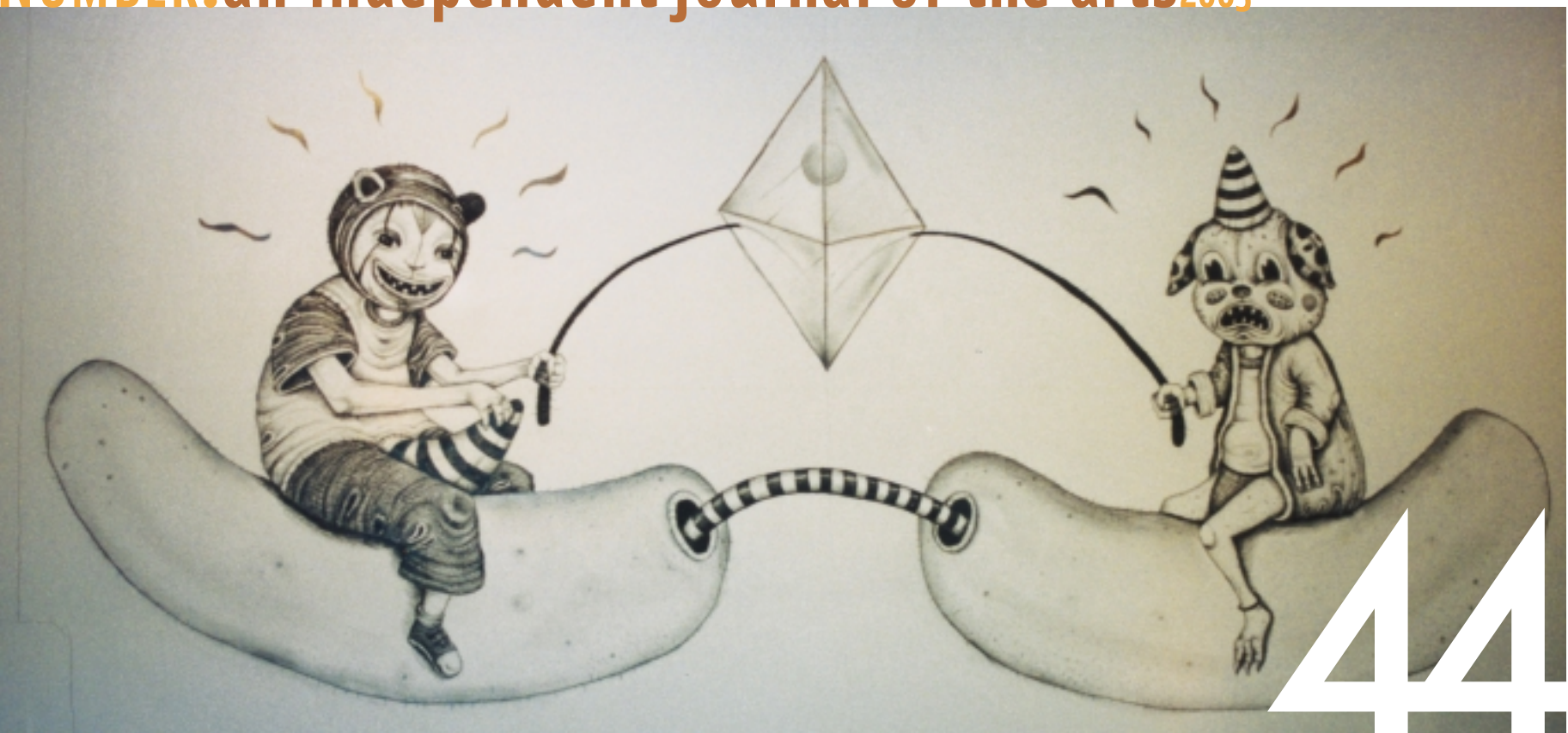


No!

fortyfour

NUMBER: an independent journal of the arts **Spring 2003**

1



44

★★ LEARN TO DRAW ★★
YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS

At Memphis College of Art,

we've created an environment for

learning that revolves around the

individual, as evidenced by our

10 to 1 student-teacher ratio, ready

access to professors, and personalized

instruction. But don't just take our word for it.

Find out for yourself.

BFA

Printmaking
Papermaking/ Book Arts
Painting
Fiber Arts
Sculpture
Clay
Metal Arts

MFA

Photography
Graphic Design
Illustration
Computer Arts

Computer Arts
Fiber Arts
Painting
Printmaking
Papermaking/ Book Arts
Photography
Sculpture



1.800.727.1088

e-mail info@mca.edu

1930 Poplar Avenue, Overton Park - Memphis, TN 38104-2764

www.mca.edu



February 17th until March 22nd, 2003
WILLIAM K. GREINER New Orleans, LA
Color Photography
SPENCE KELLUM Austin, TX
Mobiles
ROBIN WHITFIELD Tupelo, MS
Watercolor Paintings

SOUTHSIDE GALLERY

150 Courthouse Square • Oxford, Mississippi 38655
Telephone 662.234.9090 • Fax 662.234.9021
www.southsideoxford.com • southside@watervalley.net



14 SCREENS – ALL STADIUM SEATING
POPLAR AT MENDENHALL - THE CENTER OF THE CITY



ART CENTER

SUPPLY STORE

MIDTOWN • 1636 UNION

(901)276-6321 • 1-800-824-5315

www.artcentermemphis.com

"FOR ALL THINGS CREATIVE"

Help fuel Delta Axis and the Power House-
Become a founding sponsor of Delta Axis!

In the past ten years Delta Axis has funded over 100 exhibitions featuring national, international and regional artists. Delta Axis has traveled regional art to such places as Budapest, London, New York and Chicago. Delta Axis also funds Indie Memphis, the only film festival that celebrates and explores the image of the South. Ongoing projects include the Power House, Delta Axis @ Marshall Arts as well as the MAX shows at AMUM. For the first time since its birth, Delta Axis is asking for your help.

For a donation of \$150 or more, sponsors will receive two invitations to all Power House sponsored events as well as two passes to the pre-reception private views for Power House exhibitions for the coming year. Sponsors will also receive six tickets to the movies of their choice during the Indie Memphis film festival.

Please help Delta Axis continue its support of the arts in Memphis. For more information on how you can help, please contact us by phone at (901) 578-5545 or via e-mail at info@deltaaxis.org.

Donations may be made at any Delta Axis venue or through the main office at 45 GE Patterson, Memphis, TN 38103.



power house

MAX:2003



delta axis @
marshall arts



Mitch Epstein: *Family Business*

March 22- May 3, 2003

Opening Reception: Saturday, March 22nd from 6-8 pm

Using photography and video installation, the artist will premiere a new body of work on the demise of his father's furniture store and real estate holdings in a declining New England industrial town. The exhibition - Store Properties Town Home - creates the universe of one man's life.

Power House 45 GE Patterson Avenue Memphis TN 38103
Open Thursday Friday Saturday 12-5 | 901.578.5545

A nonprofit initiative by Delta Axis | Curated by Peter Fleissig
www.deltaaxis.org

: 4 4 C O N T E N T S

Anti-Top Ten	Lawrence Jasud	05
Editorial	Hamlett Dobbins	06
Top Ten	Hamlett Dobbins	07
Inside Outside Art: William Edmonson	Carol Crown	08
Oxford's Southside Gallery Changes Hands	Steve Cheseborough	09
Blue Light Special	Gary Bridgman	10
Everybody Wants to Get in on the Act	Chris McCoy	11
Interview with John Salvest	Bill Anthes	12
Critical Distance/Critical Debate	David Hall	14
Memphis' First Modern	James Ramsey	16
Mark Hosford: Preliminaries	Jeanne Hamilton	18
Out of Our Minds	Jeanne Hamilton	18
Elizabeth Winton and Joseph Whitt	Jeanne Hamilton	20
Thomas Nozkowski: Works on Paper	Fred Burton	21
Info		22

Published by NUMBER: Incorporated, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. The focus of NUMBER: is on the contemporary visual arts in the tri-state region (TN, AR, MS). Opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the publishers. Contents in whole or in part may not be reproduced without written permission of the publisher. All correspondence should be addressed to NUMBER: PO Box 11008, Memphis, TN 38111-0008. Back issues are available in limited quantities for \$5.00 each (please inquire before ordering).

© COPYRIGHT 2003 NUMBER: INCORPORATED All published material is protected under this copyright; however, all rights and ownership remain with the contributor.

COPY
 editorial@numberinc.org

ADS
 ads@numberinc.org

INFO PAGE
 info@numberinc.org

ALL OTHER
 response@numberinc.org

GRAPHIC DESIGN
 frankndzn

OFFICE
 po box 11008
 memphis, tn
 38111-0008

NUMBER: is supported in part by grants from the Greater Memphis Arts Council, the Tennessee Arts Commission, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



NATIONAL
 ENDOWMENT
 FOR THE
 ARTS

PATRONS
 Lorraine Kroul
 James Patterson
 Beverly & Sam Ross
 Mr. & Mrs. Charles Wurtzburger
 Menke Foundation

DONORS
 William Baucom & Susan Spurgeon
 Ciscley Jane Elliott
 Freida Hamm
 Charles R. Jansen
 Fredric Koeppel & Leslie Luebbbers
 Marjorie Liebman
 Zoe & Alan Nadel
 Mary Mhoon & Perry Walker
 Margie Polk
 Richard R. & Carol Crown Ranta
 K.C. & Jeff Warren
 Union University

FRIENDS OF STARVING ARTISTS
 Cheryl Bader
 René Paul Barilleaux & Timothy Hedgepeth
 Brian Bishop & Ashley Oates
 Burton Callicott
 Jerry Carr
 Le RomeCausley
 Chad Driver
 Larry & Mattie Edwards
 Joyce & Lester F. Gingold
 Greenville (MS) Arts Council
 Ruth Gross
 Diane Jalfon
 Charles R. Jansen
 Richard & Carol Knowles
 Patti Lechman & Bert Sharpe
 Sandy Lowrance
 Terri Jones & Greely Myatt
 Charles & Sandra Nelson
 Linda Rendtorff
 Murray & Karen Riss
 Flournoy S. Rogers
 Dolph & Jessie Smith
 Peter J. Stempel
 M.K. VanGieson
 Barbara Hart Wilson

STARVING ARTISTS
 Ann Hadaway Aldinger
 Joe & Sharon Babb
 Lea Barton
 Saul C. Belz
 Melissa Christiano
 Irma Ecksel
 Dennis Flaim
 Michael Fowler
 Lisa M. Francisco
 Johan Hagaman
 Iris Harkavy
 Saxon Henry
 Sherri Warner Hunter
 Jeri Ledbetter
 Terri Lowery
 Martha Hunt Huie
 Annabelle Meacham
 Billie Howard Moten
 David McCarthy & Marina Pacini
 Sally Mankus
 Pat Musick
 Carol M. Olson
 Alice Clare O'Neill
 Euneda Otis
 Faith Shafran
 Peter Stempel
 Amy Kay Sorensen
 Jeane Umbreit
 Peggy Vance

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 James Patterson, PRESIDENT
 Cheryl S. Bader, VP/TREASURER
 Carol Crown Ranta, SECRETARY
 René Paul Barilleaux
 Hamlett Dobbins III
 Sheri Fleck Rieth
 Leslie Luebbbers
 David Thompson
 Mary Kay VanGieson

The following letters comment upon the editorial that appeared in NUMBER: 43.

Dear Harvey,
 Where is your backbone? Why should the comments of one individual cause you to back down from a humorous and creative solution. Assigning a singular identity to your collective editorial crew may have been silly but what is life and art without a sense of humor. Sometimes we Artists take ourselves a little too seriously. How can we ever be great enlighteners if we never take the opportunity to lighten up ourselves.

Although I agree with many of Claudio's points about GMAC and the CA, I feel his judgments of GAMUT magazine to be over the top. Sure they are young, fresh and a little green, but to resort to such name calling is unwarranted. I personally respect the fact that they are not a journal of critical review. They write about what they like to see and hear in an effort to turn people on to the fact that Memphis has more than the SAMO we've been force fed for years. Gracefully written or not, as far as ethics and incestuous connections go, my question is who does it hurt? Will the one who has not ever used their connections for advancement cast the first stone!

In response to David Hall's "Critical Mess," I would like to point out that in this town where everyone seems to know everyone else there seems to be certain artists (I among them) who can't beg a review (not even a bad one) out of local critics (David among them). When I think of the times spent writing and hand delivering dozens of press releases to no avail, I am saddened and angered. I for one would like to see an increase in critical reviews that goes beyond the usual suspects and institutions. There is a lot of art out there!

I believe that Oscar Wilde also said "It is better to be talked badly about than to not be talked about at all."

Eric Swartz

Dear NUMBER,
 I feel moved to reply to a letter from my friend Claudio Perez-Leon in the last issue of NUMBER. Although I agree with everything he said, I'm afraid he missed the point. One need only look at the proliferation of new magazines in recent years to see that things have changed drastically.

Most of the new stuff seems the result of an illicit union between *Wired*, *Vogue* and *Artforum*. Toss in more than a pinch of the Society Page and you have the contemporary magazine; a triumph of design over content and the ascension of fashion over substance.

Claudio, my friend, we have become Dinosaurs. Like you I yearn for substance, significance, thoughtfulness and excellence. I want critical writing that is not self-serving and superficial, grounded in a thorough knowledge of Art History, thoughtful, insightful and illuminating.

But Art, in this Post PostModern world, has become a Fashion Accessory, a decorative accouterment and emblematic of one's social status and lifestyle. Like fashion everywhere, it must be colorful, novel, undisturbing, depthless and disposable. It must be easy to change, like one's clothes or decorating scheme.

When I pick up most new magazines these days, I can't tell whether I'm looking at an art magazine, a fashion magazine, a movie magazine, a music magazine, a consumer's report or a "Society" magazine like *R.S.V.P.* or *Elite*. In this regard, *GAMUT* is eminently at one with its time. Publishers are now putting out Cliff Notes type guides for contemporary bestsellers. One can now converse brilliantly and insightfully on the latest blockbuster without ever having to actually read a book! Clearly, the simulation has become more important than the substance. *GAMUT* is simply Cliff Notes for today's hip lifestyle.

Sincerely,
 Lawrence Jasud

Memphis Anti-Top Ten

In an ongoing series, people involved in the Memphis art community contribute a Top Ten list for each of their quarterly periods. For this issue, Lawrence Jasud offered his observations.

Top 10 Reasons It's Really Great to be an Artist in Memphis
1. We have an independent artist run contemporary exhibition space which is actively supportive of and responsive to local and regional artists, shows challenging and interesting work, and operates in an atmosphere of inclusion and openness. OOPS! I'm sorry. That was MCCA, which closed its doors about 10 years ago. Its founder, Rob McGowan, burned out after running aground too many times on the shoals of official indifference. MCCA received support from the Memphis Arts Council for the first time the year it closed its doors.
2. Our major regional art museum actively seeks out, supports and features local and regional artists in exhibitions, lectures and workshops. It actively endeavors to educate the citizens of Memphis about contemporary art, and brings an exciting roster of challenging contemporary exhibitions in every year. Wellllll. It did actually have a few exhibitions featuring regional artists several years ago. I don't know what happened to that initiative. And it does have Casino Nights, Balls, Fur Shows, Bridge Nights and other types of social occasions.
3. The city actively supports a variety of grass roots art activities, protects neighborhoods where artists like to live and work from developers, insures mixed neighborhoods with a reasonable supply of affordable housing, actively fosters diversity and tolerance, is committed to ecologically sound policies and is developing long range policies to prevent

sprawl. Geez, I'm dreaming again. There must be someplace like this somewhere. Carol Coletta talks about this stuff on her radio show. We do have an NBA Team, which was just characterized in the *New York Times* as the worst in the country.
4. We have a number of small artist run alternative exhibition spaces that host ongoing shows of vital new work and other kinds of cultural activities; actively supported by an engaged and interested audience. Wellllll. There have been a number of attempts of this sort that all crashed and burned. I know that somewhere out there, this sort of thing goes on and succeeds.
5. We have a number of progressive Commercial Galleries that contribute to the vitality of the Memphis Art Scene by featuring an interesting mix of local and national art, take chances on risky work, and educate their clientele to a more sophisticated engagement with contemporary art. Ahhhh. Wouldn't that be nice!
6. We have a number of insightful and provocative local critics who make the local art scene more exciting through their thoughtful and informative writing and active participation in the cultural life of the community! (What cultural life, I ask myself?) David Hall is making a valiant attempt in the face of massive indifference and active hostility. Cory Dugan, where are you when we need you?
7. We have several local philanthropists who actively contribute their time, money and energy towards making Memphis a truly

vital and supportive environment for the arts. Don't we????
8. The city actively promotes a vital and exciting environment, grounded in tolerance and support of diversity, in which the arts and other types of cultural activities can flourish. There is an atmosphere of vitality and excitement, which promotes openness and adventurousness. The physical environment is beautifully maintained, with a number of attractive parks and green spaces facilitating the citizen's enjoyment of the natural environment. Oops! Sorry, those are Golf Courses.
9. Best of all is the annual VizArts Benefit. All the Performing Arts and Cultural organizations in the city who have been soliciting donations from visual artists for fund raising auctions decided it was time to do something for visual artists and pay them back for years of support. These organizations put on a series of benefit performances with the proceeds donated to a fund supporting individual artists. Managed by a rotating peer panel of artists, the money becomes the basis for small grants supporting everything from exhibition preparation, material support, new research and other sorts of art making needs. None of this support can go to organizations. "Fairy tales can come true, it could happen to you...."
10. Try as I may, I can't think of any more reasons that Memphis is such a good place to be an artist. Perhaps you can.
Lawrence Jasud
 Lawrence Jasud is an associate professor of art at The University of Memphis

Editorial: Good morning, Dumbo!

After receiving Lawrence Jasud's "Anti-10" (go to page 5 and read it now) I felt that we didn't want to edit his list, but that, in the interest of accuracy, some factual errors required comment. To address the elephant in the room, the task of writing this issue's editorial has fallen to Hamlett the artist, curator, and NUMBER: Incorporated board member, so the things I address have personal relevance.

Jasud's Anti-10's #1 states that Memphis does not have an artist-run contemporary exhibition space. I will be the first to say that the city needs a great many more artist-run galleries, but there is Delta Axis @ Marshall Arts. While I know his criticism wasn't aimed at DA @ MA directly, I feel the need to point out that an artist owns the building, artists curate the shows, artists hang the shows, an artist patches and paints the walls between shows, an artist sweeps the floor before the show opens, and an artist serves the drinks during the openings.

In Jasud's #2, he writes that our regional museum "did actually have a few exhibitions featuring regional artists several years ago. I don't know what happened to that initiative." I'm guessing that Larry is referring to the Brooks, but it did produce *Side by Side* in 2002, a show that featured regional artists and produced a catalog for the show, and the Brooks is regularly featuring emerging artists in the *Brooks Introduces* series. *Brooks Introduces* shows are held in the educational space of the museum, which is small and basement-like. I agree with Jasud that the Brooks has a way to go in supporting local artists, but I feel that it is on the right track.

Beyond those factual matters, his list strikes at the heart of many troubles of the city's art community, but it doesn't begin to offer suggestions on how to improve the troubles. How do we get the city to support the arts community? How do we get more insightful and provocative critics? Is Memphis special in being balkanized and clannish? How do we fix it? I don't think any of these questions can be answered without looking at the many aspects of the trouble and acknowledging their tangled connections.

Why is the city's art community not visible? In part the responsibility must be taken by the local press. How can Memphians see the visual arts a priority without seeing it as a priority for the local press. *The Commercial Appeal* still has no reporters for whom writing about visual art is their primary responsibility, whereas they have two full-time music and performing arts writers, two others who have partial responsibility for same, one who covers Tunica, and one extensively used freelancer for popular music. Our weekly paper, *The Memphis Flyer*, has one visual arts reviewer and publishes one article every five to six weeks. In the same breath, I have to thank Dave Hall for at times

putting his own art on the back burner in order to provide the city with an article even this often. While Chris Davis' role at *The Flyer* has improved coverage (his cover story on Carrie Mae Weems and the one on Carissa Hussong were the only cover stories for the visual arts I can remember). I think it's sad that, in a city with such potential, *The Flyer* can find only one person willing to sit down and write an art review. Responsibility must also be taken by artists and writers in town who can write an article but haven't approached *The CA*, *The Flyer* or NUMBER: about contributing. Additional responsibility for the lack of proper press coverage must be also taken by area artists or curators who lack the necessary savvy to draw the media's attention.

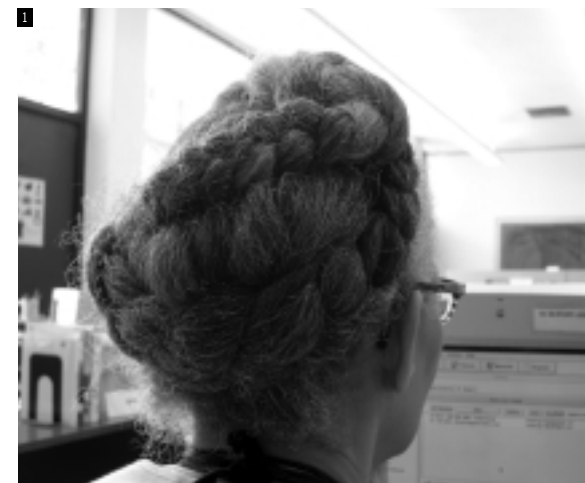
Then we have to examine why the city's art market isn't viable. (Think it is viable? Name all the artists you know that make their living as artists – not as landlords, teachers, art store employees, or carpenters.) I think the main trouble is the gap between the average person and contemporary art. In part the gap exists because of ignorance; it's an ugly word, "ignorance," but in this case it fits. Most folks are turned off by things they don't understand. David Lusk Gallery, as well as other galleries and alternative spaces, has begun providing gallery talks. By initiating a more inclusive dialogue one hopes the scope of the audience is broadened.

Jasud also raises the question of why galleries don't take risks on edgy work. Put simply: to stay alive commercial galleries have to make money; if they can't sell it, they don't show it. Then ask yourself, when was the last time you or a friend bought a piece of art? A city's art community is a lot like "listener-supported" public radio. Listeners are not required to pay for their enjoyment of local culture, but, if no one does, it goes away. If there's an artist whose work you like, BUY it! Because if artists can't make money, after a while they'll either quit making art and focus on their non-art careers, or they'll go to a place where they CAN make a living. (Anyone seen Colin McLain, Carlos de Villesante, or Allison Smith lately?)

I understand that a majority of art in the city may be more expensive than many people can afford, but there are plenty of opportunities for everyone to buy art. Why don't most people in Memphis buy art? You learn from example: how many people do you know who grew up in households where buying art was a regular practice? How many people understand the importance that buying art plays in the local arts community? Some, but not enough. Teach your friends and others about the joys of buying and living with art.

Of course I don't think I can address or answer the urgent questions raised by Lawrence Jasud's "Anti-10," and I don't think that asking them or answering them is NUMBER:'s task

alone. In our many emails discussing his list, Jasud and I talked about community and the kind of responsibility that comes with being a part of a group. We agreed that a great many things need to be done to improve the arts community in Memphis, not only the way it works as a whole, but how it functions within. We agree that one of the requirements is to address our problems and then determine a course of action to improve the conditions. I believe that NUMBER: can be a vital part of strengthening the community, but not without ideas contributed by our readers and writers.



Now on to the ISSUE issue:

We are working to bring you info on the quarter. Just before press we hear about the re-vamping of Arts in the Park, the expansion of Artimpact, Inc., the re-vamping of *GAMUT* magazine, the opening of the Power House with a William Eggleston performance. More on these happenings next issue.

This issue of NUMBER: includes a conversation between local art historian Bill Anthes and Jonesboro artist John Salvest. Chris McCoy brings us a report on actor Leigh Ann Evans' experience working on *Six Days in the Life of Mims*, a local digital video production by Steve Stanley and Chris Triko. Steve Cheseborough reports on the transition at Oxford's Southside Gallery; James Ramsey presents his essay on Memphis' first modern house. Gary Bridgeman illuminates the Light Up Memphis UrbanArt project, while Carol Crown reports on the 20th century self-taught African-American artist William Edmondson. And in response to readers' requests, we have reviews: Fred Burton writes on the Thomas Nozkowski show at Rhodes; Jeanne Hamilton and David Hall report on their visits to Nashville as a part of the exchange project (initiated by NUMBER: with funding from the Greater Memphis Arts Council). In the next issue there will be more Memphis reviews (written by the Nashvillians), but we always need more reviewers; who will pick up that gauntlet?

How Things are Built or A Tour of My Favorite Things Top Ten

These things and people that I encounter in everyday life are part of why I love to live in Memphis, and I always try to point them out to visitors. They are in no particular order.

1. Maxine Strawder's hair. While I don't actually take visitors to see Maxine's hair, I always talk about it whenever the MCA library comes up in conversation. An example of such a conversation might go like this: "I've never heard of *Contemporary* magazine, where can I get it in town?" "Oh, you can buy it at Davis Kidd or you can go read some at the MCA library; they subscribe. Plus, if you go there you get to see Maxine's hair. She has the best hair." Once in another artist's studio we were talking about what motivates some painters to paint and I brought up Maxine's hair as a prime example of how hair can be a great motivator for me in the studio.

2. This building at the corner of North Second and Looney.

3. Signs that were once signs for something, but now they're either just blank shapes or they're signs for something completely different. Memphis is an all-you-can-see buffet for this kind of thing.

4. The Bunge Factory, 1079 North Second.

5. The amazing wallpaper at Best Rubber Stamp on Union. Most people know Best Rubber Stamp as Midtown Video's night-time parking annex. The shop offers a special treat for their customers, not only is it a great place to get stamps made in a hurry, but they have the most amazing wallpaper. While the pattern might seem old school, the reflective qualities make it timeless. Like Native-American textile designs made into wallpaper by the folks at Warhol's factory.

6. The houses built by George Allen at 1014 North Second and around the corner at North Second and Henry. For years, on my way from downtown to Frayser, I would slow down to take in these two structures. They are pretty typical in shape, but they are prime examples of what an artist's home (in this case, a bricklayer's) should look like. There is an amazing order and balance in what appears to be dozens of bricklaying techniques confidently woven together to make the walls of the sturdy homes.

7. The three green squares on this empty building on North Watkins between Autumn and Galloway. The sheets of particle board hodgepodge-painted in deep, mossy greens present themselves on the drive northbound on Cleveland/North Watkins rounding the corner past Easy Way. The image is about the color and shape of the three panels as much as it is about the space between them.

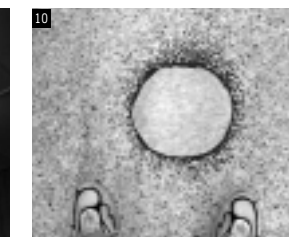
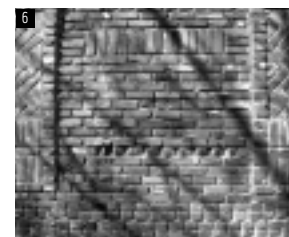
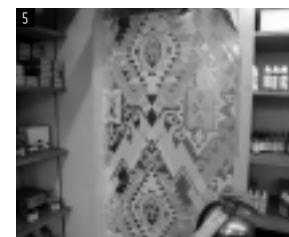
8. The Sears Crosstown building or, more specifically, the way the building interacts visually with the houses on North Parkway-as if somehow, a neighborhood of bungalow homes sprung up around the Ziggurat at Ur.

9. The lights in Cozy Corner. When you first walk into Cozy to order your food, the lights are straight fluorescents; you notice them when you look up at the menu or you see them reflected in the plexi covering the pictures on the wall of fame. When you enter the dining area however, something is different; objects in the room seem to have a supernatural warmth about them. I always chalked it up to the anticipation of great Que or the magic of the place until I noticed the blue, red, and green gels that wrap around the florescent lights. When I bring out-of-town guests there I always point out how Cozy has gallery hours (10:30-5 Tuesday through Saturday) and how it has a great site-specific installation by Dan Flavin on the ceiling.

10. The other place I tend to eat more often than I should is Kwik Check on Madison. There while I wait on my Red Sea G, Yippee or Falafel I always spend some quality time with my favorite moment: the patched linoleum bit of flooring just in front of the potato chip rack. It looks like a pipe, a supporting post or maybe a drain of some sort was there before. The patch is round-ish with uneven edges; the smooth linoleum that makes the patch is a different pattern than the softly raised linoleum that surrounds it. It's a spot where the world grows quiet for me as I look at it. In a way it reminds me of one of Martina Shenal's photos, Pearl, from her show at Second Floor Contemporary a few years back.

Hamlett Dobbins

Hamlett Dobbins, a Memphis painter, is director of the Clough-Hanson Gallery at Rhodes College.



Inside Outside Art: William Edmondson

Born on a plantation in Tennessee, the son of former slaves, William Edmondson (1874-1951) seems like an unlikely candidate for the cover of a Christie's auction catalog. Yet there it is—Edmondson's celebrated "Noah's Ark" given pride of place in the January 27, 2003 issue and stealing the show in Christie's pre-auction exhibit featuring works from the Robert M. Greenberg Collection. Composed of four pieces of stone, the lower two left rough, and the upper two hewn into a simple two-story pitched-roof house, Edmondson's "Ark" calls to mind the houseboat arks of Early Christian and



"Courting Lady," limestone, c. 1940s. Collection of Memphis Brooks Museum of Art.

Medieval times. Like them, his boat—at least at first—looks anything but sea worthy. But, Edmondson's boat, its monumental form miraculously floating above the base of churning sea, maintains a solid equilibrium.

Fortunately or unfortunately, depending upon your perspective, Edmondson's ark, with an estimated value of \$400,000-\$600,000, failed to elicit a bid above the seller's reserve price and sailed right through the auction—Christie's first devoted exclusively to 20th century self-taught and outsider art—back to its home in Greenberg's collection. Nonetheless, Edmondson's oeuvre—and surely the "Ark" is among his most well known and famous works—is considered to be the creation of one of the most distinguished and important sculptors of the 20th century. As Christie's catalog

points out, Edmondson's art is "equally at home in the context of 19th century folk art, 20th century self-taught art as well as modernist and contemporary sculpture." His achievements—and Christie's auction—demonstrate the growing value and the recognition afforded the work of untrained artists.

Edmondson's rise to artistic renown began in Nashville, where his family moved in the 1890s. He took up stone carving only late in life, making tombstones during the Great Depression. Soon he was carving more complicated forms and figurative depictions, including members of the black community—preachers, schoolteachers, even the fighter Jack Johnson (the first black heavy weight champion of the world)—and people and events inspired by the Bible, including angels, Adam and Eve, Christ on the Cross, and Noah's Ark. Edmondson was discovered by the photographer Louise Dahl-Wolfe, who showed his work to Alfred Barr, director of the Museum of Modern Art. In 1937, Edmondson became the first black artist and the first self-taught artist to be featured in a solo exhibit at MoMA. The purity of form and monumentality that characterizes his sculpture has always attracted the attention of artists and collectors.

Several studies have documented the roots of Edmondson's art in the African-American community, and the impact of his religious background has always been recognized. In Nashville, Edmondson became an active participant in the activities of nearby churches, particularly the Primitive Baptist church, whose tenets inform his life and work. Edmondson clearly felt that God had given him a special calling. While even as a young boy he had "seen angels in the clouds," it was not until he had retired from a lifetime of work that God gave him the gift of carving. "I was out in the driveway with some old pieces of stone when I heard a voice telling me to pick up my tools and start to work on a tombstone. I looked up in the sky and right here in the noon daylight, He hung a tombstone out for me to carve." Edmondson did not doubt that God had called him to serve his community. Using simple tools, including

chisels he had crafted from railroad spikes, and cast-off or salvaged stone delivered to him by friends, Edmondson began to carve tombstones. His early pieces were minimally adorned rectangular tablets. Soon, however, he began to try his hand at carving more ambitious and evocative works, always attributing his developing talent to God: "The Lord told me to cut something once, and I said to myself I didn't believe I could. He talked right back to me: Yes you can."ⁱ

Edmondson's art will make an appearance in Memphis this coming spring, when an exhibition of his work, *Stonework: William Edmondson* opens at the Memphis Brooks Museum on March 9 and runs to May 18th. The exhibition features 21 sculptures drawn from the Tennessee State Museum, the First Tennessee Bank Collection, Cheekwood Museum in

Nashville, and the Memphis Brooks' own collection, which gained two Edmondsons as part of a gift from AutoZone. *Stonework* follows *The Art of William Edmondson*, an extraordinary exhibition of a few years ago organized by the Cheekwood Museum. That exhibition featured 58 of Edmondson's pieces as well as the photography of Edward Weston, who like Dahl-Wolfe, found the untaught sculptor and his creations mesmerizing. Although the Memphis Brooks' show will be smaller, it will offer an attractive serving of Edmondson's art, displaying a wide variety of objects, including animals, a charming double portrait of Bess and Joe (acquaintances of Edmondson), a regal sculpture of



"Angel," limestone, 1932-1937. Collection of Robert A. Roth.

Eleanor Roosevelt, and a fascinating rendition of Eve. Edmondson's work will also be featured next year in *Coming Home! Self-Taught Artists, the Bible, and the American South*, opening in June 2004 at the Art Museum of the University of Memphis.

Carol Crown

Associate Professor of Art History, The University of Memphis.

Sections adapted from an essay written by Cheryl Rivers, American Folk Art Institute, appearing in the catalog to *Coming Home! Self-Taught Artists the Bible and the American South*, curated by Crown, opening June 14, 2004 at the Art Museum of the University of Memphis.

ⁱ William Edmondson quoted in Bobby L. Lovett, "From Plantation to the City: William Edmondson and the African American Community," in *William Edmondson*, ed. Rusty Freeman, p.21 and William Edmondson, quoted in Jack Lindsey, *Folk Art*.

ⁱⁱ William Edmondson quoted in Lindsey, p. 10.

Oxford, Mississippi, calls itself one of the South's great small towns, a New South Arts Mecca.

But what does that mean? America's great novelist, William Faulkner, is from there, sure. You can visit his house and his grave. But you can read his novels without having to visit Oxford. The same goes for the fine contemporary writers who live there, Larry Brown and Barry Hannah – you might catch a glimpse of them on a visit, but their art is best appreciated by sitting home with their books.

Then there's the music scene. A few memorable rock bands, Beanland and Blue Mountain, have emerged from Oxford in recent decades – and broken up, as rock bands tend to do. And the great contemporary bluesman R. L. Burnside was born near there and remains in the general area, though he hasn't performed lately. There are a few good clubs, as you would expect in a college town, but not enough to call it a music center.

Let's get to art, as in what hangs on the wall. An arts town should have art galleries, right? Well, Oxford has one. Which might not sound like a lot, but it's one more than most small towns have, especially in the South. And Oxford's Southside Gallery is not just a frame shop or a gift shop calling itself a gallery. It's a real gallery, with real art, real prices, and openings that draw people from Memphis and throughout Mississippi, as well as hip locals and a steady stream of passers-through from all over. Quite a treasure for a little town, and certainly a big piece of that "New South Arts Mecca" reputation.

So, when Southside Gallery changed hands recently, some Oxonians naturally were alarmed. Everyone was happy that the gallery would remain open after its longtime owner, the fun-loving Milly Moorhead, decided to quit the business, move out of town and get married. But would it remain the same? Would it continue to nurture Oxford's art scene? And, if the scene is so dependent on one gallery, is there really even an Oxford art scene at all?

Moorhead opened the gallery in 1993 with her then-husband, artist Rod Moorhead. She became sole proprietor in 1998, after the couple divorced. An extreme extrovert, award-winning photographer, world traveler (who often brought not only art but the artists themselves from faraway places to the gallery) and renowned party-thrower, Moorhead's personality defined Southside.

The new owners are Vickie M. Cook of Oxford and Rosanne P. Russell of Germantown. Both are businesswomen (Cook, a CPA, has taken care of the gallery's accounting for many years) with full-time day jobs they don't plan to give up right away. They have hired a director, Kara W. Giles, who holds a master of fine arts degree from Ole Miss.

"We desire to continue Southside Gallery as a driving force in the art scene here," Cook said. "We appreciate the fact that the community has been supportive. We would like to see it become known even more, in other places." She said many of the same artists and kinds of art would continue to show at Southside, although perhaps more emerging artists, especially from this area, would be added to the mix.

If there has been a main theme to Southside's exhibitions over the years, it would be "Southern but national." William Eggleston, William Christenberry, Benny Andrews and Sally

Oxford's Southside Gallery changes hands – so what?

Mann are part of the stable. Moorhead also brought to town the work of rising artists and photographers from other U.S. regions, Russia, the Netherlands and especially Cuba. She also offered an excellent array of contemporary Southern folk art. And she presented many artists who were new to the gallery world, as long as they met her artistic standards.

"I'd like to think that I've enlightened people, opened some eyes around here, with the idea of what art is and what art can be," Moorhead said. Rod Moorhead, who co-owned the gallery for its first five years, further articulated its philosophy:

"I kind of figured what I was doing with the gallery was educational. Somebody had to start somewhere. And then maybe somebody else could come along later and add to that. The idea of what a gallery could be – not just Great Aunt Trudy's Sunday paintings hanging on a wall. You can do stuff that's difficult and challenging. One problem of running a gallery is the temptation to go for the easy stuff you know you'll make money on, not take chances. A lot of galleries do that. It's not what I was interested in doing."

Rod Moorhead said there was a problem, however, in finding an audience. "The literary scene has an audience. There are a lot of people who read in Oxford, a lot of readings, a lot of literate, sophisticated people. You don't have that same audience for the artists here. You have some people sophisticated in what they look at and what they see. But it's not a large group. I think that's the South. For all the Southern artists – and there are a lot of them. Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Cy Twombly are all Southern artists. But there's not a real sophisticated Southern audience. Art, as much as literature, is about the dialogue between artist and viewer. The South is not the cutting edge of anything in art, whereas it has been in terms of literature."

Rod Moorhead lives in Oxford and now works as a full-time artist. He doesn't believe, however, that there is an arts scene. "There are artists that live in Oxford. Whether it's an art scene, I don't know. There certainly isn't, in the way there is a literary thing. The artists are more independent and into themselves. Or maybe it's just me. I may be a hermit. Maybe the other artists are out partying and exchanging ideas every night."

When talking about the possible existence of an Oxford art scene, the name Jere Allen comes up often. "There is an Ole Miss style," said Giles, Southside's new manager. "When Jere was teaching you could tell who their teacher was, from the color palette and style."

Allen, who makes large, dramatic, black-background figurative paintings, taught art at the University of Mississippi until he quit three years ago to devote himself fully to painting. He dismisses the idea, however, that there is any Oxford style, much less one based on his work.

"Most people who visit the university are pleased that there is no style," Allen said. "People are encouraged to be individuals. And in the community even more. There are wide differences. There are really only a couple of my former students who show any figurative influence at all. I heard from one who said he's doing three-dimensional computer design, whatever that means. That's what he's doing with his MFA in

painting.

"It's nice to have a place in Oxford," Allen said of Southside Gallery. "People enjoy showing there. And there are sales realized there. But Oxford is a small place. I'm just happy that it's supported one gallery. A friend was talking about Birmingham. He said to keep something going you need to be in a big city. I was thinking how big that is. So we're lucky to have one here." Although Allen shows at Southside, most of his work sells through a New Orleans gallery, he said.

A new artist in town, Chris Aloia, who moved to Oxford from Seattle, also dismisses the idea of an Oxford scene or school. "I just see a quiet college town with a lot of educated people," he said. "There's some breathing room for people to express their individuality. But no real school of art."

Milly Moorhead's concept of an art scene is more about the patrons than the artists. "You have to love everybody who walks in that door," she would tell her staff. "When I think of the art scene I don't think of style," Moorhead said. "I look at the people who gather around and support the arts. Whether they come to be part of it, to see their friends, dressing up, supporting the whole opening thing. It goes with my theater background. Stage it, light it, rehearse it and then it's show-time. Let's just have fun with this, like a dance party."

Moorhead said she does not see a local style. "You know, that is missing here," she said. "Jere Allen has a definite style. But there's not room for much more of it here. He even saturated the market here. And of course I didn't emphasize local artists, not as much as some small-town galleries. If there is a local style I missed it."

One local style that Moorhead brought to Mississippi in a big way is that of Cuba. She showed the works of prerevolutionary photographers as well as modern painters and sculptors. There was at least one major Cuban exhibition at Southside every year, occasional visits by Cuban artists (for whom Moorhead had secured visas), and regular representation of Cuban work in the gallery. Moorhead even once infuriated anti-Castro Cuban-Americans in Florida by running ads in golf magazines for revolutionary-era photos of Castro and Che playing golf in their military fatigues.

"With Cuba, I made it fun because I had been there," Moorhead said. "I knew the artists, I knew their stories. People like a story with their art. And just the fact that it was Cuban art – people don't expect to see a portrait of Che Guevara in Oxford."

And they might not see it anymore. "Our emphasis in photography won't be so much on Cuba," Giles said. "It's not our expertise." What will they feature? "A lot of regional artists that might be new to the gallery. The upstairs will have more everything. More artists, possibly more student artists. To some extent we'll still be Southern. People like to see what they know."

And Cook added: "We'll still have opening receptions. But I don't think we'll be wearing party dresses."

Steve Cheseborough

Steve Cheseborough is a 1920s-30s-style blues musician and author of *Blues Traveling: The Holy Sites of Delta Blues*. He lives in Oxford, Mississippi, and can be reached at steve@cheseborough.com.

Blue Light Special: Light It Up: The Downtown Illumination Project

I can't really claim any objectivity about Light It Up: the Downtown Illumination Project. As the "content architect" for the project's website, I put a lot of thought into selling this concept to the public.

Like any public relations practitioner, I've had to hold my nose a time or two while promoting products or organizations I didn't particularly like. Lucky for me (and for Memphis), this proved to be one of the more worthy projects. Light It Up calls for bathing riverfront buildings from Poplar to Union in a slowly rolling wave of pale blue light (flowing south, like the river). The plan also calls for better lighting along downtown streets and public spaces, along with a number of luminal art installations.

What's not to like?

I did have a couple of concerns at first.

The environmentalist in me wondered about light pollution. My wife and I live in Fayette County, five miles east of Collierville, where we can listen to coyotes and owls all night, yet a quarter of our night sky is cast in a perpetual misty twilight, thanks to an industrial park three miles away. While downtown Memphis is hardly an astronomer's playground, washing the skyline with additional light might make all but the brightest stars invisible at night.

Another concern was the taste factor. Would spectral blue light, moving up and down buildings in a southbound wave-effect look like Dogpatch Las Vegas—big city glamour as envisioned by the proprietor of Fireworks City USA?

But I'm not concerned about either issue, having read the project's voluminous master plan and sat in on a couple of meetings where engineers outnumbered spinmeisters. The extra lighting will be reflected off building facades, not projected into the sky as in Batman's Gotham City. The blue light will blend naturally with the skyline, and its choreographed movement will be slow enough not to be a gaudy spectacle.

Background

Light It Up began in 1999 when a committee, led by Memphis Redbirds co-founder Kristi Jernigan, developed the idea to celebrate the revitalization of downtown Memphis. Partner organizations included the Urban Art Commission, the Center City Commission, the City of Memphis, Shelby

County Government, MLGW, TVA and the Memphis Regional Chamber of Commerce.

The group's challenging mission was to enhance the image of downtown Memphis by using creative lighting design and innovative technology to highlight the city's art, architecture and landscape. The group selected Ross De Alessi Lighting Design of Seattle to draft a master plan. As various proposals were made, the committee grew eager to see the possible impact of each design. On Halloween weekend 2000, buildings along Main Street and Adams Avenue participated in a demonstration of illumination, giving business owners the opportunity to see the impact this endeavor could have on their community. Happy with what they learned, the project's organizers began to pick up steam.

The first permanent lighting component was the re-lighting of the Pyramid. The improved lighting emphasizes the landmark's shape and proportions, transforming one of downtown's signature architectural highlights to a beacon visible from a much greater distance than before. The First Tennessee Bank building and city and county government buildings are also slated for new lighting.

Big art/small art

Civic boosterism aside, if you look at it as a work of art, Light It Up is really a cityscape lighting installation. The project's organizers believe it to be the first artistic lighting project of its kind anywhere.

After dark, the Memphis skyline will be transformed into "the largest light painting ever seen." With new and existing light fixtures, building facades and their adjacent sidewalks will become the foundations for lighting the city's core. Through the gentle, flowing composition of blue light, the lighting system will emulate the visual effect of the Mississippi River.

The street-level aspect of the project isn't about moving blue lights, but improved streetlights and luminal public and private art. The project also visualizes the city as a variety of vistas, comprising sidewalks, promenades, parks, roadways, building facades and signage.

De Alessi proposed that, in addition to illuminated buildings, the project should also involve illuminated works of art. One

of the more interesting proposals is the "Letters Home" concept for a radiant gateway to the historic Pinch District.

It might look like this: Beginning at the Main Street side of the Cook Convention Center, a luminous band of light from glass blocks embedded in the sidewalks leads to two gateways. This "slot of light" continues up from the sidewalk into the gateway's posts, which appear to be sending an eruption of letters (as in handwritten notes, not pieces of the alphabet) to the wind. The gateway is concrete and the letters would be cast bronze.

But it's not as if artworks like these haven't already been installed downtown. NUMBER: magazine and the University of Memphis Art Museum sponsored a local installation of the *X Marks the Spot* public art project in 1997. Artist Mary Lucking installed "Bubble Light" over a streetlight at the corner of Front Street and Monroe Avenue for a month.

For one hour at dusk every evening a bubble machine, mounted in a third-story window, filled the air with a cloud of bubbles. The streetlight illuminated the bubbles as they floated into its light creating a large, faint, shimmering sphere above the street. Instead of using light to illuminate an object, here the bubbles were used to make the shape and scale of the streetlight's glow visible.

While "Bubble Light" wasn't part of Light It Up, the installation was a good example of how all types of enhanced or creative lighting can be seen as part of this plan, projecting the spirit of downtown Memphis' flourishing growth and its creativity (I warned you about my not being objective).

Light the other bridge (please)

My other favorite proposal is for the Harahan Bridge over the Mississippi. One of the three "old bridges" connecting the South Bluffs to Arkansas, this span was the only way to cross the river by automobile until 1949. Traffic crept along single, wooden-planked lanes on each side of the railroad (which could still be developed into a pedestrian walkway).

Today the bridge offers a wonderful opportunity for a subdued mirror to the dramatic lighting already highlighting the Hernando DeSoto Bridge two miles to the north. Proposed lighting includes washing the stone towers emerging from the river with metal halide lamps, revealing the ancient-looking stonework texture and splashing cool light along the currents below. Additional lighting could cast a soft glow on the complex inner latticework of girders and struts above. The railroad company that owns the bridge is taking a cool, wait-and-see stance on the idea, but Light It Up organizers are still hopeful that this part of the plan will be realized.

In addition to the aesthetic advantages of Light It Up, all the new lighting will help address the perceived notion that downtown is an unsafe place full of dark alleys. Organizers hope that the project will bring a sense of security to visitors and residents alike and in turn draw more people and commerce into the downtown area.

Gary Bridgman

Gary Bridgman, director of public relations at inferno, is a former associate editor of NUMBER: Visit Light It Up on the Web at www.lightitupmemphis.com.

Photo courtesy of Ross De Alessi Lighting Design.



Everybody Wants to Get in on the Act

Movies are almost always shot out of sequence. Factors such as availability of locations and local lighting conditions, rather than dramatic consistency, dictate the shooting schedule. This can prove disconcerting for the stage actor used to telling a character's entire story at once. "It's so completely different from what I'm used to doing in theater," says Evans, "where you rehearse and rehearse to try and get an idea of what your dramatic arc is going to look like." The actor must trust the director to ensure consistency in her performance. This is especially important in low-budget, independent cinema where shooting schedules can be erratic and strung out over a long period of time. "Trying to remember where your character was and trying to re-represent it has been hard. I really have to trust Steve to tell me if he's seeing what he saw before. And of course they've been looking at the film so far, and so they have a much better idea of what everything looks like." The fact that the director can choose which take to use in the editing room is another major departure from stagecraft. "You might shoot several different types of emotional reactions—in fact that's what we did in one of the scenes we shot," says Evans.

"Steve would watch the take and then say 'OK, let's try it this way.' So you're able to adapt on the fly."

Stage actors must communicate to large numbers of people at once, many of whom are too far away to see subtle details of an actor's performance. "In theater," says Evans, "you have to be aware all the time that if you are on stage, anybody can be looking at you, while on film you can narrow it down and be very specific about what you want to shoot—whether you want to be close up or far back, or whatever. The director, editor, and cinematographer have ultimate control over what the audience is seeing." A stage actor is trained to exaggerate mannerisms and project the voice to the back row of the theater. But acting that looks natural in

that setting appears ridiculously affected on screen. "Film is really intimate," says director Stanley. "The camera can be right up in your face." The lack of immediate audience reaction is something else the stage actor must get used to. "I think in theater there's definitely a symbiotic relationship going on between the actors onstage and the audience." Evans says. "There are some times when I'm not aware of the audience, but other times the audience's reaction colors the energy exchange between the actors, or what the audience gives back to the actors in terms of their response."

For his part, Stanley says directing an experienced actor like Evans has advantages over working with a complete novice. Trained actors, he says, are more versatile and can take direction better than amateurs. "Every once in a while, you get a natural, like [Eric Tate] from [director Craig Brewer's] *The Poor and Hungry*, but I've found that if they don't get it the first time, they're not going to get it." Evans, who has had some stage directing experience, agrees. "If you can just get them to be themselves and relax a little bit, they'll do fine," she says.

Evans says she has enjoyed her stint as a film actor, but the immediacy of theater remains her first love. "This has been a completely different experience. It's the same basic set of skills, but I feel like I've been stretching acting muscles that are completely different than the usual muscles. When I come out of a shoot, I don't feel like I've been through the wringer. Sometimes when you've had that particular show that you love when you do theater, it's almost...masochistic in nature. You feel wrung out, emotionally. It's like you've lived a whole life—and that's what you should be doing, living someone's life for the two or so hours you've been onstage."

Chris McCoy

Chris McCoy is a writer living in Memphis. He can be contacted at mccoy@midsouth.rr.com.

The Hidden Significance of a Clothespin: A Conversation with John Salvest

Bill Anthes: I've seen several of your works that include the image of the U.S. flag and the U.S. map, but you don't seem to approach these symbols with the same deadpan attitude of, say, Jasper Johns. I'm reminded more of installations like Dread Scott's "What is the Proper Way to Display the Flag?" The flag is a very loaded symbol. Why do you work with it?

John Salvest: All of my work begins with objects or materials that I believe already have attached meaning—used coffee filters, pills, pencils, chewing gum, etc. Maybe it's my Catholic upbringing that has cursed and blessed me with eyes that find meaning in everything. I agree with Baudelaire who said, "We walk through a forest of symbols," but most of the time we are too tired or busy to notice. Usually my task is to bring these submerged or half-forgotten meanings to the surface. With the image of the flag, however, pre-existing meaning is a given and is already particularly intense. Working with the flag is very different from, say, trying to convey the hidden significance of a clothespin. When I make an American flag out of used cigarette butts or matches or pills I am layering meaning upon meaning. These combinations of an already loaded symbol and a specific material are intended to suggest discrepancies between the ideal and the actual and to raise questions about the state of our nation. Sometimes it seems that the main purpose of religious or political icons is to squelch critical thinking. We are blinded by the comfort and safety of being part of a group or numbed by the promise of future happiness on some other hypothetical plane of existence, and so we are distracted from our present sadness or anger. The idea of America is, or should be, always evolving. Its laws and even its constitution should be subject to constant reexamination and revision. Creating a dialogue or tension between the given design of the flag and the unorthodox material from which it is made is a visual reexamination rather than a verbal one, like a debate without words. The flag pieces are more overtly political than a lot of my work, but still the main intent is to enrich experience for the viewer by helping him or her to see things freshly or differently.

Did 9/11 change the way you think about the flag in your art? Have you done more flag pieces since?

It did for a while. The over-saturation of red, white and blue that accompanied the wave of patriotism after September 11, 2001, caused me to question whether I'd ever make another flag. First of all, did America really need another flag made

of plastic cups poked in a chain-link fence? I also recall many commentators speculating about the death of irony at the time, and I too wondered if the use of irony or humor in addressing the American way through its most potent symbol was appropriate or relevant any longer. But just as congressional repartee returned after a brief hiatus immediately following the tragedy, the impulse to create new flag works returned. Actually, the impulse was helped along by a commission for a flag in the lobby of American State Bank in Jonesboro. That flag, constructed of pennies and dimes, jump-started a series of new works, some of which address the excessive use of the U.S. flag after September 11. I have an exhibition at the Cheekwood Museum of Art in Nashville that focuses exclusively on the flags and will include new works as well as a sampling of older flags. I've always thought of them as individual works and not as an ongoing series, but when you suddenly realize that you've made ten of them, maybe it's time to step back and look at them as a whole. I'm curious about how they will function as a group. With the one-year anniversary of 9/11 just behind us when the exhibition opened, it seemed like an interesting moment to gather a roomful of them. Perhaps some of my questions about the appropriateness or relevancy of such work at this time will be answered.

Many of the works presented in TEXTure at the Arkansas Arts Center have what I would describe as an indexical quality as regards the passing of time. I'm thinking in particular of "Reliquary," "Newspaper Column" and "Coffee Calendar." But I think there is also a time-based dimension in many of the other pieces as well. Do you see these as a kind of performance?

Actually, I do. The works you mentioned, "Reliquary," "Newspaper Columns" and "Coffee Calendar" can be seen as the remnants or evidence of ongoing private performances or rituals. The saving of newspapers or fingernail clippings has become habitual. I have several years' worth of used coffee filters and many full year editions of various newspapers. The year of coffee filters and several columns of newspapers you saw at the Arkansas Arts Center were only a small part of the inventory. Why I am compelled to save all of this stuff is another matter, although you and I have talked before about the influence of growing up with relatives who lived through the Depression and World War II rationing programs. It's as if we have a second-hand economic insecurity embedded in our psyches. Anyway, some of the things I save or accumulate



"Placebo," first aid kit, pills, 2002.

are organized in some way, usually chronologically, while others are just gathered and stockpiled for future use. I think that anyone who sees these projects can't help but consider the passage of time and the performance of a repeated action by the absent maker. There is never, intentionally, any trace of specific autobiography in those works. My hope is that this anonymity will enable viewers to substitute themselves and thereby connect more personally with the work. I've noticed that even the non-indexical works, because of their labor intensity, lead many viewers to think about time and process. I'm often asked questions about how much time it took to accumulate materials for a project or how much time it took to construct a work, and I'm sure that it's because everyone can easily relate to ordinary materials like straight pins and postage stamps. The magic isn't in the materials but instead in the time and labor involved. **Many people include the fact that you have a background in literature to explain the inclusion of text in your sculpture. As a sculptor, how would you describe your relationship to words?**

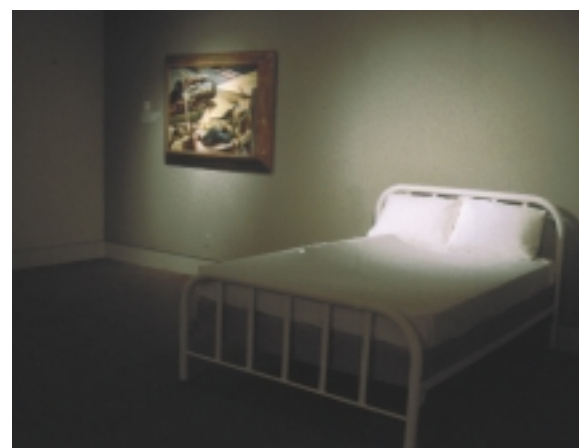
As a kid I loved reading and writing. My mom has always loved books and I think it rubbed off on me. Eventually I majored in English in college. I guess I had this vague longing to communicate, but writing seemed too sedentary and hermetic an activity for me then, and that still holds true. I think that I'm too restless to be a full-time writer. When I was first exposed to sculpture in college, I was immediately



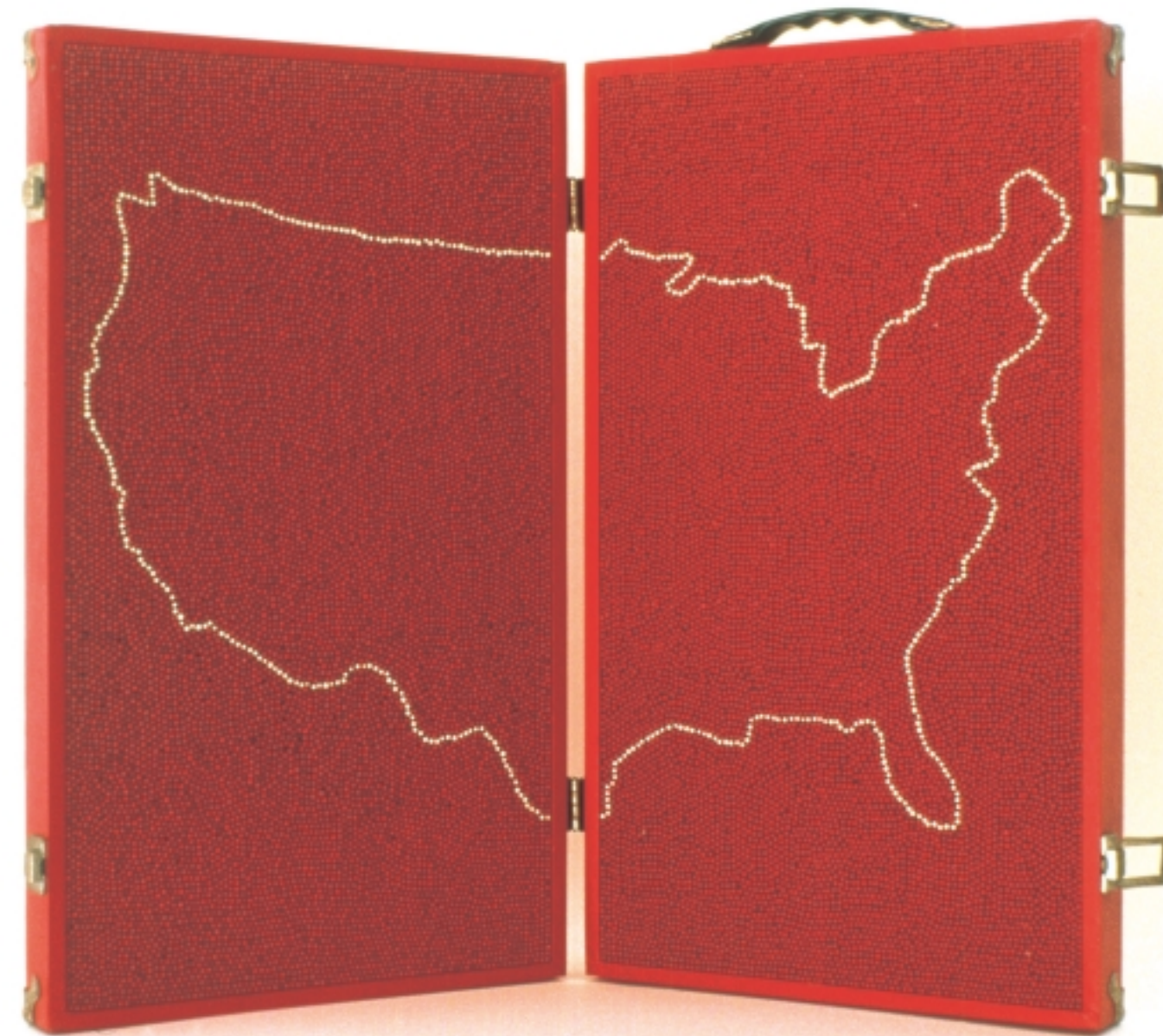
"Fly," (detail), mounted sparrows, cable, audio CD, 2002.



Installation view of "Coffee Calendar," Arkansas Art Center.



Installation view of "Night Train," Memphis Brooks Museum of Art.



"Strike Anywhere," leather case, matches, 2002.

attracted to its inclusiveness in terms of materials and ideas, including the use of language. It seemed to open up a world of endless possibilities and offered a more physical and active form of creativity. That really appealed to me. So the realization that I could communicate through materials instead of, or in addition to, language was a great breakthrough for me. It changed my life. From the very beginning my work had a narrative quality, but for a long time I actually resisted the use of language. It was probably inevitable, given my background, that text would find its way into the work. Now I have a kind of double relationship with words. When I use text in my work I am very focused upon the physical characteristics of the words I am using—the number and shape of letters, the logistics of shaping words from specific materials, and the mathematics of fitting words into specific spaces. When I am drafting plans for an artwork, graph paper is required. When I write, I am more concerned with the abstract quality of words—their meaning and infinite nuance. When I write, any kind of paper will do.

The two most recent pieces I have seen—"FLY" at the Arkansas Arts Center and "Night Train" at the Memphis Brooks Museum—have included sound. This seems to be a change in the way that time is an element in your work, is that correct?

In using sound, my main intention, as always, was to make the work more interesting. I was interested in adding other sensory elements that contribute to the overall meaning of the work. In earlier works I had stumbled upon the use of

smell, for example, because it was a natural characteristic of the materials with which I chose to work—the rubber tires I used in "Black River" or the cigarette butts in "Smoke Free." Both "Night Train" and "FLY" used sound loops with no sense of beginning, middle or end to them, so I wasn't trying to control the time element in those works. They were meant more as ambient, atmospheric sound that provided a soundtrack for the process of looking at the visual elements. So in a way I think of the sound element as only slightly less static than the visual elements. One thing that sound may do is prolong the time spent with a particular work by providing another hook for engaging the viewer. Someone told me that museumgoers spend an average of something like three seconds with a work of art, so maybe artists need all the help they can get. The found loop for "Night Train," part of the *Side by Side* exhibition at the Brooks Museum, had several minutes of rail yard sounds that included train noises as well as a conversation between engineers as they prepared for departure. I thought it was pretty funny because, given the context, you couldn't help but pick up on the sexual overtones of the rail men's banter, which only reinforced the point I was trying to make about the trouble with trains as subject matter. Viewers, as easily entertained as I, might be compelled to stick around until the loop goes full circle.

Neither of these pieces includes text. Do you see yourself moving away from words in your work? Do you see a change in the way that meaning and message are conveyed in your work?

John Salvest's mixed-media objects and installations have been presented in solo and group shows throughout the United States including one-person exhibitions at Phoenix Art Museum (Arizona), New Museum of Contemporary Art (New York, New York), Forum for Contemporary Art (St. Louis, Missouri), Salina Art Center (Kansas), Cheekwood Museum of Art (Nashville, Tennessee) and Arkansas Arts Center (Little Rock). His work has been recognized with numerous awards and grants including a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in 1993 and a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant in 1998. He is currently working on large-scale commissions for Hartsfield International Airport in Atlanta, Georgia and the Cannon Center for the Performing Arts in Memphis, Tennessee. Salvest received a B.A. in English from Duke University and an M.A. in English literature and an M.F.A. in sculpture from the University of Iowa. He lives in Jonesboro, Arkansas, where he is Professor of Sculpture at Arkansas State University.

Bill Anthes is an art historian and writer living in Memphis, Tennessee, where he is Assistant Professor of Contemporary Art History at The University of Memphis. He is currently completing his first book, *Native Moderns*, a study of Native American artists in the post-World War Two era, to be published by the University Press of Kansas.

Actually, "FLY" did include text as well as sound. You may recall that the sparrows were arranged on the wires to spell out the word "fly." But in answer to your

question about moving away from the use of language, it seems that I never completely abandon any element I've used before in my work. Even if they disappear for a while, ideas, materials and images resurface. Also, I tend not to jump from one style or medium to another or to make distinctly separate bodies of work. Changes in my work are more incremental. They may not be obvious from year to year or show to show, but unfold over time, I think. I remember a time not so long ago when I was answering questions about incorporating text in my work, and now you are asking me if I'm moving away from it. Maybe five years from now someone will be asking if I'll ever use sound again. I said earlier that I always had this vague longing to communicate and that I was lucky to discover a suitable vehicle for personal expression in sculpture. My point of departure has always been and will probably always be the commonplace, because it seems that ordinary objects and images offer the greatest potential for connection with the viewer. Over the years I have explored different strategies for strengthening that connection and have gradually developed a palette that includes text, smell, sound and other "colors." For any given project I will continue to use whatever means seem most effective in conveying meaning and message to as broad a spectrum of viewers as possible. This is not to say that I will pander to the lowest common denominator, but instead to suggest a genuine consideration and respect for the audience, whatever its level of involvement with contemporary art.

Critical Distance/Critical Debate

After accepting NUMBER's invitation to contribute to the critics exchange with Nashville, I somehow straightaway fell into a quarrel with one of the three participating critics from middle Tennessee after asking the group for assistance establishing contacts and offering the same for their assignments in Memphis. My initial correspondence stated that "coming into Nashville cold seems rather daunting, and my greatest fear is that, as an outside writer, I will misrepresent the local art scene by only gaining a superficial perspective of its players." In hindsight, it is plain that my three days in a new city could only confer a partial discernment of the bubbling art scene, but the parlay with my respected peer prior to the visit foreshadowed an all-too-familiar rendezvous with local art world politics.

The goal of my trip was to locate the region's native artist community, and so the intention of my correspondence was to elicit information regarding cooperatives, alternative or artist-run spaces and studio districts. The steadfast critic, however, focused on the "art scene" and "perspective," that I had mentioned. In a friendly rebuke, he objected to my regard for these contexts on principal, privileging a standard of critical distance for his own writing. He argued that "a critic should respect the local art scene by not first finding out where the conventional wisdom, critical alliances, and art-political potholes are," as if I had been looking for them. "Imbedded in the approach that you apparently endorse," he further indicted, "is the implication that (Nashville) artists are too frail to withstand a confessed outsider's possibly negative, though honest, opinion." I replied that after years of perturbing people right here at home, I have nothing to fear from Nashville, "save maybe fellow contrarians."

However, the critic's misapprehension of my pragmatic preparation for a brief visit to Nashville inadvertently triggered an eloquent and illuminating view of the city's artist community: "An artist whom I know tells me often that she thinks that Nashville's artists, who all seem to know each other, are unavoidably an insular group, which...dumbs



Zeitgeist, interior gallery.

down Nashville's critical dialog among those artists, because professional courtesy (I won't say 'mean' stuff about your work if you don't say it about mine) tends to overly legitimize or even sanctify the work of artist-friends in what is a most uncritical and, thus ultimately, unkind way. And just as un-challenging in peer coddling is the unspoken, warm and fuzzy assurance that no local artist needs to seriously look outward at the larger art world."

"What a scoop," I thought, since an analogous sentiment had just been conveyed in Leslie Luebbers' editorial for NUMBER: 43, indicating that the exchange project is intended to counter what is a socially-barbed impasse in Memphis: "Everyone in a given visual arts environment is part of a small community, and unspoken rules of politesse seem to mitigate objective analysis...So, we'll see if geographical distance creates critical distance."

I arrived in Nashville just in time to attend the opening reception for Kristina Arnold's *Infectious* at the Ruby Green Contemporary Art Center, a non-profit exhibition space situated in a light industrial area south of the Broadway strip, and the people I met that night subsequently became my nexus to the local artist community. Circulating through the crowded main gallery, the installation was pitched in darkness, except for shiny translucent plastic domes casting splashes of candy-colored light that mottled the walls and floor in a psychedelic ambiance. The bulbous amber and pink spheres protruded from the walls of a large tent illumined from within. Entering, one was inside a glaring fishbowl, where a labyrinth of twisted yarn and shiny bits and pieces of molten plastic trembled and flickered above a bubblegum-pink shag rug while tiny speakers woven into the installation emitted aleatoric noise. I didn't stick around inside the tent long, after I somehow ended up alone with a gentleman grinning maniacally and enthusiastically wallowing around on the pink rug.

Since 1999, Chris Campbell, Ruby Green's founder and curator, has eked out an existence "just under the radar" in Nashville to provide an environment advantageous to non-traditional artforms, including performance, video and multimedia installations. Liberated from the strictures of the commercial gallery concept, featured artists may indulge challenging or experimental content, as in Arnold's whimsical work. Board member Curtis Rose gleefully informed me that everyone serving on the board of directors of Ruby Green is an artist in some capacity, including a photographer, a painter and, in Rose's case, a poet. Campbell has survived through aggressive self-reliance, launching the Ruby Green Foundation as a non-profit by carefully researching the issue and then overseeing the procedure herself. She likewise has become efficient at grant writing and this year, the entirely artist-directed enterprise received funding from the Tennessee Arts Commission, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Frist Foundation, among others.

Shaun Slifer, Ally Reaves and James Wilson, who operate the Rule of Thirds in a residential area of Belmont, affirm their own brand of autonomy (or at least until the landlord puts his foot down), by operating the gallery out of the

front two rooms of their own house for the simple purpose of "showing things other folks won't." The night I was present, the group was hosting *Expressions of the Condemned*, an exhibit of art created by inmates on death row that had been unwelcome at a dozen other locations, according to mitigator Susan McBride. The attitudes found at Ruby Green and the Rule of Thirds are exhilarating, because their unique contributions to the vitality of Nashville's art scene are prompted by the very conditions of scarcity to which most artists forfeit involvement.

According to its artists, Nashville's exhibition opportunities, publicity and other resources are at a premium, and access to them charts predictable strata favoring the region's institutions and a short list of usual suspects, while a recalcitrant undercurrent of local artists persist at the margins of visibility. Although several artist-run commercial ventures—the Plowhaus in east Nashville, Tag Art Gallery and Zeitgeist in the Hillsboro Village neighborhood—regularly tap the local community, "the artists getting the gallery shows, the museum shows, and the shot at public commissions," says artist Lain York, "have traditionally come from academia and outside the immediate Nashville area." Artists compete with musicians for coveted raw space, but both the artist-run Fugitive Art Center and the Chestnut building not far from Ruby Green rent studios to visual artists, as do building owners in the vicinity of the Marathon Car Factory in north Nashville. Otherwise, artist's initiatives for creating collectives or communal warehouse space come and go and "cooperatives have been kicked around by artists and architects, but none have actually come around," York says.

"Resources are so thin, coming as they do from a small group of bureaucrats," says Joseph Whitt, "that the only viable venues are the ones that can flourish outside an environment of commerce." Whitt, an artist from Athens, Alabama, says "scavenging" Nashville's alternative visual arts scene—at Ruby Green, Fugitive and itinerant shows by the group Untitled—is much more "conceptually interesting" than going to the offerings in area museums and galleries, which he suggests have succumbed to an insular, largely conservative and therapeutic arts establishment. "Many people seem to be bound by the notion that art has to function as a form of community outreach (Hear that, Snoopy and Dr. Suess?) to justify itself to a larger public. It's hard to take risks as an individual in an atmosphere like that. Artists, writers and curators shouldn't be apologists. The art world is a cult; and I resent those who would dumb down content to initiate new recruits. There's too much of that going on here...too many wives of lawyers and doctors, who took a handful of art survey classes thirty years ago, and ended up on boards of directors of museums and institutions through hardcore nepotism. The gatekeepers have all the money and none of the passion or real knowledge."

Whitt laments that the role of much local art writing is simply "back patting," assuming the pedestrian tone of the press release by consigning itself to the merely descriptive. When notified of the critics exchange with Memphis, people

were surprised to discover that NUMBER: could even successfully track down three critics from the Nashville area, since they reported local coverage of art events dismal at best, and not much that really counts as criticism. "Most of the writing about art around here falls into the category of the human-interest story," said Slifer. Adds York, "we are hamstrung by the lack of effective and responsible arts writing (and) definitely no critical writing." Artists in general expressed frustration with the local coverage of all facets of the city's visual arts. The contributions of writers including Susan Knowles, Adrienne Outlaw, Jerry Waters, Angela Wibking and Barbara Yontz are roundly praised, but since they all publish on the fringes, artists indicate that their impact is sorely limited.

Don Evans, an artist and educator renowned locally for his performances and happenings spanning nearly three decades yet poorly represented in the press, says that the long-standing lack of art coverage in middle Tennessee "leads to people not knowing that you're doing anything anyway and ultimately you're working in a very, very isolated, somewhat lonely circumstance... It's appalling, but artists are now writing for other artists (just like) they're presenting their work for other artists. The work at Ruby Green is shown for other artists. The people at (Arnold's) show were other artists; that wasn't Nashville."

Ok, ok, lest one starts to get the impression that the artist communities in Memphis and Nashville have devastatingly identical situations—little cabals of influence, shameless conflicts of interest, an insubstantial mediated presence—that is not entirely the case: Memphis has no Ruby Green.

Digesting the correspondences, I am reminded of Dave Hickey's general observation about cultural mores away from the established centers of art. Years ago in Memphis, the visiting critic passively suggested to a group of startled artists that, if they're serious about their careers, they will move to New York, LA or Cologne, and forget about the South. His rationale is rooted in the assumption that cosmopolitan cities offer enough perspectives, resources and capital to sustain diverging streams of continuous dissent. Vital culture flourishes as a dynamic of contentious subcultures—splinter outposts of artists, critics and patrons—all dissenting from one another. Conversely, in cities the size of Nashville or Memphis, matters are simplified: Artists generally may identify themselves as being part of the "art community" or else marginalized from it, with few permutations in between. Since resources and patronage are fewer and more narrowly concentrated, conditions do not encourage dissent or may very well dissuade it, since, in order to survive, the great compulsion is to simply play along, drop out or at least not burn any bridges by questioning authority.

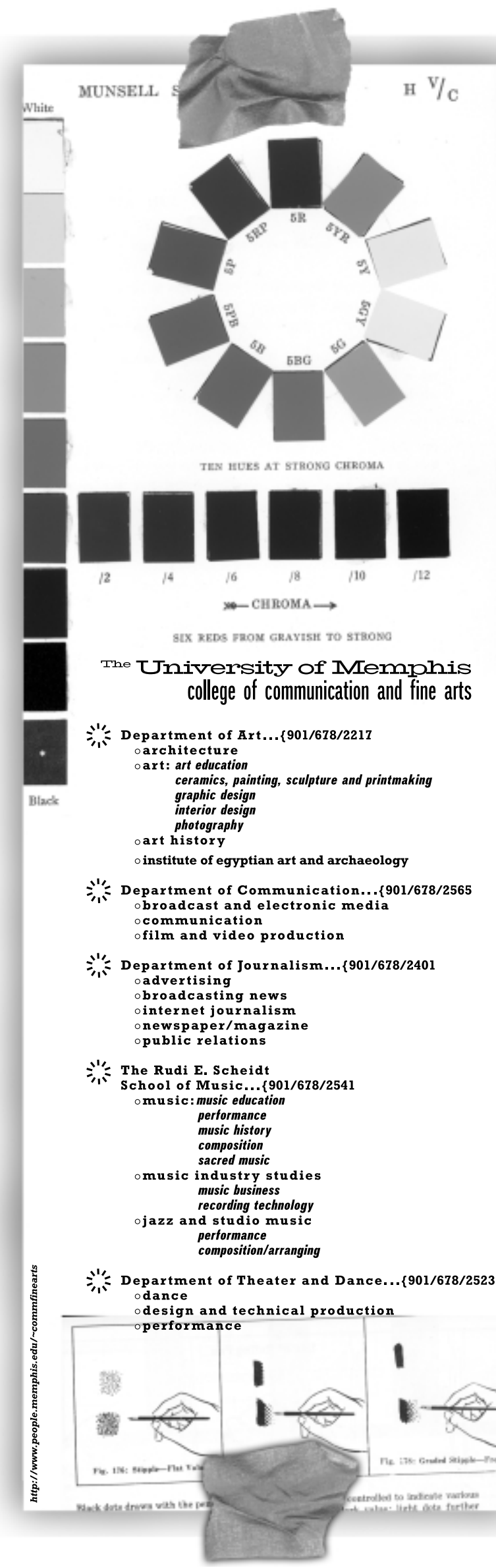
In an editorial titled "What Are Critics For?" *Art in America* contributor Eleanor Heartney maintains that "the critic's most important task is to look at art and the art world in context and to ask hard questions that boosters may not want to hear: Why is this artist or movement emerging now? What is behind the museum boom and the proliferation of international biennials? What are the agendas of the various players? Is institutional expansion always good for art? Where is that golden umbilical cord appearing now?" (Yes, where indeed?) To these questions I would add: Is Hickey's model of second cities cogent, and if so, is it a situation that is mutable or should artists just take the cowboy's advice? I honestly don't know anymore.

"I don't believe the value of art is diminished," Heartney continues, "when critics return it to the complicated economic, political, social, and psychic systems that brought it forth. On the contrary, art's complicity in our messy realities is the real reason that it holds our interest and has something important to tell us about who we are. Because no other participant in the art system is interested in these questions, it is the critic's fate to take them on."

With all due respect to my colleagues, critical distance cannot be the boon to a healthy and sustained discourse of art, when diminished objectivity is an inadequacy not limited to art writers alone, but also prevalent among artists, bureaucrats, curators, board members, etc. In a setting where almost any advantage—institutional, convivial or otherwise—is so often validation for access to coveted opportunities or publicity, there is woefully little to stimulate critical exegesis. Could it be too that the real elephant in the room is that dubious or disreputable contexts have become so pervasive as to effectively assign the critic's judgment to superfluity? Shhh! After all, "politesse" forbids that such matters pass the lips beyond the innocuous bitching one hears from disaffected souls at opening soirées. So much for dissent.

David Hall

David Hall is a Memphis artist, writer and independent curator. He is one of six participants in an exchange of critical perspectives between Memphis and Nashville. The project is funded with an Arts Build Community grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission and administered by the Greater Memphis Arts Council.



Memphis' First Moderns

The 20th century was a crucial time in the history of design, and Memphis offers a perfect laboratory to understand this period. Just at the moment when Modernism appeared on the horizon, Memphis was a pretty typical American town. What happened here probably happened with minor variations in countless other American cities.

The only architectural survey of our city was put together by Eugene J. Johnson and Robert D. Russell, Jr., and published in 1990 as *Memphis, An Architectural Guide*. It was a great foundation upon which to base further study. On the subject of modernism's debut, Johnson and Russell describe Arkansas-born A.L. Aydelott as the architect "largely responsible for introducing modernism into Memphis architecture." Aydelott's well-known buildings date from the Fifties, including Immaculate Conception High School on Central (1952-6) and Aydelott's office (1952) on Peabody at Florence, now a residence owned by sculptor Alonzo Davis. Aydelott practiced architecture here in the Forties; an interesting modern home he designed on Erwin Circle pushes "Aydelott modernism" back at least to 1946.

Some earlier modernist pioneers in Memphis were E.L. Harrison, designer of Fairview School (1930), and Herbert M. Burnham, architect of Kimbrough Towers apartments (1939). But these early designs conform best to what is now called Art Deco, in which a modern look is achieved using traditional forms and ornament.

This would mean that in Memphis, no one wanted to live in a truly modern house until the period right after World War II. During the post-war period, the leading architect of the new "faith" was A.L. Aydelott, as Johnson and Russell suggested. But not have we overlooked anything? The *Memphis Guide* coverage is less comprehensive as you move beyond Midtown. Logically, construction in new styles—especially residences—would probably be further away from the older neighborhoods. Taking a broader look at Memphis and its environs, can we find earlier examples of modernism?

What did modernism look like in other places including its places of origin? Truly modern single family residence prototypes were advanced by Le Corbusier (Villa Savoye, 1930) and Mies van der Rohe (Barcelona Pavilion, 1929). In the States, Neutra's Lovell Health House (1929) was highlighted in the 1932 MoMA exhibition that defined modernism

and called it "International Style."

Meanwhile, Frank Lloyd Wright worked in his own version of "modern" in masterpieces like Falling Water (1936). From 1937 up to the Fifties, Wright promoted another concept—the Usonian House—a type of compact, practical home that is easily constructed and affordable. Nothing else particularly new stands out in single family residence design until after World War II, when a fresh start is promised in Johnson's Glass House and Eames Case Study House #8—both from 1949.

One day a friend mentioned to me that her family home in Raleigh had been designed by "the architect of the United Nations." I knew Ginny Martin was the daughter of cotton baron Berry Brooks and his wife Virginia. I had heard about the colorful life the family enjoyed and knew they had brushed with "the rich and famous." But could it be that Wallace K. Harrison, chief architect of the United Nations (1950), had designed a residence in Memphis?

The Brooks' house sits on top of a green hill beside James Road, near the point where Highland used to enter the Raleigh area. The entrance on the north side is sheltered by rows of simple white pillars. Horizontal banks of casement windows in white wood frames can be seen above, where bedrooms are located. Below large expanses of glass, including tilt-out transoms above sliders below, open up the first level to lovely views of the hillside and valley. Originally the natural terra-cotta color of the brick walls contrasted nicely with horizontal cypress siding painted white. The roofs are low hips, almost flat. No ornament, decoration, or layers of finishes are visible. The walls read as folded planes, some reaching out to suggest garden partitions. Inside we find lots of built-in storage but little decoration. Walls have baseboards but no cornices or moldings around doors or windows. The stairwell and bedroom corridor cabinets curve gently.

Wright's Usonians around 1940 have several features in common with the residence in Raleigh, notably the combination of vertical panels of red brick contrasting with horizontal cypress siding outside; an articulated floor plan with functions isolated in separate wings some wings projecting out along diagonals, not right angles in the plan; and lots of built-in storage.

This leads us back to the question: Who designed the

house in Raleigh? In a published interview in 1968, Virginia Brooks identified the architect as Bernard J. Harrison and the client as Bernard's brother, Randolph Harrison, "designer of the United Nations." As it turns out, her assertions were partly correct. An article in *House and Garden* in 1946 cites the architects as New Yorkers Bernard J. Harrison and Vincent Furno, with Austin K. Hall as associate. Vincent Furno taught architecture for twelve years at Columbia. After working with Harrison, he practiced in the office of Edward Durrell Stone, the Arkansas-born designer of the 1939 Museum of Modern Art (with Philip Goodwin) and the Kennedy Center (1961-71).

Now living in Ontario, Furno clarified a second issue: Who was the house designed for? Recent owners believed the house was designed for Alexander B. "Billy" McFadden and his family. But Memphian Bob McCallum, a partner in the McFadden cotton firm at the time, remembered that, for a short time, the Raleigh house was owned and occupied by Randolph Harrison. Brother of the architect, Randolph married Billy McFadden's sister and worked in her family's cotton business in Memphis for a short time. Furno confirmed that Randolph Harrison was in fact the original owner—the client for whom the house was designed—just as Virginia Brooks had noted. Randolph had two young children, and the layout of bedrooms reflects his family's needs at the time.

The Harrisons stayed barely two years before two more New Yorkers acquired the property. Mrs. Harrison's brother, Alexander B. "Billy" McFadden and his wife Josie had rented homes on Belaire Drive and Yates Road before moving into the Harrison residence in Raleigh in 1943. Billy had come to Memphis to involve his family's cotton business in the Memphis' market. Founded in 1862, George H. McFadden and Brothers, the family firm, was the oldest cotton brokerage in the U.S.

Sadly, the McFadden family was able to enjoy their home in Raleigh only a couple of years. In 1945 Billy died in a skiing accident while vacationing with a group of Memphis' top cotton brokers. Josie McFadden and her children soon returned to New York. During the years when Randolph Harrison and then Billy McFadden occupied the house in Raleigh, Berry and Virginia Brooks were living on Hawthorne in Midtown. Brooks bought the 322-acre estate from Josie McFadden in the Spring of 1948 and moved his family in during August and September. The Brooks family loved the

property and became its best known residents for almost forty years. Here Berry could raise cattle, and Virginia could collect fourteen peacocks, giving rise to a new name: Epping Forest Manor, recalling the hunting preserve of the British royals.

Born in Senatobia, Mississippi, in 1902, Berry Boswell Brooks attended Washington and Lee and entered the cotton business in 1922. In addition to his highly successful international cotton brokerage, Brooks enjoyed big game hunting. Lecturing widely on his travels in Africa, he eventually made documentary films, relocating the family for a time to Hollywood, where they extended their circle of friends among the film community.

Sold in 1986 by Virginia Brooks to Philip Broadnax III, a question remains: is the Harrison-McFadden-Brooks-Broadnax residence the only modern home built in Memphis in the 1940s? A second early modern home from the same period was built in East Memphis for a cotton broker who came here from another state. The architect was Ely Jacques Kahn, a prominent New York designer. The consulting architect was Merrill G. Ehrman, designer of the Overton Park Shell (1936) and the house Elvis named Graceland (1939). Although substantially altered, the East Memphis modern remains a handsome residence.

What have we learned from this probe into the origins of modern design in Memphis? We found that modern forms entered the local repertory first in non-residential buildings and in the more acceptable, less functionalist, guise of Art Deco. The introduction of truly modern design in Memphis residential architecture dates from the period 1940-43, when at least two single-family homes were designed by New York architects for clients who had come to Memphis from other areas.

The situation in architecture applies in a general way to all the arts. Whenever local money is being spent on an enterprise located here that will rely heavily on talent from outside our city, we shouldn't complain too much. The infusion of influences from other areas will probably enrich our local traditions and perhaps stimulate them in new directions. Perhaps the imported work will serve as a platform for local development.

It is remarkable that the two modern homes I have described ever got built. On December 7, 1941, the U.S. was drawn into World War II by the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Shortages of labor, materials and other hardships slowed down non-military construction during the War. In fact, private building was outlawed. Completion of the Raleigh house may have been allowed so it could be used as a Naval intelligence center with twenty-eight phone lines. Over the years Memphis never discarded or outgrew the two early modern homes; they are still residences. Except for new finishes on walls, floors, and roof, major changes to the house in Raleigh have been avoided leaving the 1941 concept largely intact.

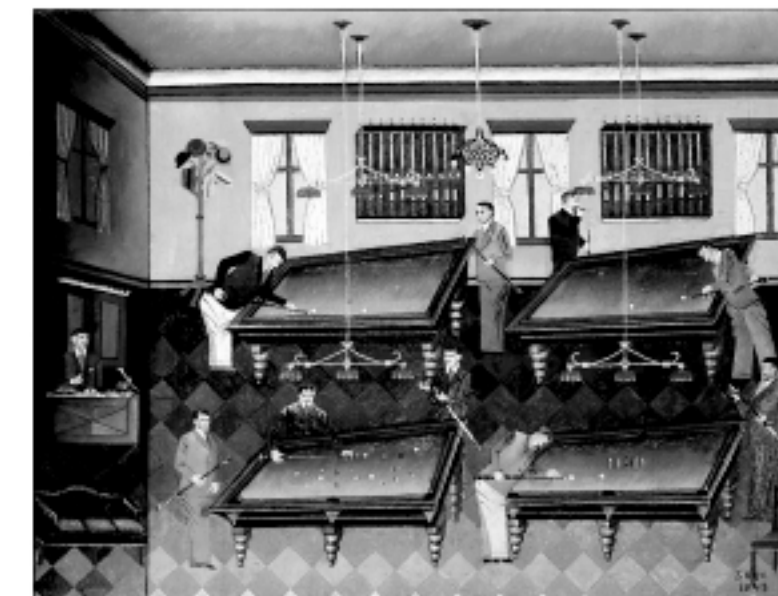
Situated on its own little green hill at a strategic and accessible site, the house in Raleigh could continue to be used as a fine residence, or interesting non-residential functions could be introduced. The many bedrooms suggest a center for artist residencies—a place for the study of art and interior design, architecture, and landscape design with wonderful spaces for exhibitions and plenty of parking. In addition, it could serve as a place for entertaining, thus raising resources that would underwrite the continuation of art and design in our city.

James Ramsey

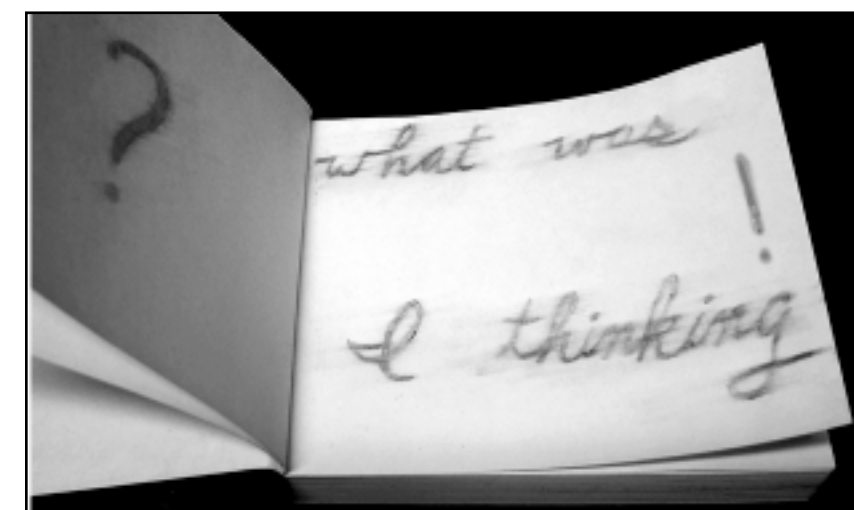
James Ramsey teaches the history of architecture at The University of Memphis and Memphis College of Art.



rhodes college | clough-hanson gallery
works by ladis sabo



february 28 through april 2, 2003
tuesday through saturday 11:30 am - 5 pm
gallery closed sundays and mondays
901.843.3442



tom lee: *what was i thinking?*
2.28.03 through 4.18.03

coming soon:
a show organized by guest curator david hall
4.25.03 through 6.7.03
reception: friday 4.25.03 from 6-9 pm

gallery hours: sat. 1-5 pm or by appointment

delta axis@marshall arts
639 marshall | memphis, tn 38103
901.522.9483

Mark Hosford: Preliminaries**December 7 - January 23**
Fugitive Art Center

Deep in a bleak industrial area of Nashville, Fugitive Art Center is made distinctive by a bright green door on a side street. Broken glass and litter dot the sidewalk near pavement where few cars are parked. Fortunately, Fugitive's flyers and website provide lengthy directions on how to find them for we would have a difficult time otherwise.

Within the drafty space, clusters of doodles on notebook paper, flyers and hotel stationery bedecked the entrance hallway; Mark Hosford's exhibition, *Preliminaries* was a disturbing and engrossing experience.

Recently, drawings have become regarded as complete works rather than as preliminaries to paintings. Such shows as MOMA's *Drawing Now: Eight Propositions* have tacked onto the gallery walls sketches influenced by comics and animé along with architectural renderings. In Hosford's exhibition, clusters of drawings were fixed to the wall with needle-like pins in a seemingly casual arrangement. However, the attention to detail in the installation erases any doubt of the artist's dedication to his images. The pictures were pinned down as painstakingly as the artist's imagination was unpinned.

The Vanderbilt professor's figures are the offspring of worms and aliens, robots and rabbits, suggesting impossible reproductive unions. Sexual elements are not only implied but thrust in our faces with skinny little girls with phalluses and sickly visages spewing mucous. Characters are reminis-

cent of Hieronymus Bosch's disfigured captives in hell and details in the original illustrations by John Tenniel for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Bunnies and little creatures border on being cute and cuddly but, with their fearful eyes or deformed appendages, they cannot convince us.

Attraction to the taboo is something this work shares with the creator of Lewis Carroll, creator of *Alice*, with his alleged attraction to children. Hosford's pieces make us feel dirty for looking, as if we bought pornography on a busy street, paid to see a cock fight or observed an inhumane experiment.

Does the Vanderbilt administration know about his problematic imagination? All questions and astonishment aside, the exhibition is a feat produced by talent and dedication.

The "Preliminaries," Hosford tells us through the title, are introductory. Are these drawings leading up to something, or is the humongous grouping like any other art that leads its creator into unpredictable territory? Among these tacked-up collections floats a blown-up version of two of the cast members, a young "boy" (the closest noun I could



use for it) and a bear-like horned toad, drawn directly onto the gallery wall. Perhaps this large scale rendering is the result of the prolific preliminary sketching.

Facing each other, they straddle their own cucumber-like support network, including a thick striped rope connecting the separate supports. Each holds their end of a string connected to a diamond between them: a dull, plainly-surfaced gem empty of any dazzle.

The boy has a sick grimace revealing sharp and widely-spaced teeth. He wears kids' sneakers and a cap with teddy ears. Between his legs protrudes a striped horn as wide as his pudgy short legs. He is an obnoxious, over-sexed and

Out of Our Minds**November 9, 2002 - February 1, 2003**
Zeitgeist Gallery

The Zeitgeist Gallery, located in the heart of Nashville's flourishing Hillsboro Village, stands out on a corner along 21st Street, a thoroughfare of book, design, furniture and clothing stores. The storefront is modest but the long and high-ceilinged space inside was ideal for displaying art. The Italian design consortium Memphis was on display alongside *Out of Our Minds*, a show of local artists..

The Milan-based Memphis group produces sophisticated furniture items that are supposedly a "juxtaposition of high and low culture" as in "both the ancient capital of Egypt and the home of Elvis Presley." Without asking which is the "high" and which is the "low" here, I'll say that the jarring but symmetrical, primary colored furniture made Zeitgeist look like an urban design store from the outside and accomplished the purpose of luring in viewers to see the far less refined work in the large *Out of Our Minds*, an exhibition of 15 local artists, of which I will discuss two as representative of the overall combine painting style pioneered in the 1960s by Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns.

Jim Ann Howard puts politics and frustration right out there with "The Amazing Game Without Rules: Tagwar." Visually this piece is extremely attractive, but as I read the title and contemplated the material, I wanted it to mean something highly



Mary Sue Kerns, "Fractured Fairytales."

important and strong. I wanted it to communicate for me (and others) intimately, as most good art does.

The viewer's journey is like moving around a board game. Compartmentalizing the large surface into various-sized squares, Howard fills them with collage elements such as keyholes and door handles. These are mostly on the left side. A clear plastic tube with marbles inside moves horizontally across the upper edge of the piece. At the right side of the panel, the tube goes down the right edge, where it becomes stopped up by the fallen marbles and disappears into the panel. Near where the tube exits is an electrical socket with a plug dripping with red paint (blood) whose cord is connected to a mini electric chair contained within the grouping of mini-compartments where we began on the left.

In this context, a "Get Out of Jail Free" card from the Monopoly board game takes a job at current events by



Zeitgeist Gallery design show.

pointing to the humiliating ease with which a public official or head of a corporation can get away with money and murder. This is all too familiar in recent headlines, though the collapse of Enron and corruption in the accounting industry have been supplanted by news of a possible war with Iraq. Soothing and self-reflecting aspects of this work occur only in the largest compartment, where a larger-than-life painted bird turns its head away from its mirrored image, refusing to see itself as we might see it. In a frieze below that runs along the length of the piece lurk frogs, birds and flowers interacting at various stages of development, pollinating and reproducing. These benign elements of nature are what we have, what we are used to and what we can lose or destroy.

In her title, Howard refers to "tagwar" and "a game without rules" as if to highlight the diplomatic rule-break-

malicious bully from the school yard.

His companion, the toad-bear is bare-chested; its pale pudgy stomach, frail legs and horrified expression give this creature a victimized disposition. Toad is in his own existential hell, on a wall in front of us as scared of his appearance as we are; and he looks ashamed that Mark Hosford had the gall to present him to us.

Embarrassment has the power to disarm and disrupt. I believe Hosford is being honest with us, as if saying, "this was my terrible obsession. I know you have one too."

Jeanne Hamilton

Jeanne Hamilton is a writer and art critic for Memphis' daily newspaper, *The Commercial Appeal*. She is one of six participants in an exchange of critical perspectives between Memphis and Nashville. The project is funded with an Arts Build Community grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission and administered by the Greater Memphis Arts Council.



ing on both sides of a conflict and the inability of each to understand the other side. The bird looks away from its reflection; is the reflected image a companion or adversary? In any case, the bird's gesture embodies a reluctance to empathize or acknowledge a conscience.

Mary Sue Kern's "Fractured Fairytales" towers above us like a huge control panel from a science fiction movie or another type of game. From its wood backing, individual protrusions that stick out almost a foot from the wall greet and mock us and urge us to manipulate them. From a "kitchen sink" assortment of objects (syringes, timers, metal wires of varying color and size, buffer wheels), human and toy visages are fashioned. As humorous as Mike Kelley's sock puppets and as disconcerting as a forest of mechanization, "Fractured Fairytales" renders playful and useless objects that were once functional. Reflective lights and plastic soldiers suggest preventative safety measures and the simplicity of childhood combat.

"Fractured Fairytales" implies distorted dreams or lessons. In the process of growing up or self-realization, a human being encounters events in life that cannot be assessed easily, that are full of contradictions and hypocrisy. Fracturing results from internal and external pressures and violence that may alter, damage or kill. Beyond childhood, survival is our own objective and is no longer the responsibility of the guardian.

This is what I, as an adult, see when I gaze at a work of art with such a title and such collaging. A child would perhaps stand in front of "Fractured Fairytales" in awe at the possibilities of play.

Other artists included in *Out of Our Minds* were Patrick DeGuira, Brady Haston, Tim Hussey, Susan Sisk, Paul Harmon, Richard Painter, Gene Wilken, Kathryn Dettwiller, Andy Harding, Lesley Patterson, Beth Trabue, Richard Feaster and Donna Tauscher.

Jeanne Hamilton

Jeanne Hamilton is a writer and art critic for *The Commercial Appeal*, Memphis' daily newspaper. She is one of six participants in an exchange of critical perspectives between Memphis and Nashville. The project is funded by an Arts Build Community grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission and administered by the Greater Memphis Arts Council.

upcoming exhibitions**david lusk gallery****mar**melissastern
sheahembrey**apr**greelymyatt
robertyasuda**may**hugerfoote
jsonmyers**jun**

freidahamm

juljohnpavlicek
terrijones**aug**theprice
isright**www.davidluskgallery.com**

O Georgia O'Keeffe

and the Calla Lily in American Art, 1860 - 1940

Feb. 23 - May 4

Sponsored by: The Georgia O'Keeffe Museum National Advisory Council and The Burnett Foundation
Georgia O'Keeffe and the Calla Lily in American Art, 1860 - 1940, has been organized by the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum

Local Presenting Sponsor: Hyde Family Foundations

Contributing Sponsors: H.W. Durham Foundation, BDO Seidman, LLP; Greater Memphis Arts Council Partner - Thomas & Betts



JOIN US!

- Dinner with *Georgia O'Keeffe Wine Dinner and Tour Georgia O'Keeffe and the Calla Lily in American Art, 1860 - 1940* with Chief Curator Marina Pacini 6 pm, Thursday, March 20 - \$60 per person
- Flower Arranging Workshop and Lunch 11 am, Wednesday, March 26 For more information call 901.544.6243
- Senior Tuesdays Free Admission for 65+ and 10% discount in the Brushmark and Museum Store

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE
Calla Lilies, 1924
Oil on canvas
Private Collection
©Juan Hamilton



BROOKS
MEMPHIS BROOKS MUSEUM OF ART
In association with the Smithsonian Institution

1934 Poplar Ave. Memphis, TN 38104 | 901.544.6200 | www.brooksmuseum.org

Elizabeth Winton
Joseph Whitt
December 6, 2002-January 11, 2003
Ruby Green Gallery

Ruby Green Gallery sits snug atop sloping Fifth Avenue with a clear view into downtown Nashville. The unassuming storefront is easy to miss among topless clubs, porn shops and convenience stores. On view here were two artists, entirely dissimilar in technique but high on both mental and visual texture.

New York City artist Elizabeth Winton's work vibrates with hustle, congestion and drastically different perspectives that are as conflicted as the people in her home town. The artist does not lead the viewer with any direct motion of strokes and colors. We are adrift in marks. We grab for what we can decipher. We can feel claustrophobic, lost, threatened and injured in the busiest of them.

Titles like "Cast," "Transit," "Circus," and "Sweep" provide no road maps to the works' site of inspiration. They are unnecessary signs along the road telling the improvisational traveler where to stop. The titles seem like an effort to organize what is not able to be organized: the confusing experience of over-stimulation, the closeness of many other beings and trying to grasp and calm desperation of varying intensities.

All the work bears an Abstract Expressionist influence, recalling Jackson Pollock's palette, Susan Rothenburg's transforming structures and Nancy Graves' freedom. Space

is delineated (however loosely) with visions of glass, water and man-made structures represented by blue and green splatter or by delineated but ambiguous shapes.

The most successful work is a series of sketches that resembles collage paintings. It is as if the artist took what she had given the larger works and condensed the matter and care onto a surface one fourth the size. In her gallery talk, Winton explained that these small pieces are a result of what she produces when she is exhausted and tired of dealing with the big ones. They are more exploratory, less conscientious and seemingly effortless.

While some of the large canvases provide fields of red that draw the viewer's eyes and emotions, others are very gray and dull with snippets of dark and light excitement. When you first see Elizabeth Winton's work, it is difficult to like because it is disordered. However, the more you take in (the artist had over 15 paintings) the more you understand her direction (and lack thereof) without any explanation.

Joseph Whitt's highly conceptual work creates unease akin to realizing that you might have a "kick me" sign on your back. What kind powerlessness do we feel when we are unable to recognize and classify the representation of a person? Whitt makes it impossible to do so with the controversial "R. Mutt," an oval portrait of an African or African American satyr, complete with elfin ears and deep black sideburns. The background is a peach-pink abyss; the figure is surrounded by a Victorian golden frame.

The portrait is upside-down. The artist is equating a

black version of a mythological creature and Marcel Duchamp's ground-breaking ready-made upside-down urinal that he signed "R. Mutt 1917." Whitt's piece is an otherwise straightforward side view of the creature reminiscent of a mug shot of an individual discarded from society, just like the urinal. Every aspect of this picture causes us discomfort at the prospect of evaluating a subject that would inevitably reveal our racial or social prejudices.

"R. Gift" is a C-Print of a blown up photographic image of Roland Gift, singer of Fine Young Cannibals and formerly the English Beat. Having been severely pixilated through the digital medium, he smiles sweetly with squinting eyes the size of dinner plates. The singer's head is six or eight times life-size, and Whitt achieves the Op-Art effect of causing viewer's eyes to water as they get within a foot or so of the work. The blurry and nonsensical piece repels us if we stand too close. The not-immediately-obvious pop icon alienates us with his blown-up fame and this exaggerated representation.

Playing with visages is to point to the inaccuracy of representation in any art medium and disorient viewers. If we are unable to visually evaluate a subject, name it and classify it, we become uneasy and suspicious.

Jeanne Hamilton

Jeanne Hamilton is a writer and art critic for *The Commercial Appeal*, Memphis' daily newspaper. She is one of six participants in an exchange of critical perspectives between Memphis and Nashville. The project is funded with an Arts Builds Communities Grant from the Tennessee Arts Commission and administered by the Greater Memphis Arts Council.



Joseph Whitt, "R. Gift," c-print, 2002.



Elizabeth Winton, "Transit," oil on canvas, 2000.

Thomas Nozkowski Works On Paper
October 25 through December 11, 2002
Clough-Hanson Gallery, Rhodes College

New Yorker Thomas Nozkowski's twelve medium size oils and four etching/aquaints at the Clough-Hanson Gallery reveal a complex shape shifter of rich pictorial means. His strongest images are modernist in spirit, personal in feeling and generate elaborate, slow motion dialogues between their main forms and the surrounding space.

An infinite repertoire of eccentric silhouettes are conjured: knots and noses, snake heads, rickety abstracted cartoon characters, gold fish, a ship's stern, dice, piazza aerial views and podgy house structures. These encyclopedic figures are typically positioned slightly akimbo, somewhat to the left or right of center in each composition. Usually low on the picture plane, the main shapes succeed when charting a leisurely sense of movement, as if in slow transit, gradually meandering through their environment.

Facilitating this circuitous route, the edges of forms vary significantly: from crisp and hard to soft and ambiguous. Contour lines sporadically mutate into different colors while changing thickness and speed. These deviations engender shapes that can expand or contract while embarking upon leisurely trajectories. The resulting precarious tensions keep the viewer's eye perusing the images over and over again.

Nozkowski's singular focus upon irregular figures reveals direct, sometimes peripheral affinities to the works of mostly senior painters. Among them, the eccentric 1950s Gulf Coast fisherman/artist Forest Bess; Peter Plagens, the current art scribe for *Newsweek*; Londoner Paul Huxley (an important personality throughout the Swinging Sixties) - all have trafficked in unconventional shapes voyaging through their personal cosmos.

In seven of these sixteen works, Nozkowski plays various riffs off that old modernist surrogate, the grid. They are thin and wobbly, submerged under fluid skeins of pigment or sluggish in pace and broad and undulating in form. Others are broken, stacked and tilted, fashioned from the vestiges of hard-edged rectangles immersed in translucent fields.

Instinctive feelings for offbeat hues and confident tactile sensibilities are revealed in the paint handling. The broad range of coloring varies from dark salmon pinks to ultramarines and sharp cerulean blues; transparent cadmium yellows, gray violets and acerbic phthalo greens. Warm and cool off-whites add to the mix.

Nozkowski's modus operandi delivers surfaces frothy and watery, slick and scratchy, clotted and smooth. Soaked-in stains play against opaque areas. Segments of pentimento divulge changes of mind and form through subtle revisions of brushwork suspended under the surface. The surface attributes of the oil paintings—the corner pinholes, the shiny, matte, or sometimes-creamy skins—convey a distinctly human feeling.

Nozkowski's images portray peculiar tales about an unfathomable world of inexplicable flux. They celebrate equilibrium between an offbeat worldview and traditional craft, and the results are simultaneously coy, enigmatic and elegant.

Fred Burton

Fred Burton is a professor at the Memphis College of Art



Thomas Nozkowski, "Q-15," oil on paper, 22.5" x 30", 2002. Image courtesy of the artist and Max Protetch Gallery, New York.

GAMUT

the arts and culture of memphis

www.gamutmag.com

articles

forums

calendar

EXHIBITIONS

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Albers Art
1102 Brookfield, Suite 103, 901.683.2256 www.albersgallery.com

Artforms at Grace Place
4615 Poplar, 901.292-5559
Jeni Stallings. Ongoing–March 15
Anton Weiss, New Works in Metal.
March 21–April 19

Art Museum of the University of Memphis
Communication and Fine Arts Bldg, 901-678-2224
www.amum.org

Maria Elena Gonzalez. UN Real Estates.
March 8–April 19.
Opening reception, Friday March 7, 5-7:30pm

ArtLab. Entrances. Colonial Middle School CAPA students. March 7–April 19.
Opening reception Friday, March 7, 5-7:30pm.

Hamlett Dobbins: The Stillness of Skin.
March 8–April 19
Opening reception, Friday, March 7, 5-7:30pm

MFA Thesis Exhibition. Work by Hether Burks, Kristen S. Gitchell, Patrick Graves, Melanie J. Spillman, David Green.
April 26–June 21, 2003
Opening reception, Friday, April 25, 5-7:30

ArtLab. Leslie Smoke: Yard Art.
April 26–June 21, 2003
Opening reception, Friday, April 25, 5-7:30

Art Village Gallery
410 S Main St, 901.521.0782

Askev Nixon Ferguson Architects
1500 Union Av, 901.261.5512
Fred Burton. April 4–April 29

Center for Southern Folklore
119 S Main St, 901.544.9962

Clip Joint Gallery
3534 Walker Av, 901.452.8363
Russel Vaughn. Abstract Art with an old Catholicism twist. Acrylic and charcoal.
April 5–May 24
Leslie Cannon. Abstract to a folk degree.
Glass and ceramic sculpture. May 31–July 27

Clayworks Studio and Gallery
2116 Vinton, 901.340.7247
Works by Claybodies. Students from Memphis College of Art. Through March 16

Clough-Hanson Gallery, Rhodes College
2200 N Parkway, 901-843-3442
Works by Ladis Sabo. February 28–April 2
Rhodes Student Show. April 11–April 16.
Opening reception April 11, 5-7pm
Senior Thesis Show. April 25–May 17.
Opening reception April 25, 5-7pm

DCI Gallery
768 Brookhaven Cir E., 901.767.8617

David Lusk Gallery
4540 Poplar, 901.767.3800 www.davidluskgallery.com
Melissa Stern. My Friends. March 4–29
Shea Hembrey. Offerings. March 4–29
Greely Myatt.seeem..... April 1–26
Robery Yasuda. New Work. April 1–26
Huger Foote. New Photographs. April 29–May 31
Json Myers. New Work. April 29–May 31
Freida Hamm. New Paintings. June 4–July 3

D'Edge Art and Unique Treasures
550 S Main St, 901.521.0054 edgearth@aol.com
Jeremiah Stansburg. Abstract @s. March
Memphis in May events featuring gallery artist, George Hunt. May
Gallery artists: Judy Woods, Frank D. Robinson, Christ Packer, Debra Edge, Kingfish, Jeremiah Stansburg, and George Hunt. April and May

Delta Axis @ Marshall Arts
639 Marshall Ave, 901.901.522.9483 www.deltaaxis.com
Tom Lee: what was? I thinking.
February 28–April 19.
David Hall curates. May 1–July

Disciple Gallery
390 S Main, 901.386.4299
Further South: A Mission to Mexico.
Photography exhibit of current day Mexico by Craig Thompson. Ongoing.

Dixon Gallery and Gardens
4339 Park, 901.761.5250 www.dixon.org
A Brush with Nature: The Gere Collection of Landscape Oil Sketches. Ongoing–April 6
The Devonshire Inheritance: Five Centuries of Collecting at Chatsworth. April 27–August 17

Durden Gallery
509 S Main, 901.543.0340
Featuring gallery artists through the spring months.

Jay Etkin Gallery
409 S Main, 901.543.0035 www.jayetkingallery.com
Recent Photographs by Jonathan Postal.
Opening, March 21
Selected Works by Marc Rouillard (Paintings).
Opening April 18
Recent Paintings by Annabelle Meacham. May

Front Street Gallery
269 S Front, 901.544.1432
Paintings, prints and posters by Eddie Tucker.
Ongoing

The Gallery at Palladio
2169 Central
Works by local artists: Laurie Schneider, Michelle Allen, Peggy Felsenthal, Connie Balton, Sarah Swindle, Sophie Coors, and others

Hungry Artists Gallery
2571 Broad Ave, 901.452.2727
Works by local artists: Tim Cranford, Tim Dingle, Amy Hutcheson, and Carson Lamm

Joysmith Gallery and Studio
46 Huling, 901.543.0505

Lisa Kurts Gallery
766 S White Station, 901.683.6200
Anita Huffington: Resonance, Recent Sculpture.
Ongoing - March 31

Levy Gallery at the Buckman Performing and Fine Arts Center
60 Perkins Ex, 901.537.1483
Presence and Absence," Kathleen McElroy and Carol DeForest. March 2–April 11

Memphis Arts Council
8 S Third 901.578.2787
The Angel Series. Wess Loudenslager.
Opens February 28

Memphis Botanic Gardens
750 Cherry Rd, 901.685.1566
Photography: Jed Dreifus. Ends March 9

Memphis Brooks Museum of Art
Overton Park, 901.544.6200 www.brooksmuseum.org
Traces Suspectes en Surface. Ongoing–April 6
Brooks Introduces. Ongoing–April 20

The British Etching Revival. Ongoing–June 15
Georgia O'Keeffe and the Calla Lily in American Art:1860–1940. Ongoing–May 4
Stonework: William Edmondson. March 9–May 18
Lecture. Nam June Paik by John Handardt. May 5, 2pm
Glory of the Silk Road: Art from Ancient China. June 8–August 3

Memphis College of Art
1930 Poplar, 901.726.4085-www.mca.edu
Common Thread. Fibers Exhibition in Honor of Henry Easterwood. Ongoing–April 5
MCA Graduate Student Exhibition. Ongoing–April 5. Closing reception March 31, 6–8pm
MFA Exhibition. April 8–17.
Opening reception April 11, 6–8pm
BFA Exhibition. April 22–May 10.
Closing reception May 10

Midtown Artist Market
2027b Madison, 901.726.0052

National Civil Rights Museum
450 Mulberry, 901.521.9699-www.civilrightsmuseum.org
Jeremy's Story. A traveling exhibition.
Ongoing–March 21
A Century of Contribution: Christianburg Institute and Education Change in Virginia, a companion exhibition on the history of LeMoyné Owen College and the Piney Woods School. Ongoing–June 15

National Ornamental Metal Museum
374 Metal Museum Drive, 774.6380. www.metalmuseum.org
Transformations 3: Contemporary Works in Jewelry and Small Metals. February 23–April 27
Memphis in May: Contemporary Korean Metalwork. May 4–July 13

Painted Planet Artspace
1555 Madison, 901.728.6278.
Big Muddy: Scenes from the 2002 Ruskey and Clark Missouri Expedition. Ends March 9

Paul Edelstein Gallery
519 N Highland, 901.454.7105.

Penczner Fine Art Studio and Gallery
1436 Poplar, 901.278.3217

Peabody Place Museum
119 S Main, 901.523.2787

P

erry Nicole Fine Art
3092 Poplar, 901.405.6000
Mitchell Gaudet, glass. March 2–29. Reception,
March 7, 6–8

Plough Library
650 East Parkway 5, 901.321.3432.
Potters Guild and Weavers Guild Exhibition.
February 21–March 28
The Art of Elizabeth Alley. April 4–May 2

Power House
45 East G. E. Patterson 901.578.5545 www.deltaxaxis.org
Mitch Epstein. Family Business. March 22–June
Opening reception, Friday, March 21

Rivertown Gallery
128 Gagos, 901.527.7573

Second Floor Contemporary Art Gallery
431 S Main, 901.521.1514

Shainberg Gallery
Memphis Jewish Community Center - 6560 Poplar, 901.761.0810

Venus Envy (see Events)

HENDERSONVILLE, TENNESSEE

Hendersonville Art Council's Gallery
1154 W. Main Street, 615.822.0789
Jose Simon Exhibit. March 1–14
Sumner County Student Exhibit. March 20–April 4
Showcase of Arts and Crafts. May 18

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Cheekwood Botanical Gardens & Museum of Art
1200 Oliver /Park Dr, 615.322.247 www.cheekwood.org
The Natalie "Alabama" Chanin , February 7–March 30
Glass of the Avant Garde, Feb. 7–May 11

Cumberland Gallery
4107 Hillsboro Circle, 615.297.0296
www.cumberland.citysearch.com/!html
New Painting by Bob Nugent and Ande4w Winn, February 15–March 15
Color Photography Mike Smith and Photograpy from Catherine Edelman Gallery, March 22 – April 19.
Opening reception, Saturday, March 22, 6–8pm

Works by Sylvia Hyman and Suzanne Strjk, April 26 – May 24.
Opening reception, April 26, 6–8pm

Frist Center for the Visual Arts
919 Broadway, 615.224.3340 www.fristcenter.org
Realms of Faith: Medieval and Byzantine Arts from the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore. Ongoing–August 15
Fantastic Patterns: Paintings, Sculptures, and Wall–Hangings. by Liz Quisgard. Ongoing–April 20

Reflections in Black: Smithsonian African American Photography. Ongoing–April 20
Real Illusions: Contemporary Art from Nashville Collections. Ongoing–June 22.
Women Beyond Borders. March 6–July 20.
Alicia Henry: Recent Works. May 16–August 10.
Empire of the Sultans: Ottoman Art from the Khalili Collection. May 16–August 10

Fugitive Art Gallery
440 Houston, 615.294.5776 - www.fugitiveart.com
Cornel Novac and Greg Pond: Jena Paradises.
March 16–April 27

The Parthenon
Centennial Park, 615.8628431 www.nashville.gov/parthenon
Imagining Nature: Abstract Landscape Photographs by Abe Ordover. January 11–March 22
African Music: Paintings and Linocuts by Marleen De Waele–De Bock. January 25–April 6
Paintings by Budd Bishop. March 29–May 25
Mixed Media Works on paper by Ginna Priest. April 12–June 15
Catfish Out of Water. May 31–July 6

Plowhaus Artists' Cooperative
213 South 12th Street, 615.260.4042

Ruby Green Contemporary Art Center
514 Fifth Ave S, 615.244.7179 www.rubygreen.org
Don Evans: Recent Works. March 8–April 19
Peggy Snow: Golden Windows. March 8–April 19
Cecelia Kane: Freak Show. May 9–June 28
Performance by Cecelia Kane, May 9, 8pm

Sarratt Gallery
1st Floor Sarratt Student Center, Vanderbilt University.
515.322.2471 www.vanderbilt.edu/sarratt/gallery.htm
Full Circle. Crimson Rain McCaslin, mixed media. Ongoing–March 18
Sarratt Student Art Show. March 28–April 13
Inner Journey. Greg Hester and Tony Teal, paintings. April 17–June 7

Tag Art Gallery
1807 1/2 21ST AVE. S. 615.298.2905 www.tagartgallery.com
Kevin Titzer, Mr. Hooper and Rik Catlow.
March 8–April 12
Jennifer Febraro. April 9–May 10
Untitled Artist Group (see Events)

Vanderbilt University Fine Art Gallery
23RD and West End Ave. 615.322.1660
www.vanderbilt.edu/AVS/arts/gallery.html
Paranirvana (Self-Portrait) by Lewis deSoto. February 6–March 20
A Word Made Flesh: Works by Lesley Dill. March 29–June 5

Watkins College of Art and Design Gallery
2289 MetroCenter Boulevard, 615-383-4849
Faculty Show. Ongoing through March 21

Zeitgeist Gallery
1819 21st Avenue South, 615.256.4805 www.zeitgeist-art.com
Art on the Edge, a series of exhibitions in commercial spaces.
Art in Open Spaces, 1100 Demonbruen Street, 3rd Floor, through March 8

KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

Knoxville Museum of Art
1050 World's Fair Parkway, 865.525.6101 www.knoxart.org
A Century of Progress: 20th Century Painting in Tennessee. Ongoing–April 27
Works on Paper from the KMA Collection. Ongoing–May 4
Michiko Kon: Still Lifes. May 9–August 10

The Ewing Gallery of Art, University of Tennessee
1715 Volunteer Boulevard, 865.974.3200
MFA Thesis Shows. March 7–30
56th Annual Student Art Competition. April 6–17
BFA Honors Exhibit. March 6–June 6

McClung Museum, University of Tennessee
1327 Circle Park Drive, 865.974.2144
mcclungmuseum.utk.edu
African Art. Curated by Dr. Bill Dewey. Ongoing–May 18.
Hats and Headresses: Adornment of the Head from Around the World. May 31–August 31.

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

Arkansas Museum of Art, Arkansas Art Center
90th and Commerce Street, 501-372-4000. www.arkarts.com
Pat Musick. Ongoing though April 6.
The Other Side of the West: Recreating New Icons of the American West. Ongoing–April 20.
42nd Young Arkansas Artists. March 16–May
A Union of Souls: Sculpture by Robyn Horn. April 11–June 8
Masterworks of American Drawings: 1900–1950. April 11–June 8

Drawn Toward the Avant-Garde: Nineteenth and Twentieth Century French Drawing from the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Copenhagen. April 11–June 8

Decorative Arts Museum, Arkansas Art Center
411 E 7th, 501.372.4000 www.arkarts.org
American Potters Working in the Realist Tradition. April 6–May 11.
Eleanor Wolfe: Weavings. April6–May 11.

OXFORD, MISSISSIPPI

Bryant Hall Gallery, University of Mississippi
662.915.1933
Ron Dale (Teacher of the Year) and his Alums:Ken Butler, Obie Clark, Ig Dimig, Niel Hora, Ky Johnson, Mary Mallahan, Jean Nichols, Jennifer Pace, Matt Steadman, Keith Steward, James Tisdale, Kevin Turner, Landra Urrutia March 1–April 4

BFA Graduating Students: Amy Lowe, Kim Dodez, Ernie Gentry, Stacey Straker, Erin Shaw, Todd Parker. April 5–April 12
Jill Foote–Hutton, MFA Exhibit. April 13–27
Brad Barnard, MFA Exhibit. April 28–May 11
Lafayette County Art Education Exhibit. May 12–17
Reception, May 17, 10–12

Southside Gallery
150 Courthouse Square, 662.234.9090
www.southsideoxford.com

William Greiner, Spence Kellum, Robin Whitfield. Ongoing through March 22
Jason Baldwin, J.B. Palasini, Jack Robinson. March 24–April 26
Reception March 28
Gerald Deloach, Susan Woodard. April 28–May 31
Reception, May 10

EVENTS

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

D'Edge Art and Unique Treasures
550 South Main St, 901.521.0054 edgearth@aol.com
Lecture. George Hunt and Frank Robinson, Memphis Public Library, Main Branch. March 11, 6:30–8:30 pm.

4th Annual Memphis International Film Forum
www.memphisfilmforum.org
March 27–30
Malco Studio on the Square, 2105 Court Avenue. and
First Congo Art House Theater, First Congregational Church, 1000 S. Cooper

Media Co-op Arthouse Theater
1000 S. Cooper, 901-278-9077 www.mediaco-op.org
Workshops:
Saturday Film Workshops. Every Saturday in March. Call or see website for program and fees.
Tuesday Night Workshops. 7:30 pm. Free.
Films:
Bike Like You Mean It. Rusty Martin and Susan Kirr. March 8, 7:30pm
Eloge de L'Amour (In Praise of Love), Jean-Luc Godard, March 8, 10pm
Singing, Rob Nilsson. March 15, 10pm
Dark Days. Marc Singer. March 22, 7:30pm
1 Giant Leap. March 22, 10pm
Natural Selection, Craig Brewer. March 29, 7:30pm
Sex and Lucia. Julio Medem. March 29, 10pm

Memphis Brooks Museum of Art
Overton Park, 901.544.6200 www.brooksmuseum.org
Lecture: Christopher Reed. Is a Calla Lily Ever Just a Calla Lily? Abstraction, Symbolism and Sexual Identity. March 2, 2pm.
2003 The Art of Good Taste. Art and Lifestyle Auctions. March 3.
Lecture: John Handardt. Nam Jun Paik. May 5, 2pm

Memphis College of Art
1930 Poplar, 901.726.4085 www.mca.edu
Lecture: Tom Huck, printmaker. Callicott Auditorium. March 20, 7pm.
Lecture: Annet Couwenberg, fiber/sculpture artist. Callicott Auditorium. March 31, 7pm.
Lecture: Andy Grundberg, photography critic for The New York Times, 2003 Downing Pryor Distinguished Artist Lecturer. Callicott Auditorium, April 11, 7pm.

South Main Trolley Tour
Last Friday of each month, 6–9pm.
South Main galleries open.

South Main Festival
April 26

Venus Envy 2003
2125 Madison, Overton Square. 314.726.0052
vensesymemphis@yahoo.com
A multimedia, all-female exhibition and celebratory event.
March 29, 7–11pm

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Frist Center for the Visual Arts
919 Broadway, 615.224.3340 www.fristcenter.org
Film Series: Reflections in Black. April 10–12
Lecture: Carlton Wilkinson. An Artist's Perspective. March 20, 6pm.

Untitled Artist Group
615.242.6033 www.untitlednashville.org
SELF, 100+ Nashville Artists, One Night Event, Friday, March 21, 6–9pm
Blue Sky Court, 410 4th Street



Art Museum

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

Maria Elena González: UN Real Estates

ARTLAB: Entrances

A Collaboration with Colonial Middle School



March 8th - April 19th.
Opening reception with performances by Colonial Middle School, Friday, March 7th, 5:00 - 7:30pm. Free & open to the public

Hamlett Dobbins: Stillness of Skin

March 8th - April 19th
Opening reception: Friday, March 7th, 5:00 - 7:30pm







MFA Thesis Exhibition:

Hether Burks, Kristen S. Gitchell, Patrick Graves, Melanie J. Spillman, David Green

April 26th - June 21st
Opening Reception: Friday, April 25th
5:00 - 7:30pm



ARTLAB

Leslie Smoke: Yard Art

April 26th - June 21st
Opening Reception: Friday, April 25th, 5:00 - 7:30pm
ArtLab gallery talk with artist on Monday, April 29th, 1:00pm

for more information: amum.org or 901.678.2224

THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS
An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action University

The next issue, NUMBER: 45, will list events for June through August 2003 events:

NUMBER: INC
Attn: Melissa Crown
P.O. Box 11008
Memphis, TN 38111-0008
email: info@numberinc.org

