by the National Ethics Committee which concluded the exhibition was not scientific enough and encouraged voyeurism.

As Vice-president Pierre le Coz told Rue89 online newspaper bodies can only be used after death for scientific purposes, even if the people gave their consent. "When you consider the way China respects human rights, what can consent mean? We would never use French bodies like that," le Coz explains.

In the end the enterprising Bernardin hired his own venue, Espace Madeleine 12, for the four-month run. He says it's doing well, attracting 12,000 visitors per week since it opened on February 12th, but the polemic continues. A group of scientists led by Francois Rastier, a research director with the CNRS centre for scientific research, has launched a petition calling for the exhibition to be suspended until more is known about the origin of the bodies.

As well as the doubt over consent, he accuses the exhibition of using the corpses for commercial and showbiz-driven rather than scientific purposes. Pascal Bernardin is firm in his defence, pointing to the primarily educational nature of the exhibition (all exhibits are accompanied by panels with

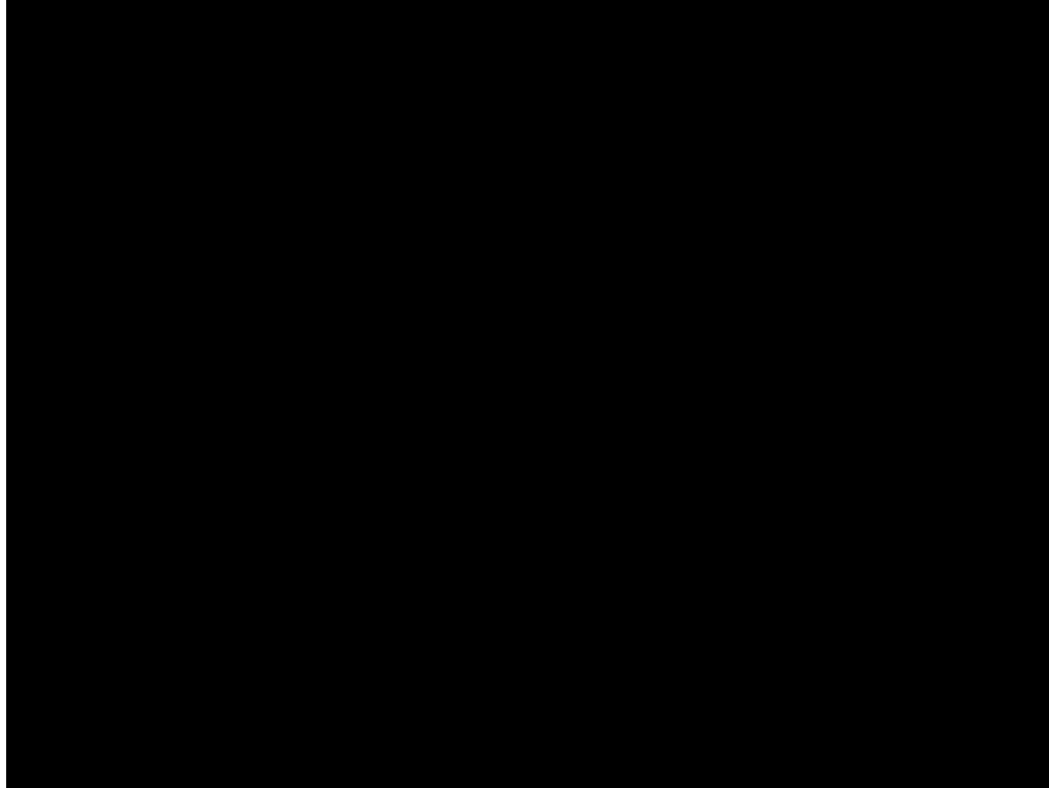
simple but accurate scientific explanations) and insisting that while it's aesthetic in its approach, it has nothing to do with art.

He also claims there's a double standard operating, citing precedents such as the Musée de l'homme which has a body on display dating from 1875 and Musée Veterinaire de Fragonard near Paris which also displays a flayed body dating from the late 18th century. Not to mention the mummies at Le Louvre... "If this can be shown to the public why can't you show a real exhibition which at least gives you the opportunity to see how the body works. You see bodies and organs everywhere but not prepared with this same talent or techniques. I think there is some hypocrisy in saying 'what the hell is this guy doing when it's all around us'."

He's proud to point out the exhibition is linked to the campaign for organ donation by Marie Berry, this year's national medical cause in France. "I think at the end of the day if we can help all those organisations asking for organ donation we will prove that it was the right thing to do."

In the meantime, despite the hefty 15-euro entry fee, visitors are pouring in, the vast majority clearly unperturbed by the polemic and relishing the opportunity to take a good look inside themselves. ■

Our body, à corps ouvert is at the Espace 12 Madeleine, 12 boulevard de la Madeleine until 10 May.



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this a sample page and it works!

What's stopping you?

By Avtarjeet Dhanjal

DELHI (PRONOUNCED AS DILLI) IS CHAOTIC LIKE HELL. I believe no one has seen this imaginary place 'hell', or I don't know anyone who has come back to tell us about it. Hell may be only a concept of an imaginary place, a terrible place or a state of being, but it worked as a good threat to goad unbelievers into believing. But if you seen Delhi during rush hours, the scenes are not far from the description given in religious books. Delhi is also a place, you can find most beautiful art, craft, music, theatre and meet creative people who still dare to conceive beauty while living in such a city.

The Hindu philosophy of living like a lotus in the murky waters of life and to remain untouched by the murkiness is applicable here in this city of over fourteen millions. When you see piles of rubbish right in the middle of posh residential areas and no one seems to be bothered about it, one wonders if this idea of remaining untouched by the filth as a lotus flower is taken too far. As the lotus has naturally developed a coating that doesn't allow murky water to effects its beauty, the people of Delhi has also become insular, a difficult task for the ones who do not live there.

Last winter of 2009/10, I lived in this city for nearly four months; all this time I was trying to learn from the example of lotus, and to remain untouched the crowd, chaos, filth and corruption in the city. I was sometimes tempted to go out in the street with a black bag to pick the litter in the street, so that I may feel comfortable and be creative in this city; though I never dared to.

Now when I go to India, I try do not stay more than couple of days in Delhi. On my last day my visit to

India, got a text from Simran, a young artist who went to the same Arts School in Chandigarh, "Could we meet?" Although I had never really met Simran before, but have attended the same art school, makes all ex-students/alumni feel members of the same clan, that gives a certain right to feel related and talk to each other without any formal introductions.

Chandigarh Art School was also my school in sixties; I have some mixed feelings about the School. It is one of the oldest Institutions of India, was set up under the name of Mayo School of Art, Lahore (Now in Pakistan) in 1875, during the reign of the British. John Lockwood Kipling was the founder Principal.

While I was a student at the Chandigarh Arts School, it was a sleepy place; the principle a Bengali painter was an aloof man, had never seen interacting with the students. Teaching was left to individual teachers; some loved to teach and they did teach. We tree students in sculpture department had one teacher, whose favourite pastime department was to sit in the sun, drink tea and eat samosas all day long.

One day I cornered him, if he would take more interest in the students' work, he quietly confessed to me, "I am sorry to

disappoint you, I do not have what you are looking for." I forgave him and never bothered him again. It turned out to be an opportunity for me to explore and learn more from diverse sources. As a result I left Chandigarh School of Art as productive sculptor, but not a thinking one. The Art School NEVER gave me the experience of talking discussing about Art as a concept; I do not remember if ever there was any seminar where students and teachers could exchange ideas in the whole of five years I spent there. In spite my pushing to our sculpture teacher he never sat down in department to discuss any subject or issue about art/sculpture. So the skill to express and communicate I had to learn hard way in following years. St. Martin's School of Art in London where I spend one year for my post-grad taught me skill of talking about art.

Simran was lucky, came from an educated family, being daughter to a highly placed army officer, had the chance to live in several places in India. By the time she came to the Arts School atmosphere was more creative. She also worked with a brilliant theatre group, and leant acting. As a result she grew into not only a print maker but good actor and arti-

culate person, as her writings show.

Early nineties, I initiated an exchange of artist between Panjab (a state where I grew in India) and county of Shropshire where I live now in UK. Simran came to Shropshire to work with a very creative theatre director whom she had met during his tour to the Panjab. I went to see the play Simran in which was playing a part in a school in Shropshire. I arrived when performance had already started, I entered as quietly as possible, Simran was middle of her act on top of stool, she managed a glance, and I caught a glance of her big clear eyes, eyes with curiosity to explore and experience life.

Somehow, we stayed in touch off and on during all these years, now when I got a text from Simran on my last day in Delhi; I agreed to meet her in the café of Indian Cottage Emporium in central Delhi. As a matter of fact I never really met Simran properly to know her; it was only a curiosity and feeling of duty belonging to the same clan (Chandigarh Art School alumni) that prompted me to find time to see her on my last day before flying back to UK.

While waiting in the café, I was thinking what kind of artist she would be, trained in the art school that I had mixed feelings about. When Simran arrived I looked in her big eyes, they were not so clear as I had remembered, clouds of years of struggle as an artist were visible in her eyes, the curiosity to know the world was still very much alive.

I really did not know what to ask or discuss with Simran, I am not sure if she knew either. It reminded me of an incident many years earlier. A bright young man came to visit me,



Last Drop

while I was staying with a friend in Patiala. He wanted my help, as he was not selected to go to UK as part of the exchange I had set up. I am not very good in helping people in such official matters, nor I had any authority to intervene, and it was a matter between the managers of the project that I happened to set up few years earlier.

I asked the young man what he really wanted to do in life? He told me that he wanted to be an exemplary police officer, when most of the police in India is corrupt. I liked the spirit of the young man and I arranged for him a 3 week placement in the police department in UK.

Now in this café sitting opposite to a young promising artist, the first question I asked Simran, where she would like to be five years time. Answer was, she wanted to explore as much as possible and express her observations through her work without any hint of material or professional achievements.

It was like a breath of fresh air in that café of Delhi; Delhi where storms of materialism are gathering momentum by every minute of the day, what is offered to the Indian young as globalisation spelled as dollar signs.

Historically, India is one of the countries of the East, where works of art were created throughout history, not to be auctioned in art markets, but for the delight of the creators and the humanity at large. Works in Ajanta Elora and thousands of other places are proud example of such art, that you cannot place a value on these works. Plus these artists took NO credit for these works by signing their names. This is very Western concept of signing the works of art, to make these objects rare and marketable, whether these works actually have any intrinsic worth or not is different matter (to be discussed elsewhere).

When I arrived back in UK, Simran sent me some of her writings, in one of her poems say:

“I don’t want to know how subtle you are or have been.
I want to know how alive you can be,
How large you can live, be it for a few seconds even.
What’s stopping you?”

Simran is asking a question to all of us “What is stopping you?” We may not answer this question directly, but one can certainly ask this to oneself. These are NOT the words of a spiritual teacher but of an artist who is just curious to know, explore and understand the world around, as she is born with an insatiable curiosity. Simran is addressing this question to all artists and to everyone else for that matter. But asking such questions are important us as artists.

If a lotus can flower in murky waters, so can Simran contemplate on such questions in the midst of chaotic Delhi?

TREAT THE
EARTH WELL.
IT WAS NOT
GIVEN TO YOU
BY YOUR
PARENTS,
IT WAS
LOANED
TO YOU
BY YOUR
CHILDREN

COLO
URED
WITH
CULT
URE

Exhibitions 29.4-16.6.

"Kurditytöissä

Wärien

Woimaa"

Gouache paintings by Roza Omar (17 yrs)
and Lara-Nansi Mahmud (10 yrs).



Everyday

Mirrors

Kurdish artist Khosro Azizi Asl's
naturalistic and realistic paintings.



Save and Protect

the

Planet

Photography exhibition on sustainable
development in Africa. Perspectives
by five African photographers.



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