A STUDENT JOURNAL OF ART, CULTURE AND POLITICS

OCTOBER 2009

fNEWSMAGAZINE

SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

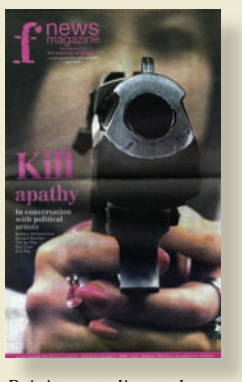
Learning Modern exhibition at the Sullivan Galleries

Taking credit: Plagiarism at SAIC discussed

Interviews with Gatekeeper, Carl Barratta, Joe Grimm & Roger Beebe

IN MEMORIAM: **Brigitte Caine**

The October 2006 issue featured one of Brigitte Caine's paintings on the cover



Brigitte art-directed more than a dozen covers during her time at F Newsmagazine.

The staff of *F Newsmagazine* would like to extend our sympathies to the family of Brigitte Caine, who died July 16 at her home. Brigitte was the student art director of *F* from fall of 2005 through spring of 2007. The design staff she led won Best Overall Design awards both years in the Society for News Design's student competition, and Brigitte personally won numerous awards in both cover and page design categories. Brigitte was an art director who set high standards for herself and others and always encouraged a spirit of collaboration among writers, photographers, illustrators, and designers.

The School of the Art Institute recognized her in both 2006 and 2007 with Student Leadership awards for her work with both the editorial and design staffs of the magazine.

While a student, Brigitte also worked as an intern on the features design staff of the *Chicago Tribune*, where many remember her fondly.

A memorial fund has been established in her name for VHL Family Alliance (Von Hippel Lindau Syndrome) and can be mailed to VHL, 2001 Beacon St., Suite 209, Boston, MA 02135.

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F Newsmagazine
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F is a free monthly newsmagazine open to art and article submissions from any member of the SAIC community. We also welcome and publish letters from all of our readers. Please contact the editors at ***editors@fnewsmagazine.com*** or ***312.345.3840*** for information, comments, or observations.

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Correction Lampo profile, *F Newsmagazine* September Issue. *F Newsmagazine* would like to point out that the images provided by Lampo for this article are documentation of the *Magic Maker Mixer Mountain* performance that took place on Saturday June 6, 2009 as part of Lampo's ongoing special projects. The performance was a collaboration between Jon Cates (Assistant Professor of FVNM), Jon Satrom (Instructor of FVNM, BFA SAIC), Nicholas O'Brien (BFA SAIC), Jake Elliott (SAIC alum), Mark Beasley (BFA SAIC), Tamas Kemenczy (BFA SAIC) and Alex Inglizian (BFA SAIC). For documentation of this performance, please go to: http://6609.tumblr.com, http://www.flickr.com/photos/cattoo/sets/72157620074172903/, and http://lampo.org/projects/.

SAIC War Vet Joins
Chicago's Vet Art Project

BY BRANDON KOSTERS

SAIC undergraduate Matthew Ping, 26, is a veteran of the war in Afghanistan. He is one of many veterans who uses the creative process as a means of coping with his experiences serving overseas.

"When I came to SAIC in January [2009], I was looking for veteran artists. I was hoping to start a student group." Ping hoped that the formation of a student group would garner support from other organizations throughout the country. "I came to find out, though, that there were only four other student veterans at SAIC, at the time." A few more veterans have enrolled at SAIC since then, and Ping is wants to get everyone involved.

Ping discovered the Vet Art Project, a Chicago based organization that strives to connect veterans with community-based artists and other community members to nurture cathartic, creative expression.

Lisa Rosenthal, resident playwright for the Chicago Dramatists, founded the Vet Art Project a few years ago. She was inspired to help after listening to a radio program featuring Edward Tick, author of *The War and the Soul*.

The book examines how various cultures treat warriors before and after their wartime service.

In our culture, Rosenthal said, "we fail to take care of our men and women in the armed services before, after, and during their service at wartime."

One goal of the Vet Art Project is to encourage veterans to explore "the healing power of storytelling, beyond peer groups and counseling. I thought: artists can bridge that gap," said Rosenthal. The project facilitates dialogue between veterans and artists so that the veterans may explore their creativity."

Ping, whose body of work encompasses sculpture, video, and writing, finds a unique forum for personal expression and a sense of community through the organization. "I participated in a performance held …at the Chicago Cultural Center. I read poetry and played music" said Ping. This event, part of the Incubator Series at the Chicago Cultural Center, included over 60 artists, 30 veterans, and 250 other community members.

Ping also actively participates in workshops with the group. In the workshops, Ping said, "We bring vets and family members and artists and usually a couple of art therapists and psychologists who deliver lectures." Educating the public at large, and fostering communication among veterans, artists, and other community members, is key to the mission of Vet Art Project.

Jerry Kykisz, a director on the board of the National Vietnam Veteran's Art Museum in Chicago, believes that it is tremendously beneficial for veterans to produce this work, and for the work to be seen by other veterans and civilians alike. "If it's therapeutic for the guy [producing the work]," Kykisz said, "of course, it's going to affect other veterans who see [the work]…When they see an art exhibit that portrays emotions and scenes they have experienced…if they see it on a wall, it validates their experience…it shows them they are not alone. For the civilians, especially relatives of a veteran, they begin to understand some of the emotional impact of the war."

"The really beneficial part," Ping said, "was going to meetings and talking about war experiences. Suddenly here you are, among some people who are with family members they have lived with their entire lives, who they have never discussed certain experiences with." For many veterans, Ping said, these discussions allow "veterans to be on a closer level with their loved ones."

Ping is pleased that the project can help "the community see a different dynamic of veterans. Everybody has that image of the Vietnam vet sitting in their wheelchair out in the street, drug-addled and with long hair," he said. Programs like the Vet Art Project "give more power to the ideas and creativity of veterans in the public eye."

For more information about the Vet Art Project, visit vetartproject.com
For more information about the National Vietnam Veterans Art Museum, visit nvvam.org

UPCOMING EVENTS & WORKSHOPS
Thursday Oct. 8 5:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.
Exploring Our Stories of War and Service
Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton St.
Chicago, IL 60610 (312) 255-3700

Saturday Oct. 3 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
What Civilians Need to Understand About Homecoming
National Vietnam Veteran's Art Museum,
1801 S. Indiana St.,
Chicago, IL 60616 (312) 326-0270

Tuesday Oct.14 6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Family Theater Night
Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington St.,
Garland Room (1st Floor)
Chicago, IL 60602 (312) 346-3278

SAIC undergrad and war veteran Matthew Ping. Photo courtesy Chicago Vet Art Project.

SCHOOL NEWS TICKER

BY BRANDON KOSTERS & ANNE WEBBER

SAIC Alumnus **Audrey Niffenegger** (author of The Time Traveler's Wife) is busy at work on her upcoming novel "The Chinchilla Girl in Exile"…The Seattle Art Museum announced that **Josh Faught**, is the winner of the 2009 Betty Bowen Award. Faught graduated from SAIC in 2006, and is currently serving as the director of fibers at the University of Oregon…**Maria Pinto** is set to design Chicago's 2016 Olympics Delegation Uniforms. Pinto, who also designed the dress Michelle Obama wore on nomination night, is an alumnus of SAIC… SAIC Alumnus **Jeff Koons** has agreed to organize an exhibition of Dakis Joannu's art collection that will be on display at the New Museum in February…

SAIC alumnus **Georgia O'Keeffe** is the subject of a biopic that aired on Lifetime. <insert your own joke here>… SAIC alumnus **Hugh Hefner's** daughter Christie Hefner has teamed up with the Columbia Journalism Review. They have recruited her as a publisher. ... Photography teacher **Todd Simeone** crafts bikes for celebrities. Ask him if he has the order yet from Wilco… keep an eye out for an upcoming publication on Stezaker by Michael Newman, Associate Professor of Art History, Theory and Criticism ... **Elaine Sturtevant** spoke to SAIC students and the Contemporary Art Society about her work at the Chicago Institute of Arts… this year is the largest graduate school class in SAIC history… SAIC alumnus **Walt Disney's** film company, Walt Disney Studios, is set to re-release "Toy Story" and "Toy Story 2" in 3D. Happy day… art collective **InCUBATE** is co-curating an exhibition at Threewalls Gallery. **Bryce Dwyer**, InCUBATE member and graduate student in SAIC's dept. of Art History and Arts Administration explains, "For In Search of the Mundane" at Threewalls, InCUBATE is collaborating with Randall Szott to program events and conversations loosely organized around a number of themes. All events held or meet at Threewalls unless specified:

Throughout
"Doing-Cooking" - numerous boozy brunches featuring Bloody Mary's and Bloody Caesar's will be held

Throughout and specific dates
"Operativity" - screenings of Trekkies and Trekkies 2

Friday October 16th, 8:00PM
Opening featuring team trivia

Sunday October 18th - "Saturday and Sunday" - a food tour of Maxwell St. Market (not sure if we will meet at Threewalls or the Market yet)

Thursday October 22nd, 7:00PM - Public Culture Lecture Series featuring Megan Stielstra week of November 8 - "Wine and Time" - a casual seminar on the pleasure of wine

MONSTROUS not MONSTERS

SAIC painting teacher Carl Barratta talks finding inspiration everywhere at once

INTERVIEW BY NATALIE EDWARDS

Carl Barratta teaches "How to steal," a painting class about appropriation. He is a self-proclaimed "tall museum staff secretary guy, who lugs things around, fixes stuff, and teaches people to use computers." His secret X-Men power is that he can remember every little painting, even doodles, that his students have created from the five years he has been teaching. He'll be teaching his class again next year. He graduated from SAIC in 2005.

NE There are a lot of monsters in your work. What's up with that?

CB The monsters aren't really monsters. I mean, parts of them are made from monsters. That is to say, I'm not sure they're monsters. They're not very monstrous. They're more pitiful and mundane, or at least I want them to act that way without being cheesy. You'll never see one missing a bus. But you might see one staring into a lake of snakes. Maybe. I trace a lot from Ultraman magazines that I get from some friends from Japan. I also trace and draw from a lot of mystical and alchemy drawings. I trace and draw from Indian miniatures, too. I also use a lot of film stills from Kung Fu movies to get the right scene. I also read a ton of mythology from all over. I listen to a lot of music, which helps a lot. I also read piles of romantic poetry. As in The Romantics.

I'm a terrible writer, but I write a lot, too. Anyway, that's where I start from. Usually the piece doesn't look anything like the original set of images I get inspired from. Rotting corpses, circling crows, sad rockers, righteous lightning, impending storms, the edge of dusk, murky bogs, golden sun-lit rivers, curling fingers, burning fires, dumbly crouching shadows, Flash Gordon, freaked-out kings, freaked-out regular people, freaked-out animals; I want them all in every painting.

Lost in the woods? Just come back from some mystical journey? Just got back from war? Just got back from killing everyone you know? Like to tap dance on flying swords? I like paintings about that. But to have all of that in one painting is something I don't see. So I try to get as much of it in with my own work.

NE Dude, what's with all this violence and blood and gore? Even your trees are decapitated. But it's still pretty.

CB I like villains. Sometimes villains are even better when they're not there. I don't mean not included, but missing. When they're missing, I think the landscape fills in for the missing figures. The open narrative is reflected in the trees, the flowers, the rocks and so on. They satellite the characters' mood. Sometimes, especially recently, if the characters are in the piece, they are asleep or dead and scantily adorned with flashy clothes. Instead the landscape around them is adorned with tumbling trees, and weird nightmare grass and whatever paint mistakes I can make look like I did it all on purpose. The paintings as a whole are a series of comb-overs trying to hide all the bald wrong moves that happen while I paint.

Shine on Forever! 2, Egg Tempera On Clay Board, 32"x24" - 2008. Courtesy of the artist.

And to answer your question, blood and gore is awesome.

The Faithful Protector (After Nick Englebert), Egg Tempera On Clay Board, 30"x30" - 2008. Courtesy of the artist.

NE Some people may recognize you as the guy who is always wearing Hawaiian shirts, no matter the season. Help us understand.

CB My folks accidentally donated all my winter clothes about 12 years ago. At the time I was living in Philly. We had negative 30-degree weather that winter. I would roll up to work, bars, openings, the store, anywhere in a Hawaiian shirt and a light vintage leather jacket. I looked like a frozen used-car salesman. After a while people thought I *really* loved those shirts. I was too broke to buy a sweater. I was too broke to buy a sweater for about three years. Since to everyone not me, I obviously loved those types of shirts, everyone gave me theirs. Flash forward 14 years and I have 40-plus of them. Once, about seven years ago, I bought a solid colored shirt and felt naked in it. I mean naked as in an ashamed, sad-faced clown, as apposed to nude, which is like 'TAH DAH!' I couldn't look people in the face. Never again with the solid shirt!

I have rules. No fire, no boogie boards, no Asian writing, no dragons, no lions or tigers, no throwing stars, no wooden paneled surfer-car nonsense. No Dragon Ball Z, no stoned cartoon characters, no licence plates, no half-assed drawn flowers. Maybe sea shells.

When I go to Trader Joe's for peanut-butter-filled pretzels, I have visions of punching all the workers in the face. Especially when they ring that bell. Insincere, Hawaiian-shirt-wearing is a big pet peeve of mine, and those guys rock insincere boldly. Look, for 12 years I've worn way over 100 Hawaiian shirts, and I know when I see one worn insincerely. It's like Highlander. I get a shiver up my spine. I'm taking notes, folks. I'm making a master list, and I'm hiding it in the hollow of an old tree, and I'm waiting for the right moment to whip it out and take bloody red vengeance on those pie-faced chodes.

NE What do you have planned? Where can we see your paintings these days?

CB I just had two group shows with new paintings in each. I'm currently hiding out making a huge pile of new paintings. This winter I'm going to work on a huge piece. Light a candle so it doesn't shit the bed. Unless something comes up in the meantime, I'll probably have a solo show late 2010/ early 2011 at my awesome gallery, Western Exhibitions, here in Chicago. I might do a show out in South Dakota. Long story. We'll see. Hiding out for a year or so has been great for my studio practice.

NE What advice do you give to baby painters? I mean, real babies and then also undergrads.

CB Look at everything. Do the work. Stay with it and suck it up, because being poor is how we artists roll. Party when you can. Get mad at stuff you think is lame, burn down entire city blocks, punch out jerks, figure out how to make paintings that you love, and remember: T-Rex is the sassiest band in the universe.

When SAIC alum Rob Divito sees his designs walking down the street, he thinks, "Its one of the better feelings in life."

Wearing Art Without A Suit

BY LAURA SCHELL

Artists can find it difficult to balance economics and creativity, but Rob Divito, who runs two businesses with his older brother, Anthony, may have found a way.

"You have to not give a shit what other people think, but that's the hardest part, when you want your art to be marketable," says Rob.

His artistic freedom is not independent of what the customer wants. "Some people think that you have to wear a suit and tie to make any money," he says. "I'll sacrifice the money in order to do what I want with my life." However, he does have expectations. To him, "starving artists" is just a cliché.

Together Rob and Anthony make up Diamond Avenue Graphics and Diavale, a clothing line that features Rob's limited screen-prints and apparel. "DAG is our main source of income," Rob says. "The printing business opens up opportunities for Diavale." DAG prints on a customer-need basis. In addition to t-shirts they can print just about anything—stickers to vinyl car wraps. The customer provides the designs or they can leave it up to Rob, but it's going to cost them. "I'm an expensive kid."

When it comes to Diavale, he is his own boss. Rob says the city is a source of inspiration, but he says his creative side comes at night. "That is when my brain functions the best."

He makes about 15 t-shirts for each design."I want the shirt to be limited and done right. I didn't want to walk down the street and see the same shirt on someone else. I hate that." This also gives him more time to come up with new designs. The stock is always changing. That's what keeps ´em coming," he says.

Diamond Avenue Graphics is based in Naperville and is currently run from Anthony Divito's home, but the brothers bought an industrial space nearby to fit their ever-growing collection of equipment.

"My brother searches Craigslist everyday, all day, in every state," Rob says.

The brothers drove to Wisconsin for a shirt dryer and a free printing press. Anthony also found a film printer in Minnesota at a business closeout sale.

"All of our equipment is old school, heavy-duty, block steel," Rob says. Anthony asked a friend living in Minnesota if he would bring the film printer down to Chicago in his truck. The cost: a case of beer.

Anthony quit his job at a private equity firm downtown to work with his brother. "Initially, it was a nominal cost to invest in his idea. As it grew, I started to believe there was potential to build two successful enterprises." Rob is glad that Antony works the financial aspects of the companies while he sticks to the creative side of things.

"We understand our differences and are able to work with them," Anthony says. "I also saw it as a way to venture into a new industry. I gave up a lot to do this, but I have always believed that I can accomplish any goals I set for myself."

In 2006, Rob attended SAIC as an undergraduate pursuing a degree in Graphic Design, but he was never a great student. "I think I started drawing because I didn't want to do school work. I would just doodle."

At SAIC he says he was ahead of the class, but that did not exempt him from taking prerequisite courses. He began to question if continuing at SAIC was right for him.

"I gave him the same advice I give everyone," Anthony says. "Figure out what you believe is the best path to take." Rob chose to discontinue his studies. His new goal was to pursue his art full-time. Anthony supported his decision. He offered Rob $10,000 to start his own business if he could be co-owner. They shook hands and haven't looked back.

When Rob sees his designs walking down the street he says, "Its one of the better feelings in life." f

Stop working, go to bed and sleep for eight hours.

BY RITA DeANGELO

In recent years, getting sufficient sleep has gone out of style. We still love sleep, but we also love telling people how little we are getting. These declarations come across as testaments to our passion and dedication to our work, but the underlying statement is a competitive one. Much to the sleepy competitor's dismay, those who stop working and hit the hay are going to win the race.

Walking away from a frustrating piece is not easy. Graduate painter Arthur Pena said, "I usually just fight through it, reminding myself that I need to get stuff done... I feel like if I'm sleeping I'm not being productive... If I'm stuck at like, 6 a.m., then I'll go to sleep and put the work right in front of me, then I wake up and it's the first thing I see and I know what's wrong with it right then and there."

When the body is allowed deep enough sleep to create Rapid Eye Movement (REM sleep), problem-solving abilities are greatly increased. The "aha!" moments that occur when the canvas is flipped, the perfect color registers, or a scrap sketch is suddenly the obvious answer.

Researchers from the University of California illustrated this by giving three groups of volunteers a creativity test (the Remote Associates Test, or RAT Test). The participants were provided with three words and asked for a fourth which could be associated with all three previous words. Later in the day, the groups received either a quiet period, a non-REM nap, or a nap with REM sleep. All three groups then retook the exam. Although there was no difference between the "quiet time" group and the "non-REM" group, the REM sleepers improved their scores by almost 40%.

The problem is, this new burst of creativity is hard to measure. Rarely will one wake up from sleep to have dreamed up a brilliant solution; the benefits are more subtle. The common mistake is to assume that because the benefits of REM sleep are hard to notice, there aren't benefits to getting a good night's rest.

NASA has proven that by allotting an average of 26 minutes to napping, pilots heighten their performance by 34% and raise their awareness by a whopping 54%.

Steve Jobs, described creativity as "just connecting things." When asleep, the brain is able to tap ideas and memories, making connections between them that will increase the chances for innovative ideas. The key is, this only happens during REM sleep, which typically begins 70-90 minutes after falling asleep and recurs three to five times a night. That is why the 7-8 hours is so crucial; your brain needs time to reset itself. NASA's 26-minute nap is a good quick fix, but don't skimp on your brain's serious downtime.

Illustration by Nicole Briant

SLEEP HYGIENE The University of Maryland Medical Center (2007) offers ten realistic ways to ensure you have a good night's sleep:

1. Try a **light snack** *before bed. Edibles such as milk and bananas are high in the amino acid tryptophan, which may assist in falling asleep.*

2. Practice **relaxation techniques** *before bed. Yoga and deep breathing calm your body and ease your brain.*

3. Get up. If you can't fall asleep within 15-30 minutes, get out of bed and **read** *for a short bit. Then try sleeping again.*

4. Keep the **TV out** *of your bedroom. Although what's on might seem unimportant, television is still very engaging to the senses.*

5. Avoid **caffeine** *4-6 hours before bedtime for obvious reasons.*

6. Try to keep your room at a good **temperature** *and well-ventilated. A cool (but not cold) room is often your best bet, so you can make yourself cozy under the covers.*

7. Give yourself wind-down time. No **exercise** *at least four hours before going to bed. Let your body ease into relaxation.*

8. Get up at the **same time** *each morning. This will help regulate your body's sleep pattern.*

9. Block out the **light**. *This will also help in the morning. Light will stimulate you to wake up, before its time to wake up.*

10. Use the **bed as a bed.** *It's not an office or a snack table!*

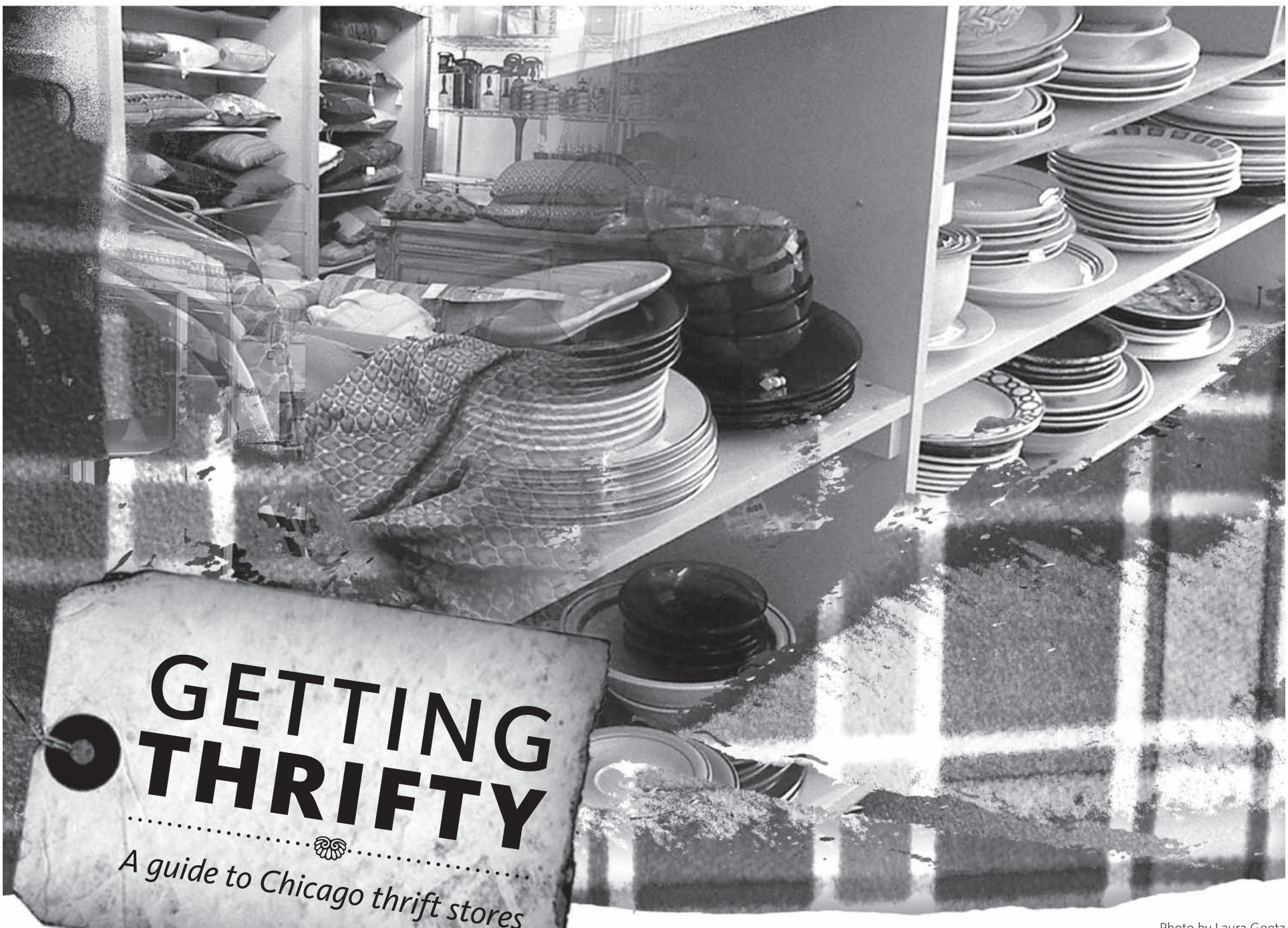


Photo by Laura Goetz

BY LAURA GOETZ

Settling into a new place can be challenging on a budget. One way to ease the transition into a new place and make it "home" without having to choose between a required text, tube of titanium white, and a set of dishes is by thrifting. Not only do thrift store purchases make you an environmental steward, they often make you a charitable giver; many local Chicago area thrift stores benefit local area hospitals and charities.

Belinda Cook, a fourth year student in Fiber and Material Studies, goes to thrift stores in Chicago for a number of reasons. "I bought a lot of furniture from Brown Elephant…two chairs, coffee table, lamp" For Cook it was price and proximity that caused her to buy her new furniture and house wares at the Brown Elephant in Chicago's Lakeview neighborhood. "For furniture, I think it's the best one," she says.

Master of Architecture student Maureen Myers visits thrift stores in Chicago to find unique clothing and accessories, but not for furniture or house wares. Myers recently moved from the Gold Coast to Bucktown and bought new items at Ikea and Target because of "cost, style and delivery option(s)." Myers says she goes to Target for convenience, and because of its accessibility by train. She doesn't have a car in Chicago. "When I lived in Ohio and had a car I went all the time," Myers said.

"Not only do thrift store purchases make you an environmental steward, they often make you a charitable giver."

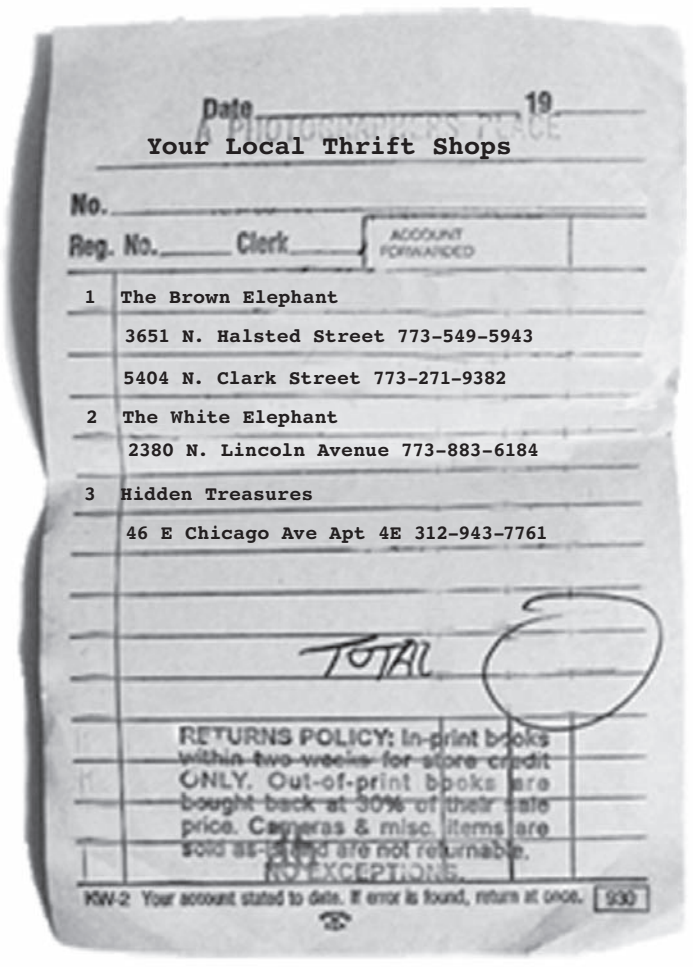
Some students don't visit thrift stores because there is no time to search for what they are looking for. Jennifer Diaz, an undergraduate studying Painting and Drawing, furnished her place in Chicago's Gold Coast with her family's leftover furniture. Diaz prefers to "go to Target or Ikea…do it on-line."

While most thrift stores do not list items online, there are some in Chicago with delivery services (for an extra charge) that would certainly rival shipping fees from Target or Ikea.

The Brown Elephant: The proceeds from the Brown Elephant resale shops help to support the Howard Brown Heath Center, one of the nation's largest LGBT healthcare organizations. Your shopping helps the organization serve more than 28,000 adults and youths each year, according to the Howard Brown Health Center website. You can find everything from Kentucky Derby glassware for a housewarming gift to holiday decorations and furniture for your home.

The White Elephant: Proceeds from the White Elephant resale shop directly benefit Children's Memorial Hospital. This shop carries many housewares and accessories but less furniture than the Brown Elephant, however the furniture they have is usually in better condition and more expensive than the Brown Elephant.

Hidden Treasures: This small resale shop benefits Northwestern Memorial hospital. While it carries a little bit of everything it is especially a good stop for small antique furniture, throw pillows, lamps and table linens. ■



Glenn Beck: Derrida or Dirtbag?

Batty Fox News talk show host fancies himself an art historian and critic

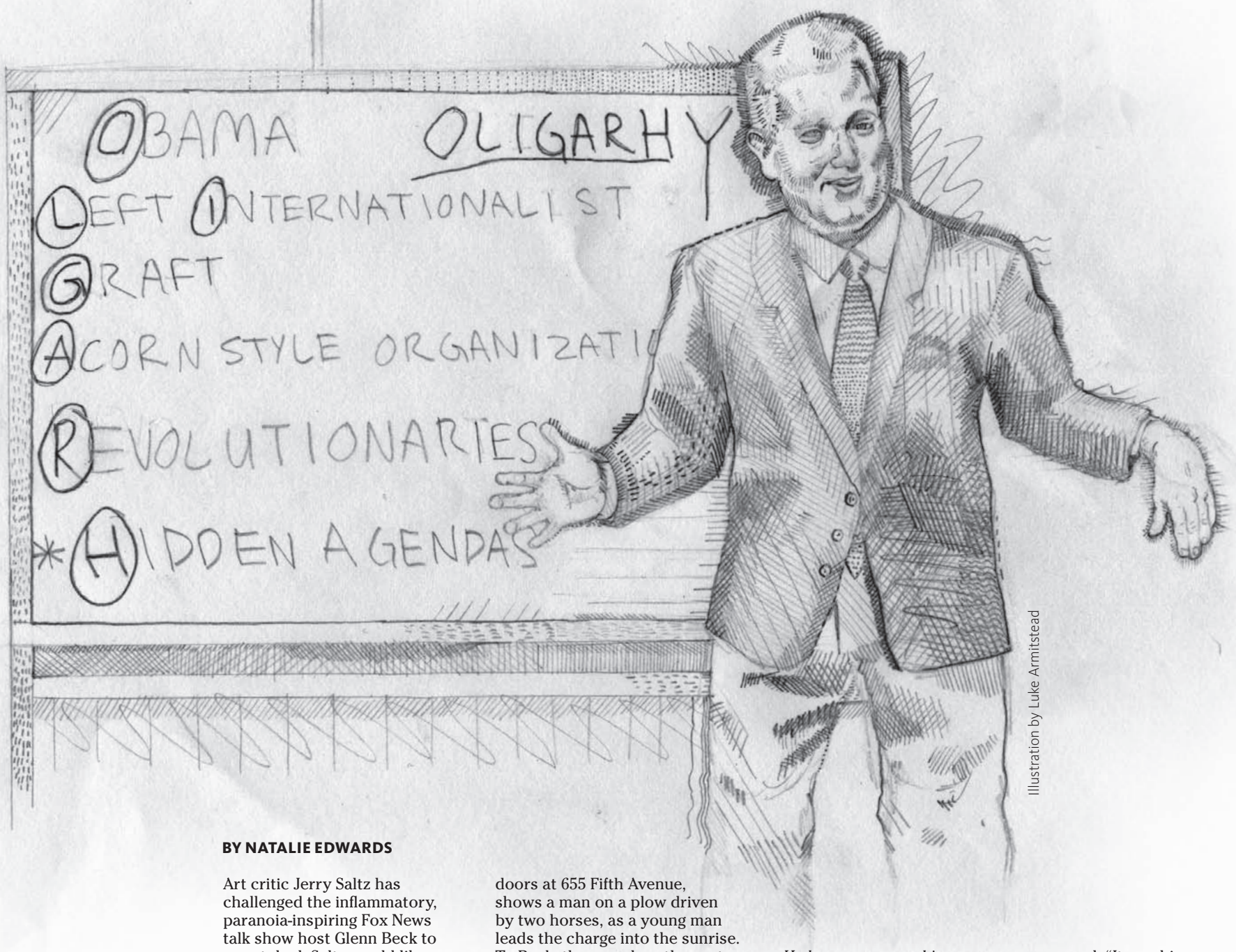


Illustration by Luke Armitstead

BY NATALIE EDWARDS

Art critic Jerry Saltz has challenged the inflammatory, paranoia-inspiring Fox News talk show host Glenn Beck to an art duel. Saltz would like Beck, who recently attacked the public art on Rockefeller Plaza, to curate two art exhibition: one of images or actual works of art that exist in New York City which Beck would like to see demolished, and another show featuring contemporary art he approves of. "In the spirit of bi-partisanship," wrote Saltz, he would "secure a first-rate New York venue for each exhibition," and would write about each show in *New York* magazine.

"I have tried my hardest not to be a dirtbag," said Glenn Beck on his show on August 26th. "I am only truly miserable when I am lying to myself or to others."

On September 2nd, in Beck's segment "Reasonable questions in unreasonable times," Beck spent ten minutes working himself into a nutty frenzy, taking aim at the limestone relief of *Youth Leading Industry* by Attillo Piccirilli of the Piccirilli Brothers studio, on Rockefeller Plaza's exterior. The plaza is an art-deco building which Beck implies is the first "gothic" structure ever built, and that prior to its existence there was "no American architecture in NYC or in the whole world. The main artwork under Beck's attack, over the doors at 655 Fifth Avenue, shows a man on a plow driven by two horses, as a young man leads the charge into the sunrise. To Beck, the sun plays the part of "the bright tomorrow," and the young man represents "the youth leading the way into the bright future of tomorrow." A hopeful, if not banal sentiment to most, but an incendiary idea to Beck. "The wheel is always representative of industry in any of these progressive paintings or pictures or artwork. The horses on the chariot, the engines of industry," he said, pumping his fists at the camera.

"Who is this? Who is this?" he asked. "This is the strong leader taking that, using that industry and those machines to lead us into the, uh, bright future, led by our children. Gee, who's having indoctrination next week? Oh yeah, that's right, our President," he said, referring to Obama's recent address to children, advising they stay in school and get good grades. "This represents, at the time this was made, Mussolini," Beck said about the man in the relief. "This represents Mussolini."

Beck went on to imply that because a Rockefeller had put the Piccirilli there, the Rockefeller, which he never identified specifically, was a communist sympathizer, even a fascist. "It drives me nuts that nobody knows what this is," he said about the scenes on the building.

According to Beck's website, it should come as no surprise that Beck is a huge fan of art because of his "vibrant wardrobe":

He knows so many bizarre art-history facts he'd light up a Jeopardy category on the subject. Last night on TV, Glenn did a segment where he explained the history and the meaning behind much of the art at Rockefeller Plaza in New York City. Who knew that classic 'American' art would be so....communist? Bizarre indeed.

To Beck, public art is just another fascist cog of the propaganda machine in "plain sight," and he ties the assumptions he presents as facts together with tenuous strings. "Don't let any of these people ever tell you anything other than the truth... the progressives of today–it makes sense that we're headed down this road," he said, closing his segment. "It makes sense that you feel a little uneasy, and everything seems to be a little hidden. It's not if you look. You're awake, you need to see the things hidden in plain sight." Beck also dismantled Diego Rivera's mural, *Man at the Crossroads*, identifying Lenin, Karl Marx, Rockefeller, and syphilis in the scene as tools of left-wing evangelism. The mural lasted only 8 months inside Rockefeller center before being hauled away in chunks by workers in 1934, but Beck referred to the mural as if it still existed intact in its original location.

Jerry Saltz, in his column in *New York* magazine seemed amused. "It was his own private Da Vinci Code, tying all these degenerates together with 'death panels,' ACORN, and socialism." He wrote. "Since it's always good when bears like this come out of the woods, let's try to coax this one out a little further."

But Glenn Beck has high standards for himself, and has yet to respond to Saltz's challenge. "I have tried my hardest not to be a dirtbag," said Glenn Beck on his show on August 26th. "I am only truly miserable when I am lying to myself or to others."

"This is truly strange," Chicago art critic Margaret Hawkins said. "The only trouble with Saltz's idea is that Glen Beck might not be able to come up with anything–he doesn't strike me as a person who actually likes things. Maybe he should curate a show of decadent art that contains secret messages just for him, which, once he exposes it, can be publicly scorned. He seems to have a lot to say on the subject."

New City art critic Jason Foumberg thinks he has an idea of what Beck might include in his exhibition. "I think Beck might like Grant Woods' American Gothic." he said. "I'm glad Saltz got involved because I don't watch Fox News and would not have otherwise known that someone on television was discussing visual art. Granted, he's off his rocker, but found relevancy in visual art." f

Photo by Karina Natis

"A chess game is something very plastic. You build it. It is a mechanical sculpture, with chess one creates beautiful problems and this beauty is made with the head and the hands."
—Marcel Duchamp

The anatomy of space, the destiny of time

Photo by Liliya Lifanova

BY JOEL KUENNEN

A linoleum chessboard sits in the middle of the darkened Betty Rymer Gallery. Strings of artificial stars hang down. Viewers are seated around the board, crowding back against the walls, watching an empty space. A tapping, then a clanging echoes down the hall outside. A master of ceremonies, sound and performance artist Sebastian Alvarez, strides majestically in, gonging a Himalayan bowl, and walks around the board to station himself in the back of the gallery.

The jingling march continues to be heard and sixteen pawns garbed in burlap masks and skimpy burlap shorts concordantly come in and take their positions—snarling and hissing at their respective opponents across the demarcated space. With greater pomp, the upper echelon of pieces arrives, all but the kings and queens. Finally, the kings and queens arrive, arm in arm; making the round of their garrisons, they take their spots. "One," says choreographer Davy Bisaro, firmly. A pawn awakens, squirms, snarls and moves to its appointed position. The game has begun.

This is *Anatomy is Destiny*, a collaborative performance designed by Liliya Lifanova, which took place at the Rymer on September 11. Lifanova's performance script enacts a game of chess played by Marcel Duchamp against himself as his female alter-ego Rrose Selavy. The performance reveals how in many ways chess was created as an abstract form to represent the grand narrative of life within its structure, battles, outcomes of win or loss.

Chess is dualistic, much as our culture has been conceived, the forces of light and darkness, good and evil battling for the win, so to speak. In Modern times (and beyond), an all-pervasive relativism has come to represent this binary dance. Yet relativism must remain dialectic, a conversation between poles of understanding that moves towards the relational. As any avid chess player will tell you, the joy of the game does not come from the recorded win or loss, but the road taken, and the conversation between the pieces. This dance reveals the fluidity of one's position, how power shifts.

The costuming designed by Lifanova, with special attention paid to the positioning of each performer required by the garments themselves, not only signifies the role of the performer for the viewer, but makes us question what it is exactly that puts us in these positions to begin with. What determines our daily wins and losses? Every minute of everyday, snap-judgments concerning one's roles are made, consciously or unconsciously, on the appearance of those who we meet in time and space. We try to discern as much as we can about the foe before us, visually comparing and classifying the sensory into categories of knowledge.

Anatomy is Destiny transforms the objective game into something that more closely resembles the metaphorical meaning of the game. It is within the interaction—*the conversation*—that the meaning of grand-metaphors becomes realized.

In her artistic statement, Lifanova explains: "When I study a transcript of a chess match between two players, within a short period of time I can see each person's aggression, defense, victory, and defeat expressed through the language of the relational. In each game, a common narrative begins to emerge, a metaphor for the complex system of life itself expressed through the abstract and silent pursuit of the bottomless truth or the full acceptance of the absence of it and the continual re-creation of one gradually sculpted in time."

If chess is a metaphor for the game of life, there is one fundamental difference. In chess, two entities collide in space and time and only one may occupy that space. It is the entity with the highest status that supersedes the other—sending one after another off the plane until the game is reset and the great dance in space and time is begun again. In life, the hope is that the rules can be broken, even while the over-arching system endures. As Foucault writes, using a different kind of match as metaphor, "In judo, the best answer to the opponent's maneuver is never to step back, but to re-use it to your own advantage as a base for the next phase...Now it is our turn to reply." f

Taking Credit. Giving Credit. & Faking Credit.

When passing is just good enough to fail

BY ANDREW YANG ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF LIBERAL ARTS

After four years of teaching at SAIC I have reached a disappointing milestone of having now dealt with over ten cases of blatant student plagiarism. What most disturbs me is a sense that I am becoming progressively less disturbed by it. It isn't that plagiarism is any less upsetting to me (it always is, like stinging nettles) but I worry whether I'm beginning to accept it as a regular feature of how things are at the School.

SAIC has a fairly thoughtful policy on plagiarism and academic misconduct that all students are supposed to learn in their first-year writing courses and which I also explain in my own courses (the loss of a grade or course credit being the simplest consequences of plagiarism.

"Pass/Fail is philosophically about 'passing.' That is, it is about getting by just enough to avoid failling."

But I suspect that this policy, as thorough as it may be, gives a false sense of meaning. Policies are flimsy stand-ins for an educational philosophy or ethos that a community (ideally) shares. Along these lines, I'm beginning to think there is an ethos operating at the School, one in which plagiarism is not an aberration but rather a natural symptom of what, for lack of a better term might be called a pervading sense of "whatever-ness."

I don't believe there is a single underlying characteristic or cause to the "whatever" sensibility; though its effects are very real, by definition its nature is vague. For example, I don't think we can trace its roots to SAIC's no-grades system, to not having undergraduate majors, to gaps in academic advising, or even to a lack of a student center—at least not to any of these factors on their own. Although it concerns the whole institution, it is not only a structural issue; it is just as much habitual.

The daily diet that feeds "whatever-ness" are small things that build over time, day-to-day practices like: students coming to class 15 minutes late, chronic absences, and assignments turned in half done, half baked, or simply never done at all. More fundamentally,"whatever" relies on everyone habitually turning a blind eye and accepting this as perfectly normal. Professors turn a blind eye to the slack of students, but likewise students will also give many passes to the sloppiness of professors as well as their peers. Whatever "whatever-ness" is exactly, it invites all of us to give in to a lovely lack of expectations.

And this is where my hypothesis comes from. I no longer feel it is a matter of isolated instances or bad circumstances, but instead a regular and problematic feature of what happens at the School. After all, what does it mean when your colleague tells you with some disbelief that he's had half of his students fail their art history exam—at an art school? Or when a student seems to blithely assume they can turn in an assignment a year after it was actually due? A college professor who cares more about his or her students' work than the students themselves is an absurd state of affairs, but I worry that it is exactly the direction we are moving in.

One might say that my claim of "whatever-ness" is ignorant or unfair given the conditions that students now operate under. Many students are working long hours at jobs, some even full-time, while pursuing their degrees with heavy course loads. Others have family issues, health issues, and a myriad of other difficulties that can divert any person from his or her plans. Students are just worn thin. I have met my own share of these struggling students in my classes, but, interestingly, almost none of them actually accounts for the slack I'm talking about. Is it perhaps because they are precisely the ones who don't have the option of treating their education as optional?

Though I write as a teacher, I hear many students express the same frustrations with the prevalence of a "whatever" atmosphere. They commiserate about opportunities lost due to poor class dynamics or about collaborative projects that flounder through a semester of lack of presence, purpose, or preparation among their peers. When we go on to factor in the ridiculously high cost of a private college education (roughly, $3000 dollars per course) the privilege of not attending class or doing the basic work necessary to pass seems extravagant indeed. Whatever-ness is an expensive habit.

But I just misstated something crucial. At SAIC we do not pass or fail people; we give credit or no-credit. Although it might seem semantic, this is an important distinction that students and faculty don't sufficiently appreciate. To pass a class at a typical university a student needs a grade of 60 or higher. To receive credit, at least at SAIC, a student needs 70 or higher (following the registrar's standard for transfer credits). This means that the credit system should in fact be more academically stringent than the pass/fail one.

More important, however, is the fact that Pass/Fail is philosophically about "passing." That is, it is about getting by

Illustration by April Behnke

just enough to avoid failing. Indeed, it is the quintessence of "whatever." Taking a course "for credit" is quite different. It is about working to a standard that involves care and personal commitment. Students get credit for a course when they have done work that, in terms of both quantity and especially quality, justifies receiving credit. If we tend to misunderstand our system of assessment in such a basic way then the educational philosophy we subscribe to at the School risks its own meaning.

Not surprisingly, this all brings me back to plagiarism. It matters so much precisely because it captures and represents the key features of a "whatever" culture, an ethos that is truly dangerous to a college like SAIC. In such a culture students plagiarize because they can; professors let it slide because it's too much trouble to deal with; and both let it go on because, whatever, "it's art school." It is disheartening how many times I've heard this from both students and teachers alike.

Let's put the intriguing postmodern nuances of artistic appropriation aside and be honest: the whole purpose of art school is to provide an unparalleled freedom to work creatively and originally—to do something different, important, difficult. The prevalence of plagiarism at art school is then especially ironic and sad because it runs entirely contrary to the reason this unique educational environment exists in the first place. At that rate, students might as well go to any other school (and pay far less for it).

Am I picking on the School? Yes, I am. I believe SAIC and its students are exceptional and worth the scrutiny. Sure, we could find some solace in noting that plagiarism is running rampant across campuses nationwide. Or perhaps, more conveniently, place blame on the broader cultural atmosphere of competition, distraction, and consumerism that has us obsessively texting, drinking Red Bull for lunch, and citing Wikipedia as a final authority. Yet regardless of what the favorite totalizing cultural scapegoat is, each simply provides an easy way out, a blind-eye-turning scheme that does nothing to address what is happening at SAIC. alt still remains true that plagiarism at an art school is at best insulting to professors and peers, and at worst simplyself-demeaning to the students' creative agency.

"Students plagiarize because they can; professors let it slide because it's too much trouble to deal with..."

SAIC is a remarkable place of making. But, like any other institution, it can slide toward the mediocre if we confuse sloppiness with creative freedom, and "getting by" with an acceptable standard of college-level work. It's all or nothing, folks. Tuition is too expensive and times are too pressing to waste on sleeping through or faking it. If there is an educational philosophy to be had, I hope this is one place to start. f

A FERTILE SPACE

"'Learning Modern' represents ' many moderns,' including, but not limited to, modern architecture, design, psychology, media, technology, art, and science."

(across page)
Ken Isaacs, *Knowledge Box*, 1962 Installation photograph at Mies van der Rohe's S.R. Crown Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago. Courtesy of LIFE Magazine © Time Inc., used with permission, courtesy of Getty Images. Photo by Robert W. Kelley.
(left) Jubelin in collaboration with Carla Duarte, *Key Notes*, 2009. Installation photograph of Narelle Julin transcribing text onto the Chicago-style windows of the SAIC Sullivan Galleries. Footnotes and figures (on windows) from: Alain Findeli, "Moholy-Nagy's Design Pedagogy in Chicago (1937-46)," Design Issues v. VII, no. 1 (Fall 1990), pp. 5-19. Photo: Carla Duarte.
(below) Ken Isaacs, *Knowledge Box*, 2009
Photo: Danny Hsu

Sullivan Galleries provide unique opportunities for students and faculty members to explore what it means to be modern.

BY JENNIFER SWANN

Stepping into the new "Learning Modern" exhibition at SAIC's Sullivan Galleries feels strange at first. Other than the boldly painted columns around the room, the space is almost completely unobstructed by the walls and partitions that are usually installed in a gallery. Instead, the exposed ceilings and giant Chicago windows overlooking the 0, 0 point of the city's grid open up the space and enable conversations between the city's architecture and the artworks in the exhibition.

"Key Notes," a work by Narelle Jubelin and collaborator Carla Duarte, is a text and textile-based installation that specifically responds to the city outside the windows of the Sullivan galleries, in homage to Mies van der Rohe and his collaborator Lilly Reich. The multi-colored planes of fabric respond to the three-part Chicago windows, and at different points in the day, one can see transcriptions of modernist texts reflected through the window and into the fabric.

SAIC Painting and Drawing Adjunct Professor Kay Rosen also uses color and language to respond to the interior structure of the Sullivan Gallery itself. In a work titled, *Divisibility*, she labels each column in the space with a color and a letter, creating a checkerboard pattern that spells *Divisibility* from either side of the gallery. The work revisits a painting the artist did in 1984 by the same name, the I's re-enacting the meaning of the word by physically dividing the consonants. In her painting *Black to White, Left to Right, Front to Back,* Rosen draws attention to the architectural columns that do in fact divide the space, which was designed by Louis Sullivan for commercial retail, most famously, Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company. The visual linking of the letters in the word "divisibility" ironically create an indivisible dialogue throughout the gallery. Strangely, by pointing out the division enacted by the columns, the piece actually acts to unify the space.

Also responding to the interior structure of the Sullivan Gallery, this time in the form of the exposed air conditioning and ventilation system, is Walter Hood's *Bio-Line,* a sculptural metallic form woven across the length of the ceiling, in which groups of Rhipsalis plants contribute to and appropriate the functions of the air filtration system.

Stationed in the center of the gallery is a curious 9'x 9' blue box that looks more like a homemade spaceship than a piece of modern art. In fact, *Knowledge Box* was constructed after the original 12' x 12' *Knowledge Box* by Ken Isaacs at the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1962, and functions today as a time machine to the beginnings of modernity. *Knowledge Box* utilizes the modern, but dated technology of slide-projectors and wireless headphones to encapsulate the viewer within the aural and visual space of the modern era.

Inside *Knowledge Box,* the viewer is subjected to the rapid-fire clicking of historical images from *Life* and *Time* magazines and audio from accompanying news broadcasts. Portraits of Nixon, Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., Sinatra, and other immediately recognizable figures are projected onto the walls, floors, and ceilings, collaging the interior space of the box so much so that one can never fully view all the images at once.

Like a blinking eye, the lens of the slide projectors forces the viewer to associate him or herself as both the observer and the participant, the spectator and the subject. The *Knowledge Box* is immersed in the idea of modern media and technology; stepping into the *Knowledge Box* in 2009 compels the viewer to think about the ways contemporary media and technology have changed and expanded since.

Like *Knowledge Box*, so many of the works that make up the exhibition are experiential, immersive, and didactic, or as curatorial assistant Joe Iverson puts it, "prototypes for a learning tool." The space sometimes feels more like a science museum, or dioramas from Disneyland's Tomorrowland, than a typical Sullivan Gallery installation. Even AIADO faculty member Charles Harrison's charming and stylized designs for sewing machines and View-Masters are innovatively pedagogical.

Objects and environments in this exhibition that may at first seem uninviting and foreign reveal after examination deep intricacies and wonderful complications that delight and inspire. Thom Faulders Studio's *Ames Spot*, for example, resembles the inside of a birthday cake, with its waves of pink and white frosting; it is only upon exiting the room that one becomes aware of the wall projection that reveals the design phenomenon that creates the unbelievable distortion of perception within the room.

The openness of the gallery's floor plan and situation of works can seem isolating, but is meant to invite interaction and collaboration, not only between the viewer and the work, but also between the works themselves. Though constructed independently of one another, works like Angela Ferreira's *Crown Hall/ Dragon House* (2009), a sculpture that replicates, minimizes, and inverts Mies van der Rohe's architectural structure of IIT's Crown Hall athe one nd Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle's *Always After (The Glass House)* (2006), a video documenting and romanticizing the clean-up of shattered glass from the window panes of Crown Hall, seem to communicate with one another.

Iverson notes that the exhibition, which took two and a half years to curate, represents "many moderns," including but not limited to, modern architecture, design, psychology, media, technology, art, and science. The varied works in the exhibition, though challenging and abstract at first glance, are all re-imaginations and translations of modern concepts that beg to be responded to and reinvented again and again.

Students and faculty can propose their own projects for "Learning Modern," which runs through January 9, and whose subject matter and artists extend to "Modern Monday" gallery talks, the Visiting Artists Program, Conversations at the Edge, and the SAIC course curriculum.

LEARNING to experience MODERN

A behind-the-scenes look at making LEARNING MODERN

With the world on the brink of economic and political disaster, László Moholy-Nagy and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe carried Bauhaus principles from Germany to Chicago in the late 1930s, expanding the role of experiential education ideas. Working with their students, these modernists sought to change our perception of the world, while changing the world itself.

In "Learning Modern," the Sullivan Galleries become a laboratory for exploration with projects by artists, architects and designers who continue this modern vision and legacy of learning through experience. **–"Learning Modern" curatorial statement.**

BY JOE IVERSON

The works in "Learning Modern" are the result of two and a half years of conversation and collaboration that directly question the nature of modernism and its relevance to contemporary art practice today. Students, faculty and staff at both The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Illinois Institute of Technology worked extensively with artists, architects, and designers to conceive, manufacture, and execute many of the major projects in the exhibition.

The SAIC Department of Exhibitions has previously facilitated the creation of new works. However, both the number and sheer magnitude of commissioned and collaborative projects in this exhibition is a first for the school. Relying on the unique talents of dozens of students, faculty and staff from SAIC and IIT, the exhibition title is revealed as not simply a reference to the historical pedagogy being considered, but also a direct statement describing the critical importance of the process used to conceive and execute the exhibited works.

"The number and sheer magnitude of commissioned and collaborative projects in this exhibition is a first for the school."

With a conscious use of a collaborative decision-making process for everything from the use of wall labels to the most technically complicated installation piece, a reconstruction of designer Ken Isaac's *Knowledge Box* from 1962, the notion of experiential learning has become a badge of honor for those involved with the project.

Moments of problem-solving have resulted in monumental opportunities for students to learn by working directly with Thom Faulders's architecture studio in the construction of their installation piece, *Ames Spot,* or with the installation of landscape architect Walter Hood's interior-systems prototype, "*Bio-line."*

These encounters will continue throughout the duration of the show in what are being called "Modern Workshops." For example, First-Year Program faculty members Andy Hall and Erik Newman will be engaging their students to re-imagine the populist-oriented designs for "Living Structures" by designer Ken Isaacs. Their re-imagined "Living Structures" will be on view in the Sullivan Galleries later this fall, which Isaacs will be able to discuss and respond to during his "Modern Monday" gallery talk on November 16.

Not all collaborations that went into the exhibition have been so direct; many have been on an international scale. The individuals involved are rarely in the same room, let alone the same continent, so questions of communication in collaboration became increasingly important to the production of the exhibited projects works. While still in Lisbon, Ângela Ferreira was sending her fabrication needs for *Crown Hall/Dragon House* to Todd Cashbaugh, SAIC Associate Director of Exhibitions. According to Cashbaugh, "the challenge was to find a fabricator that a) could do [Ângela's project] on short notice b) *could* do it and c) could communicate with an artist in that capacity."

Similar issues of communication arose with the fabrication of *Key Notes,* a work by Narelle Jubelin and collaborator Carla Duarte, a recent SAIC Alum who received her MFA in Fiber Material Studies in 2009. Duarte spoke of her experience in collaborating across an ocean with Jubelin, saying "our practices are very process-oriented in how we look at cloth and think of cloth and think of it metaphorically… This is where the documentation of the process became so vital, because I was thinking about what I would want to see and during the entire thing I was looking at everything as kind of an installation. Both in terms of the way this room was laid out, but also thinking for Narelle to be able to comprehend the process and the fabrication and the scale. She knew what three meters of cloth was, but she couldn't think of the scale of the panel. And so by giving her things of scale to compare it to, and even the stacks of cloth, I was trying to make every stage kind of a tangible tactile moment that we could comprehend via the Internet."

The "Learning Modern" artists engaged in this type of distance-based collaboration are discovering that this shared language is not just about finding common words, but learning how one another think.

—Joe Iverson is Graduate Curatorial Assistant at SAIC's Sullivan Galleries.

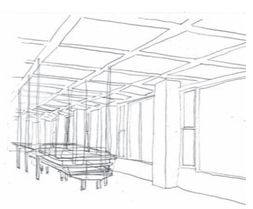
MODERN MONDAYS
GALLERY LECTURE SERIES

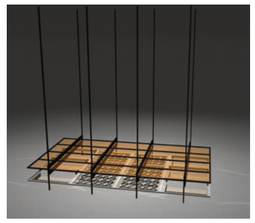
Every Monday, 4:30 - 5:30 p.m.
September 14 - December 14

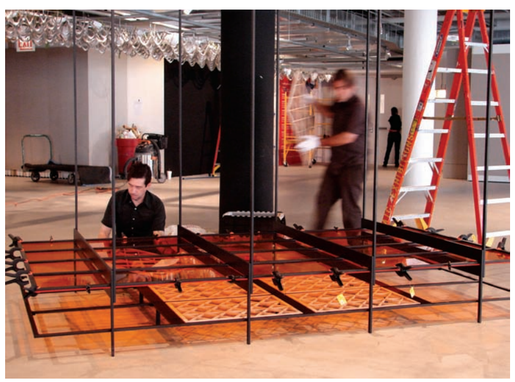
This series of gallery talks and panel discussions features artists, architects, designers, curators, and scholars who will discuss the artworks and salient themes echoed throughout the "Learning Modern" exhibition.

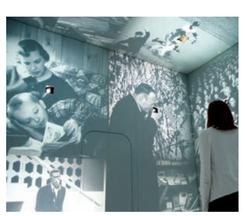
Gallery hours
Tuesday - Saturday, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

For more information visit
www.saic.edu/exhibitions









(clock wise from top photo) **1. Narelle Jubelin in collaboration with Carla Duarte, *Key Notes*, 2009. Installation photograph of Jubelin transcribing text onto the Chicago-style windows of the SAIC Sullivan Galleries.**Footnotes and figures (on windows) from: Alain Findeli, "Moholy-Nagy's Design Pedagogy in Chicago (1937-46)," Design Issues v. VII, no. 1 (Fall 1990), pp. 5-19. Photo: Carla Duarte. **2. Narelle Jubelin in collaboration with Carla Duarte, *Key Notes*, 2009. Installation photograph in the SAIC Sullivan Galleries.** Photo: James Prinz. **3. Narelle Jubelin in collaborations with Carla Duarte, *Key Notes*, 2009. Process documentation, raw wool cloth organized by installation colorway.** Photo: Carla Duarte. **4. Interior (right). Ken Isaacs, *Knowledge Box*, 2009**. Courtesy of LIFE Magazine © Time Inc., used with permission, courtesy of Getty Images. Photo: James Prinz. **5. Ken Isaacs, *Knowledge Box*, 1962 (left). Installation photograph at Mies van der Rohe's S.R. Crown Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago (interior).** Courtesy of LIFE Magazine © Time Inc., used with permission, courtesy of Getty Images. Photo: Robert W. Kelley. **6. Ângela Ferreira, *Crown Hall/Dragon House*, 2009. In-process installation, SAIC Sullivan Galleries.** Photo: Carla Duarte. **7. Ângela Ferreira, concept sketch for *Crown Hall/Dragon House*, 2009 (left).** Courtesy of the artist. **8. Alex Derdelakos, vector drawing of Ângela Ferreira's *Crown Hall/Dragon House*, 2009 (right).** Courtesy of the artist.

Exhibiting artists Ângela Ferreira of Portugal and Narelle Jubelin, an Australian living in Madrid, talk about issues of collaboration in the "Learning Modern" exhibition.

INTERVIEW BY JOE IVERSON

ON WORKING IN A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Ângela Ferreira: I teach at an art school, and I obviously learn an enormous amount from my students and benefit from being a teacher, but I do not work with my own students corroboratively. Somehow, I have never been able to do that. And what's been really nice for me in this show is that this is a teaching institution, a work-shopped act of a live teaching institution. This is a teaching gallery and the person that is going to exhibit before me and after me is a student, learning to put up a show … and the use of that resource has been really perfect in a way.

Narelle Jubelin: And there is a desire within this exhibition to articulate that, and that articulation has been part of the ongoing project… In my practice, I've elected to work within the context of university galleries from the beginning. I've looked for a kind of structure where I imagine there's an active relationship to a broader art audience, but also, at the same time, to students. I got to a point where I was seeing that it's actually extremely difficult for that kind of multiple audience to be built up. But in this case you can see that there's an active will to engage and to intertwine the academic structure, the exhibition structure, and the work that goes into the making of an exhibition. "Learning Modern" is an incredibly careful, studied and worked-through project … where exhibition making has been teased out and worked on with students actively problem solving how to describe what we've been putting into place, and that's very interesting.

ÂF At one point in my process, I stopped and I said, "Really, what can I learn from Mies van der Rohe?" I'm 51. I'm sitting there with my desk and my computer and I'm being challenged to do that, and that's good enough for me as far as a "learning" gallery is concerned.

ÂF Like producing a work in Lisbon to bring to Chicago, or working with Chicago people coming here and having to finalize a project to the point where it's readable to somebody you've never met, but then having the benefit of that person knowing what you're doing and being able to articulate it. The ideal loss of control is an interesting one, because it's not as simple as loss of control. It's loss of control and gain of another whole type of know-how, intellectual, material, specialized technical expertise which one may not have and cannot have. In my case I think the most successful projects in my practice, that mostly fulfill my ambition for my work, are actually not achievable by my single intervention, because you can't—the very nature of my pursuit implies that it has to have other people.

NJ Carla has entered, totally, within the project. It is a thing where she will send through ideas that she is starting to draw out of the material. It becomes like a collective pool of information. There's aspects to the work that we're doing that I think will continue, so it's that thing where she's particularly interested in unpicking part of one of the musical or Key Note references that we're working with and developing it in another way. And if that starts to happen within the production of a work, you know, the work is working and the work will continue to work.

ON COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES

NJ Ângela and I have done I don't know how many projects together, but it's striking to be working in this way in a show that's not a collaborative show of ours. It's another dynamic, and the fact that a group exhibition is being theorized here has been particular and another level of interest for us, for the project, no?

"She's suggested that we actually go and meet and try to tease out with other people what it is, trying to see what it is that we're putting into place."

A year and a half ago, we shared three days of thinking together about what is modern and what is an exhibition. In between that and now, your thoughts don't stop, they carry on working. Then that, combined with the kind of pedagogical way that the exhibition is being–I'm talking now about the more formalistic display–the kind of pedagogic experimental way in which the exhibition is being, the interlocking of the people that we are working with – this is well put together as a project. Whether you would call Mary Jane [Jacob] a teacher or a curator, here, I'm not sure, but there's the two going on very clearly in a very positive way.

NJ In the past I deliberately looked for that engagement. You can be in a university gallery and you never see a student come in. Often gallery directors are looking for ways to breach that gap, but the gap is there.

ON WORKING LONG-DISTANCE:

NJ A lot of time has gone into the establishment of how we are going to describe what we're about to do. The defining that needs to be done is facilitated so much that you realize the person you're actually working with is capable of putting in the time needed to engage conceptually with the new work while it is still in formation. Most of my conversations with Carla Duarte have been at considerable distance, email or Skype, and there has often been that thing where you want and need the proximity to the person, but you need to talk these things through to establish a kind of technical language. With Carla that's actually been achieved very quickly, because there was a very careful bringing together of expertise to establish a productive working relationship.

ÂF There's another interesting thing that could be happening here on the issue of collaboration at large now, speaking more broadly about collaboration. Narelle and I have a collaborative practice but we don't have a collaborative practice, which means we're actually onto a new kind of collaborative. We've done a few pieces together, but ignore those. We each have our own individual practices, but there is collaboration in those practices, and the knowledge of one feeds enormously into the knowledge of the other, and vice versa.

NJ I'll say to Ângela, "You know, you were working, this is what, this is where this has come from in terms of your thinking,"and she'll say, "You remember my work better than I do!"And it's that thing where you literally have someone that is following you, going along with you for a well-established period of time. It's that thing where you have someone pushing you, too, challenging you in a way that isn't toward their practice, but it's a way where they can help you articulate and help you move forward. What she's suggested is that we actually go and meet and try to tease out with other people what it is, trying to see what it is that we're putting into place.

ÂF It's still individualistic, because it's two people making, but it's the authorship thing. What's going on here is neither one nor the other. I'm not sure what it is yet, but it's taken us 20 years to realize it's happening.

SAIC TIME MACHINE

Marion M. Mullin's 1940s scrapbook

BY SHANNON TORII

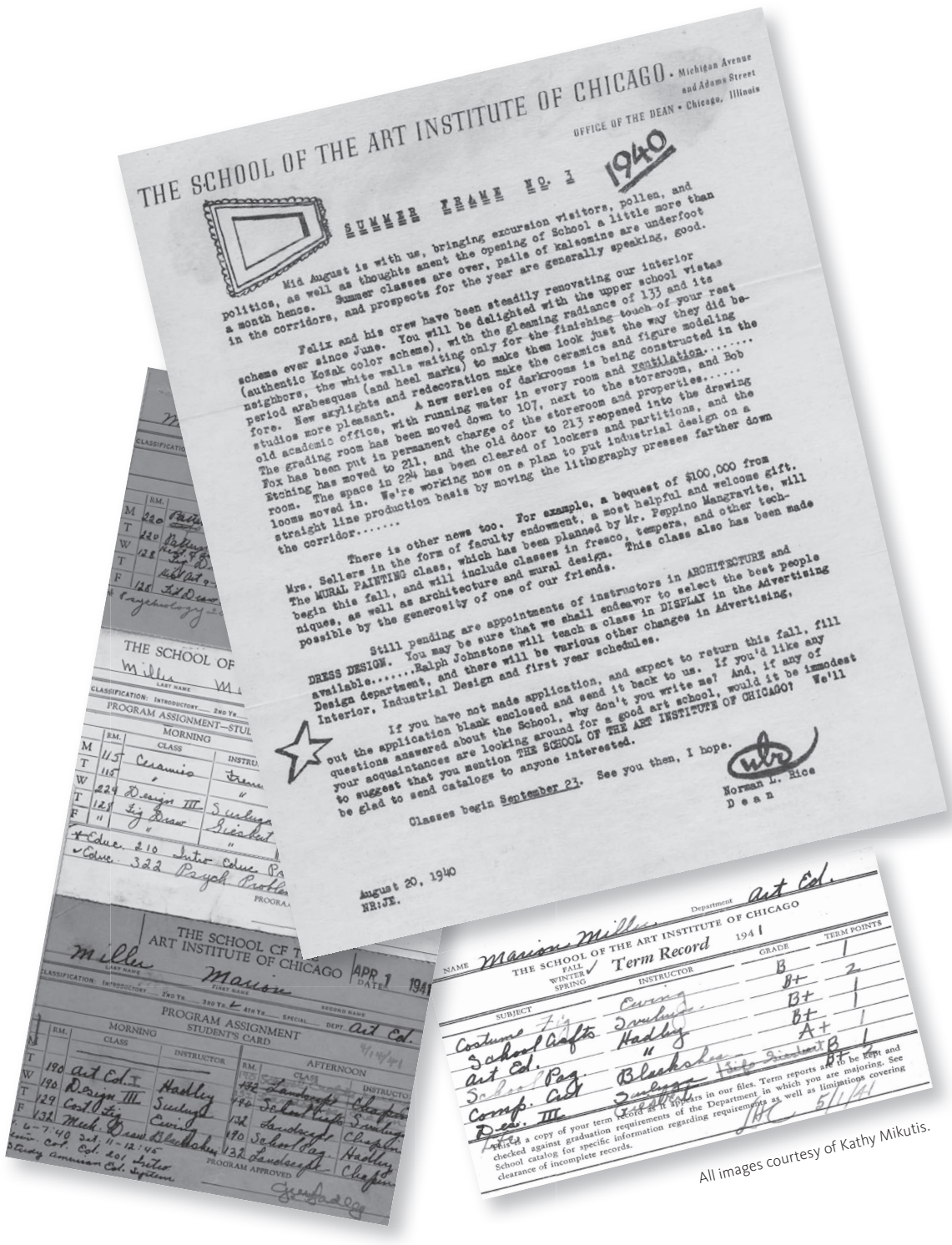
The grades on Marion M. Mullsin's SAIC report cards were handwritten in cafeful cursive with black ink.

Her acceptance letters from SAIC and the University of Chicago, her class schedules, ceremonial memorabilia, memos, news clippings, photographs, and watercolors were neatly secured on the black pages of her scrapbook, but the glue keeping order in the book is aged and memories are beginning to fall out.

She graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 1942 with a degree in Art Education. Eleven years after her death, her records, which she collected in a scrapbook, were sold to Kathy Mikutis for two dollars at a Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall in the corner of a strip mall in Wood Dale, Illinois. Forty to fifty of her paintings were sold at auctions in Chicago and eBay for around seventy-five dollars each.

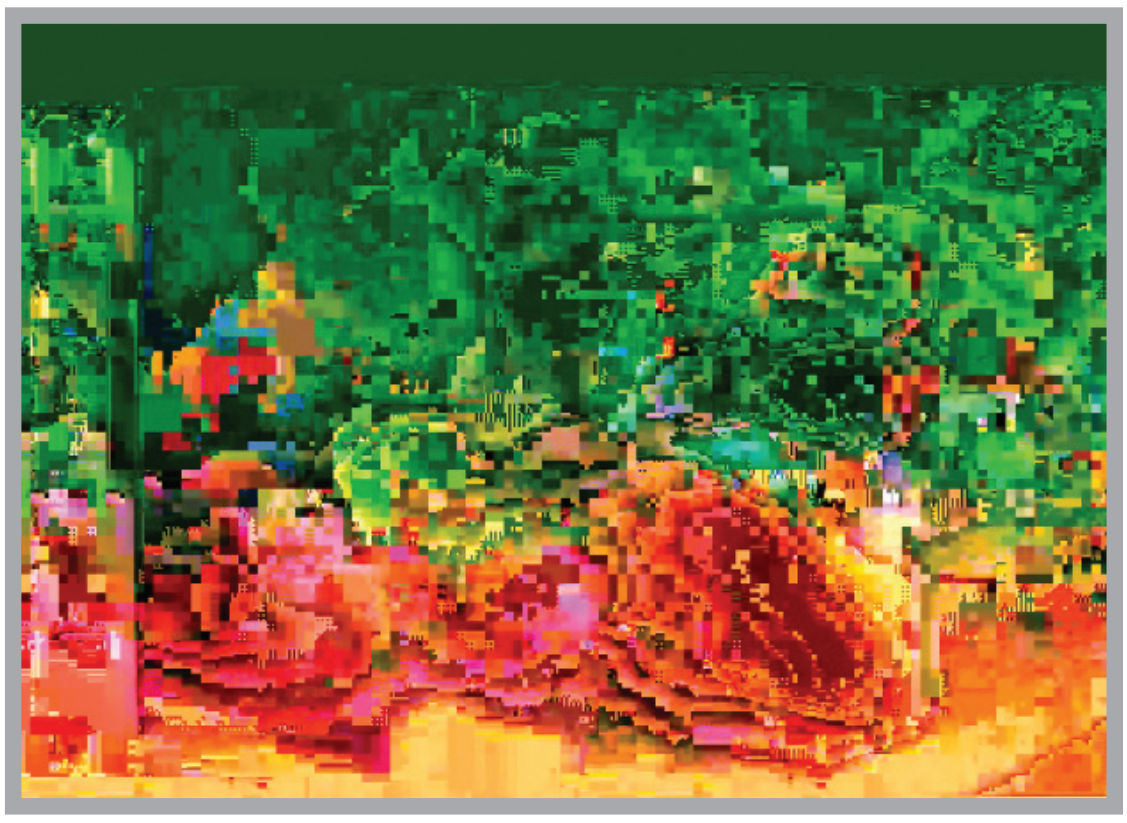
Mullins taught art at parochial schools for manyyears. She died on Friday, March 13, 1998, at the age of 78 after being ill for several months.

Kevin Daniel has one of Mullin's paintings. It's a watercolor and gouache painting of a woman holding herbs, walking alongside a farmhouse on an overcast day. He was surprised at the survival of Marion's scrapbook. "I really enjoy including personal information in my biographies [that accompany the paintings]," Daniel said. "That is the stuff that never gets preserved." *See the rest of Marion's scrapbook online at fnewsmagazine.com.* f



All images courtesy of Kathy Mikutis.

<title>glitch & art</title>



(clockwise from top) 1. Still from *YouTube Readymade*, Rosa Menkan, 2009. Courtesy of the artist. **2. Still from *From the Ground Up In Order, Embrace*, Nick Briz, 2007.** Courtesy of the artist. **3. Still from *Ceibas Portrait*, Evan Meaney, 2008.** Courtesy of the artist.

<!-- by Nick Briz -->

February 18, 2009: Kanye West introduces his new video for the song "Welcome to Heartbreak" on his blog by writing, "This is not the next single, 'Amazing' is the next single. This is the video we've been working on for the last month. We know there is another video out there using the same technique so we were forced to drop it now." The technique West is referring to is called Datamoshing (aka pixel bleed), and it is one of many ways we make "glitch art." The particular digi-painterly look of datamoshing and the fact that it's fairly easy to execute might in part explain why it has become so popular. **<search query datamosh>.**

Little did Mr. West know that this interest in aestheticizing digital errors long preceded his piece. In the realm of datamoshing alone, artists like Sven König, Takeshi Murata, Paul B. Davis, and Paper Rad have been exploring the digital medium's "natural" aesthetics and dynamics. In addition, other artists have explored the larger realm of glitch/compression-artifact/digital-noise art, including SAIC's own Jon Cates and Jon Satrom **<search query: dirty new media>.**

Datamoshing is distinctly beautiful because with glitch art that, of course, is the whole idea: to fetishize and aestheticize these organically occuring bugs dwelling in the digital landscape. My interest in glitch came as a response to film school in an attempt to reconcile my own artistic situation.

So, why this interest in glitches? This is one of many questions, and perhaps the most important one, SAIC Film Video and New Media faculty Jon Cates and Jon Satrom have been discussing. Jon</S> suggests a long history and broader context for glitches. "I believe that there always have been glitches (e.g., evolution: the platypus) and there always will be glitches (e.g., sneezes) regardless of 'technology.'" Errors and their intrigue most definitely have a long explored and examined the role of accidents and chance in artistic practice. This historical interest in flaws may account for some of our attraction to glitches, but the word "glitch" is a computer term which is relatively new and inherently linked to the technological age.

Glitches carry with them a very specifically digital quality, a quality possibly with the ability to nostalgically transport many of us back to our youthful 8-bit days. Or perhaps this attraction has more recently become part of our collective unconscious in the information age. Jon</C> points out, "For those that have now grown up on YouTube errors as a common occurrence, pixel bleed becomes a kind of normal if not normative experience." There's a lot to be considered in asking "Why?" and to be perfectly honest it's difficult for me to see even the tip of the iceberg.

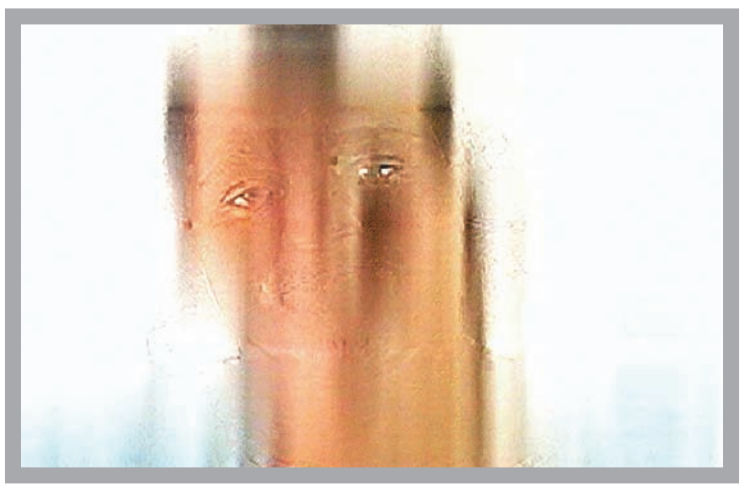
When I started, everyone was trying to make their digital movies look more like film.

This was accomplished by pulling from an ever-expanding bag of tricks, which included 24p, 35mm (DOF) adapters, and countless plug-ins. After a while, this all started to seem rather counter-productive, and I couldn't help but feel a bit ideologically out of place. So I looked to some of my favorite filmmakers at the time, Brakhage, Kubelka, and others, and the way they broke their medium down to its core. If I had any chance of establishing the kind of relationship I desired with my medium, I needed to do the same.

So I set out to make a video from binary code, the result of which was my first glitch piece, albeit unknowingly, as I hadn't at the time encountered any kind of "glitch art." In fact, I hadn't seen anything that looked and behaved the way this video did. It was as if after weeks of instigating and negotiating, the computer revealed its soul to me, and I fell in love. I wasn't exactly sure, especially at the time, why I felt the way I did, to the extent that I did, or why anyone does. It is clear, though, that there is an interest, and it's an exponentially growing one. This exponential growth is an important note to make and an elemental dynamic of our new digital ecology. It's critical to realize the effect this Kurzweilian Singularity is having on our rapidly evolving digital culture **<search query:technological singularity>.**

The means and rate at which things are introduced, assimilated, institutionalized, and historicized is drastically different now from ever before. This is why we have Kanye West "dropping" his trend-hopping commercial video before Iman Moradi releases his analytical academic text on glitch art, all the while artists, thinkers, and kids on YouTube are still exploring and figuring it all out. While I'm still trying to wrap my head around it all, I'm certain, if nothing else, of the immense conceptual and aesthetic potential within the greater canon of things this new digital practice holds. A potential to critically address our relationship to technology, the role it plays in our society, and the effect it has on communication and the aggregation and decimation of information in general.

Glitch may even have political consequences such as raising an awareness of the "media-systems that have been assimilated by culture and driven by special interests," as Jon</S> points out, by utilizing and subverting these media-systems, all this in turn creating, as Rosa Menkman puts it, a new space for dialogue: a dialogue about and within a space many of us are still exploring. Perhaps it is in its relatively un-codified presentness and recently tapped potentiality that the attraction lies.



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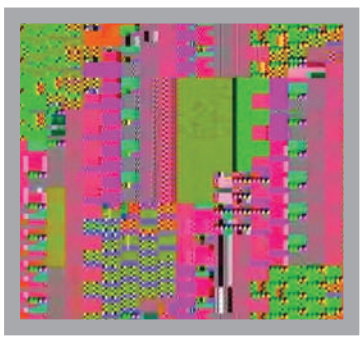

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vimeo.com/groups/artifacts

<local>
It'll be a good idea to go to the Nightingale on Oct.10 <1084 N. Milwaukee Chicago, IL 60642> Evan Meaney will be in town showing work.
dorkbotchicago.blogspot.com

Off the Screen & Onto the Page

Matthew Carter speaks about Verdana, Ikea's new type identity

Typestudy and photo by Bethany Armstrong.

Bienvenido a IKEA España

Tervetuloa!

Üdvözlünk!

Välkommen!

Bienvenue!

BY BETHANY ARMSTRONG

"It's true. IKEA abandons ~50 years of Futura and Century Schoolbook for… Verdana." On August 21st Typophile.com, a popular typography and design blog, opened a discussion board with this controversial news for the type and graphic design communities. Most who commented were in agreement; fonts made for the monitor should stay on the monitor.

According to Typophile member Raumschiff, "…the reason for the change is to be able to use the same font i[n all countries, including [A]sian countries… they want to be able to give the same visual impression both in print and the web."

Companies want their online presence to represent their print identity as closely as possible in order to retain brand identity. Screen fonts are chosen to reflect the typeface used by the company as part of their internal and external style guide. Companies choose a 'web font' that is universally available on most computers (cross-platform), but this is not usually the same typeface they use for print advertisements, or even for interactive media, it is only to accompany their standard typefaces for code-generated body-copy and headlines.

Ikea chose to go with a free and widely distributed font, instead of hiring a typographer to create a new typeface, and claim to be passing the savings on to their customers. "It's more efficient and cost-effective," said Ikea spokeswoman Monika Gocic, according to Time. "Plus, it's a simple, modern-looking typeface."

Dr. Matthew Carter designed and developed Verdana in 1996 as part of a project by Microsoft to develop the best screen type faces, 'fonts,' for the computer monitor, providing optimum readability. Dr. Carter is a type designer who, before working for Microsoft, designed type the old-fashioned way: cutting punches from steel for metal type. A designer with fifty years of experience, Matthew mastered lead type before perfecting bitmaps and vector drawing.

BA When you designed Verdana, you did so coming from a solid print type design background. How was it made?

MC *The purpose of designing Verdana and Georgia was to make two typeface families that were as legible as possible at text sizes on computer screens. It was obvious from the start, however, that they would also be used at display sizes on screen and at every size in print. With this in mind I tried to give the designs a visual style that went beyond the generic functionality of screen bitmaps.*

BA What are your thoughts on using screen fonts for print?

MC *I have been told by designers and design students that Verdana and Georgia must never be used on paper because they are "screen fonts" and that printing them is "bad design." But when I ask "What's the difference? What is it about Verdana on paper that tells you it was designed for the screen?" they can't answer. They are parroting an opinion they have heard without understanding it.*

I would never insist on using Verdana for print, but I would NEVER tell a student NEVER to use it—or any other typeface. What I would say is that Verdana may require more adjustment in print than some other typefaces. Depending on the size(s) at which the type is set it may be desirable to tighten the tracking, watch the kerning, and so on. But these are things a student should be taught.

Many in the type community have been working for more than a decade to make it possible for all typefaces to be available on screen, eliminating the need for substitution, but the problems lie in developing easy to-use software capable to emulate or distribute type, as well as licensing the type for fair use. It was only a matter of time before a big brand, like Ikea, decided to work this issue from the other way around— fine tune a screen font as a printable and print-worthy typeface.

That's exactly what is happening here; the screen version of Verdana has been finely 'set' by the designers of Ikea, tracking and kerning the characters for print. When my Ikea catalog arrived I must admit, the type design was wonderful and clear with good hierarchy. I noted the new distinctive humanist typeface—I wondered what typeface it was.

MC *There's a remark close to the heart of type-designers that I've heard attributed to Alvin Lustig while he was teaching at Yale: "There are no good typefaces or bad typefaces: there are typefaces you know how to use and typefaces you don't know how to use."*

Three legitmate differences that need to be taken into account when using a screen font on paper. **BY MATTHEW CARTER**

1. In working on Verdana I tried to think of it at the paragraph level. The spacing between letters and between words was every bit as important to legibility as the bitmap forms – in fact probably more important. Earlier screen fonts that had been adapted from printing types tended to have irregular spacing, characters touched or had spaces between them wide enough to be read as word-spaces. The spacing on screen is governed by the same coarse increments as the bitmaps themselves; the net effect of making the inter-character fitting more even was to increase the side-bearings and loosen the spacing. The enhanced legibility of open fitting is also helpful in small text sizes in print (and paradoxically in signage), but at display sizes in print it may make the type look gappy and hard to read because the letters don't cohere well into word-shapes.

2. By the same token, kerning on a coarse-resolution screen is unsubtle. A screen font probably has fewer kerning pairs in its table than a printer font.

3. Verdana is a two-weight family: Regular and Bold. In the mid-'90s when I was working on these designs the screen pixels from which bitmaps were built were binary – on or off. There were only integer pixels, no fractional pixels. Therefore, if the stem-weight of Verdana was a single pixel at a certain size on screen, the only way to make a Bold face was to double the stem-weight to two pixels. This represents a bigger gain in weight between Regular and Bold than is customary in print sanserifs. On screen the extreme contrast in weight and width of the Bold is good, it makes the distinction between the weights unambiguous.

Ladies Auxillary Polish Army Veterans of World War II. Polish Constitution Day Parade, 3 May 2008, Chicago. Chromogenic print, 48 x 48 inches

Globalization, Globally and Locally

Allan Sekula at the Renaissance Society

BY JOEL KUENNEN

Allan Sekula's exhibition "Polonia and Other Fables" at the University of Chicago's Renaissance Society is a masterfully constructed use of subjective documentary photography. By juxtaposing the subjective and the mundane with the politically charged, Sekula succeeds in asking the visitor, "Where does politics lie?"

The first photograph, *Art Student Futures Trader*, is a blithe little jest at the audience (or maybe it seems that way to me because I'm an art student). This large format portrait of a lost-looking woman standing amongst the detritus of what looks to be the Chicago Mercantile Exchange is flanked on the right by similarly formatted photos of military zone warning signs posted around so-called CIA black sites, where terror suspects were extraordinarily rendered through Poland during the War on Terror. To the left side of the art student hang images of F-16s being prepped for take-off.

The gallery is set up in concentric circles, the outer circle being explicitly political in nature. The surface of the political sphere (and paradoxically also one of its most shrouded aspects), which deals with the various political catastrophes of the past nine years, is presented matter-of-factly around the outer wall paying special attention to political alignments between Western countries. In the squared-circle of the gallery is a triptych of a crowd watching the hammer and sickle shadow nonsense on the University of Chicago campus. (For those of you unfamiliar with this little bit of urban legend, every May 1, International Worker's Day, Virginio Ferrari's sculpture Dialogo is said to cast a shadow that unmistakably resembles the Soviet hammer and sickle). The photographs show only the onlookers, reminding the viewer of the subject's role in the great symbolic ontologies of the political world, mere on-lookers in a mysterious play of shadows seems to be the commentary.

Rounding the next corner are images of political activism, and then the banal, the everyday or rather the everyman: farm scenes, ship builders (a not so subtle reference to Lech Wał sa), intense family moments (such as the image of the priest who conferred last rites upon the artist's father).

In a corner of the inner circle, there's an unexpected juxtaposition, two jazz scenes. On the left, a full color, neon stage-shot of two jazz performers in Chicago. On the right, a black and white image of Ornette Coleman sitting on a wooden bench, smoking, and listening to jazz in a club in Warsaw. Many viewers might not catch this subtle reference to the overwhelming popularity of the free-Jazz movement in Poland, and that is part of why Sekula's photos are so clever. The viewer is asked to bring his own personal knowledge to every picture, and the montage of associations works differently depending on what you know. Within the larger category of politics, Sekula is exploring the roles of nationality, the roles of heritage. There are photos of the Polish Fest in Chicago but then also an extremely striking photo of his father, holding up a handwritten list that appears to be the five-generation geneaology of the Sekulas, complete with profession. Identity, as politics, is layered, transgressive and surprising.

It's all a strange mix, but brilliant nonetheless. I'm still in the interior of the exhibition's concentric circle, and here, the exterior of politics outside the gallery walls seems to be smoke and mirrors and grand mysteries of narratives that one cannot quite grasp. What Sekula does with this exhibit is to remind us that, no, it's actually you, each and every one of you with your daily trials and tribulations, your family, your loves—politics is you, writ large.

Vinyl curtain-wall advertising. Warsaw, July 2009. Chromogenic print, 48 x 48. Photos courtesy of The Renaissance Society.

An interview with Allan Sekula

BY BRIAN WALLACE

BW Your previous photographic work deals a lot with issues pertaining to globalization—photos of people that are explicitly and intentionally political. "Polonia" is different. I like to think that lately, in light of economic instability, in art, in politics, people are considering their immediate surroundings, that people are maybe trying to hold one another up, to carry each other. Does "Polonia and Other Fables" address this idea at all?

AS I think what we need to realize is that what we call our location is increasingly shot through with connections to the rest of the world, especially in a globalized economy. People may want to retreat into the personal or think that the personal is the end all-be all, their certain circle of Facebook friends, whatever… It's like the limit of the real, but that notion of immediacy and connectivity wouldn't exist without technical mediation, which is itself a product of forces of production and communication that have a global basis, so there's no escaping it. Now, it seems that it's all about yourself, so I am certainly not putting my family in this exhibition as a way to point in that direction, because that's the direction people are taking anyway.

BW There is a quote on the wall in this show that says, "Poland is the 51st state," beside some photographs of CIA 'black sites.' The wall text says that the film was confiscated. Is there a story behind that?

AS The fact that the film was confiscated may or may not be interesting. What's interesting is what one makes of the fact that the United States is able to mobilize other countries to assist it in circumventing its own laws and often in violation of the laws of the country that is assisting, and all of this is happening in secret. The Polish government doesn't admit that any of this happened, and the American government admits it happens, but won't say where. It exists in a gray zone of acknowledgment and non acknowledgment—it's part of the politics of the moment. Are these policies continuing? Have they ended? Are we to believe the government? It seems that the real question isn't what happened to me or whether or not I had to crawl in the bushes to get this photo. What interests me is the structuring of a kind of argument or providing a tool kit and a way of saying, through the montage of the exhibition, that all of these things are connected...

BW Speaking of labor, there is a segment in the written component of Polonia that talks about a Polish guy and a Mexican guy on the north side of Chicago standing in a gas station parking lot, waiting to be picked up as day laborers. The gas station is owned by a Punjabi guy. Then there are these photos of Polish workers in Poland, building a boat. Is there an allegory here?

AS They're all kind of in the same boat: one guy has bought a gas station and the other two are just doing day labor, but they are all immigrants, they're all struggling, all kind of marginal, but I don't know if I'd say anything is an allegory of anything else. Sometimes things are just an allegory of what they are and you just have to see them with a heightened sense of their presence, their reality ... The history of migration is a history of people reaching an economic dead end. They sense that the situation is impossible, often because, with really unrealistic expectations, they come to a place and discover that its much harder than they thought, that the streets are not paved with gold, there are people who make a profit from misleading others, which is not to say that there aren't many people who come to America that end up realizing (through hard work and struggle) that there is an advantage.

BW The way that the written component of Polonia is structured is somewhat episodic, the short descriptions are like snapshots of ideas, memories, opinions, criticisms, etc. ... I wonder what the relationship is between the narrative of the writing, and that of the photos. Are they in direct conversation with one another?

AS It's more indirect. There is a relay that's set up and it's up to the reader to make connections. Sometimes I am thinking about a photograph, sometimes not. Sometimes I am thinking of a photograph that never got made. What these aren't, is captions. I have been interested in the difficulty, of say, going to a film screening and being handed a program, or production notes, and then the lights go down, and you can't read it; it's like watching a foreign film with subtitles. If you have to spend so much time reading, you miss the image, so that's what these texts are about.

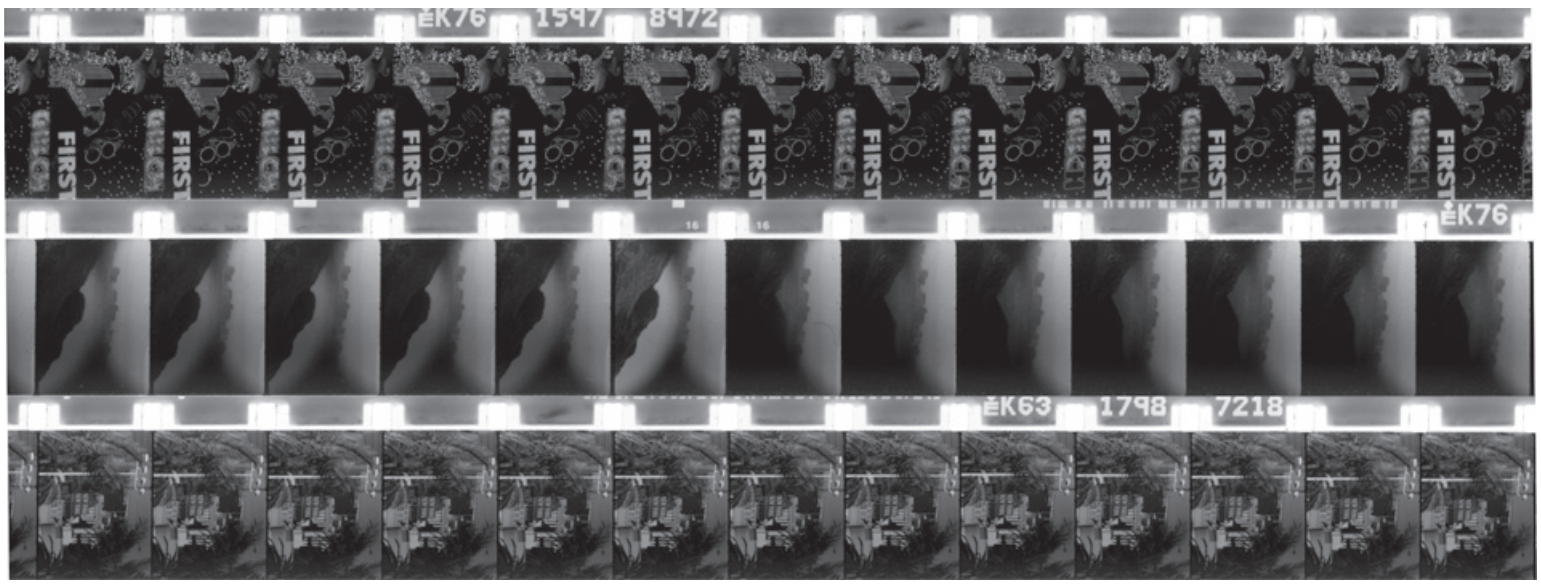
BW I wonder if these documents are more for the reader, the viewer, or more for the organization of the work, for yourself?

AS I very much intended it to be for the reader, but everything you do [as an artist] ends up being a dialogue with one's self. You have a conversation with your self, and then you invite other people in on it, and hopefully it ends up being a conversation that is not just with yourself.

Roger Beebe

Performative Projections

BY BRANDON KOSTERS



All images courtesy of Roger Beebe.

On September 11, SAIC's Eye and Ear Clinic hosted "Films for One to Eight Projectors," a collection of multi-projector short films by Roger Warren Beebe. Beebe challenges the notion of film as a stagnant medium by manipulating multiple projectors in real time. The event took place at the Flaxman Theater.

Beebe, a film and media professor at the University of Florida, was propelled to approach film in a more performative way in part because he wanted a more active role in presenting his work.

"Justifying my presence. It expanded the repertoire...[the screening] became something you could only see with me there."

Manipulating film projectors in real time became a means of "justifying my presence. It expanded the repertoire … [the screening] became something you could only see with me there.

I guess percolating in the background was the knowledge that this kind of thing had happened before … the great cinematic tricks and gimmicks of early cinema and pre-cinema. This informed my experimentation. I was doing tours and started to question the necessity of my presence."

Throughout the course of the screening, Beebe was wandering about the room, handling the projectors and the devices that were providing the audio. The way that Beebe utilizes audio also lends itself to spontaneity.

"One of the things about the films that's made the interplay of the sound and image more critical is that I've stopped making married prints." The audio is not connected to the films themselves. "I have different sound devices that I run into my mixing board every night to synch up with the film. There is more malleability in terms of the sound and image than if the two are linked in."

His film *TB TX Dance* utilizes two video projectors, with two practically identical black and white films shown juxtaposed. The color scheme is inverted. The film features the shape of the state of Texas, images of a dancing woman, and dots that were printed directly onto clear film leader with a laser printer. The dots also serve as an optical sound track, with the frequency of the pitch corresponding to the density of the dots.

"Another one of these gimmicks (or, expansions of the normal practice)," Beebe says, "is a karaoke accompaniment." For this screening for SAIC, he recruited SAIC alum William Amaya to fill in. Amaya offered his take on the vocals for the Mudhoney song "Touch Me, I'm Sick," with the lyrics projected over an educational film from the 1970s about syphilis.

The final piece in the screening was *Last Light of a Dying Star*, which consists of eight films projected simultaneously.

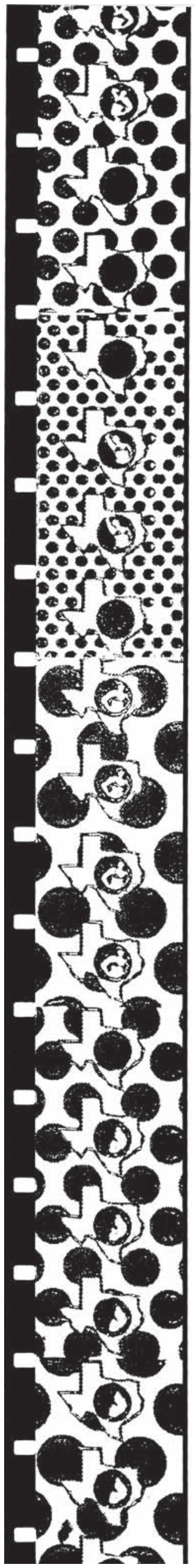
"The eight projector show was made for a screening at a planetarium in Georgia. With this piece I am almost like an orchestra conductor with these elements. I created a lot of the material, but I am also reliant upon these people's works … people who contributed directly and all of these anonymous industrial filmmakers [whose work is appropriated]."

"From an audience perspective, almost every audience is composed of people who've never seen it before. For me, in the coordination of elements, things change. I mix it around a little bit, which loops are in which projector. I have to adapt [the piece] to each space. In Bloomington, the grid was as elegant as it has been, but the strongest ending was in Atlanta. It always ends up being the same length: 23 to 27 minutes. I wouldn't say it varies wildly. I'm the only one who probably knows, as I'm the only one with a basis for comparison. There are always surprises that lead to really cool things. It's like a band that plays their songs every night. The performers themselves are in the best place to recognize these differences."

According to Beebe, "The film attempts to recapture some of the excitement of the early days of space exploration and the utopian aspirations of expanded cinema. Made as an orchestration of a number of different elements, made and found: handmade camera-less film loops by [myself] and Jodie Mack; striking sequences of digital stills by Cassandra C. Jones; 16mm educational films about eclipses, asteroids, comets, and meteorites; and a super-8 print of the East German animated film *The Drunk Sun*."

Beebe considers his work accessible. And how does his work differ from more commercial vehicles in his opinion? "I think with the eight-projector piece, it's a slowing down rather than a speeding up. It's immersive. One difference is that with my piece, there is nothing to sell. I tried to document the eight-projector piece, and it didn't work. There was the rectangle, with eight little rectangles within it. I see it as a philosophical thrust in a different direction."

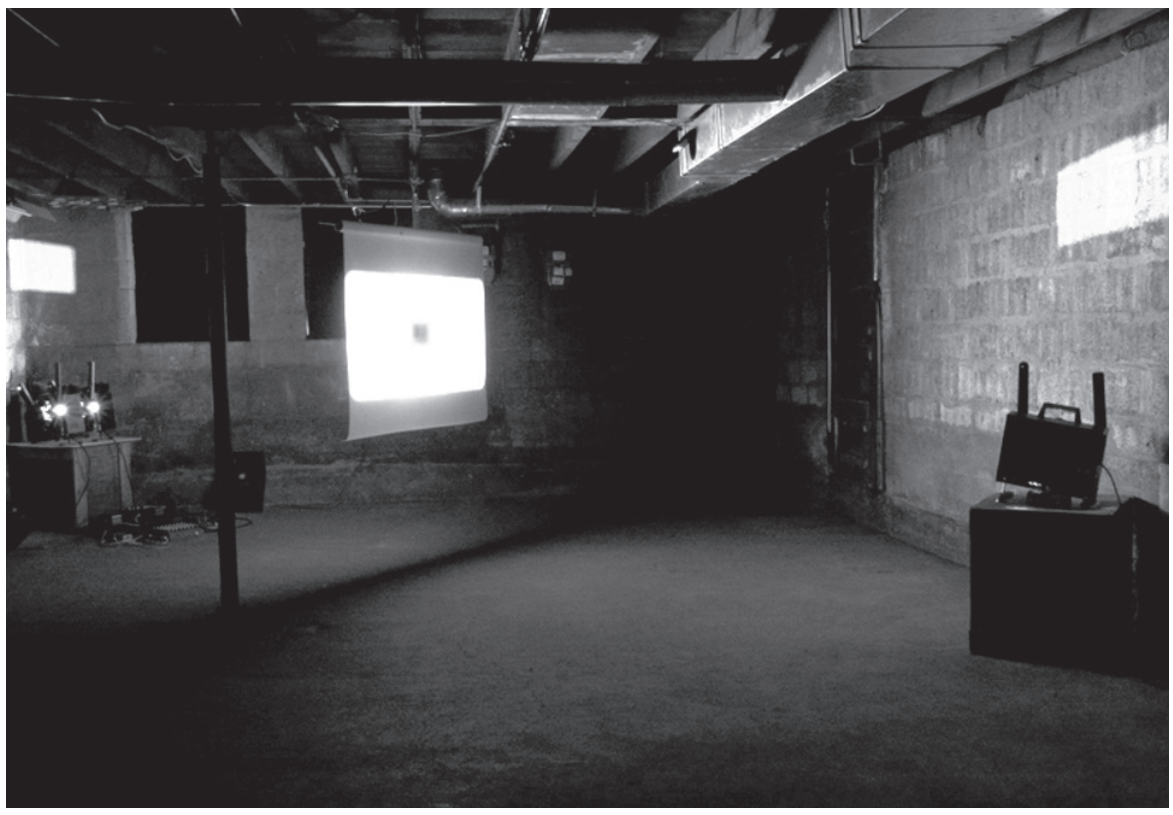
Music and sound play a prominent role in Beebe's work. Beebe himself worked as a musician at one time, and co-edited the book *Medium Cool: Music Videos from Soundies to Cellphones,* about trends in the music video industry that can be attributed to sites like YouTube. However, he maintains that for his practice, the image itself must take precedence over sound. "[With music videos] it's an impoverishment. Even the best videos are reliant upon the song. It flattens the video. I like music as an element in the films. I don't ever want to get to a point where the music is foregrounded to the point of flattening of the complexities of the image. There are places where I want the sound to recede to allow the image to breath, or lead." f



Joe Grimm

Exploring the Fallacy of Perception through Light and Sound

BY BRANDON KOSTERS



Working with handmade electronics, guitar effect pedals, and an oscillator, Joe Grimm translates light from two film projectors into sound. He has modified these projectors so that he can adjust the frame rate the projectors run at with knobs, producing erratic flickers of light that correspond to ambient noise. "It's about synesthesia," Grimm says. "Totally collapsing the two into one experience."

Grimm, a graduate student at SAIC, first approached this method of working while on tour with his friend, filmmaker Ben Russell. "We tried to come up with ways of translating flickers he would make with a projector into sound. We formed a duo called Mazes, where he would run the projector in the back, and I stood at the screen with sensors and electronics. It was about sharing the control of the sound."

Much of Joe's collaborative work seems to directly address this issue of "shared control." Grimm said, " One of the projects I'm involved with now with sculptor Lauren Carter is a project called Mirror Phase. It's a similar process but without projectors. We use feedback units and we can send sound to each other. This process of eclectically merging two different sounds."

Grimm, who is also a musician who plays more traditional instruments, went on to discuss the ways that a collaboration of this nature differs from and is similar to a more conventional musical collaboration. "It's similar in terms of listening and attunement and trying to come into balance with the other person. It's different, in that the [sound device] is sort of alive and will perform it's own fluctuations on it's own. You are more herding it than you are controlling it."

This notion of forfeiting control over the medium seems to stimulate Grimm. "I'm interested in something that rather than just responding to my own will, exerts it's own pressure back and will act as more of a partner. With the projectors, the frame rate is randomized. I never know exactly what it will do. I have control of the general arch, but the moment to moment thing is out of my control."

Grimm did his undergraduate study at Yale. He majored in philosophy, and this informed his trajectory. "I was really interested in Kant's distinction between the world of things themselves and things as we perceive them, and how we can never really know which is the real thing. I think over time you question what your senses are taking in. It becomes unclear whether you're hallucinating a sound or an image, or is it really there?"

"It's a crazy thing that happens with your eyes when you're on the boundary of experiencing something as a flicker and seeing something as a solid pane of light."

"It's a crazy thing that happens with your eyes when you're on the boundary of experiencing something as a flicker and seeing something as a solid pane of light."

This issue of visibility vs. invisibility is also applicable to the sound element of the work. " A lot of what you're hearing is the result of sound being produced far above our hearing range. The oscillators are ultrasonic. When two projectors are making ultrasonic pitches, it produces a third resultant pitch that we can hear. It's like a ghost that appears as a result of the interaction of tones that are outside of our range of hearing."

Every viewer can project or perceive something unique. "Some people will say they see certain colors, or triangles or squares. I see purpley blobs. We all have different eyes."

Grimm performs "anywhere with a good sound system and something white to project onto." He has played alongside experimental musicians on numerous occasions, and says that they are frequently more responsive to his work than filmmakers are.

"I think it's different than people who come at it from more of a film perspective," says Grimm. Film people think about the history of film and the issues that that brings. That's a totally different set of concerns. In the experimental sound context, people are less attached to the ideas of narrative and more into the idea of pure sense experience."

It was less an interest in cinema, and more of an interest in enriching his sound performances that propelled Grimm towards producing this body of work. Grimm says that he is "ultimately a person who thinks about sound first. This comes out of a concern about electronic music. If I have a bunch of pedals plugged into an oscillator, that is going to provide for a very different sort of performance than if I am playing a violin. Part of what brought me to this [process] was thinking about ways that electronic music is presented."

All images courtesy of Vega Estates

GATEKEEPER

Chicago duo creates spooky soundscapes

BY BETH CAPPER

"[Dario] Argento's classic horror films developed a language that relied on music as a narrative directive as much as any other device," says Aaron David Ross, one half of Chicago band Gatekeeper.

For anyone into the band Goblin, Ross's comments about the primacy of music in the development of Argento's aesthetic seem fairly obvious. Yet for many film historians, the power of the image is still over arching. Sound tracks are meant to function to bolster the image and its power to mesmerize, to mask the fact of it being an image.

However, for filmmakers like Argento, and an entire canon of '80s horror genre auteurs like John Carpenter and Brian de Palma, the musical scores to these makers' films are a large part of their iconic status. And while such scores don't quite throw the viewer out of the frame, they don't entirely function to suture them into it either. "To say that the music takes a backseat [to the image] is missing the idea that the feeling is what makes the films so powerful, the music is as key an ingredient as anything else," Ross says.

It's fitting, then, that Gatekeeper have decided to forgo the image altogether, molding the tropes of horror soundtracks into jagged shards of electronic dance that asks their audience to imagine the terrifying scenes infused in their sound.

Matthew Arkell, Gatekeeper's other half, explains why the duo are so drawn to these sound tracks: "Both of us grew up in the '80s and have nostalgic connections to horror and sci-fi films from this era, films which were deeply augmented by their sound tracks. This is the music that terrorized our childhoods, so naturally we feel a sacred and symbolic connection to it."

"We specifically enjoy scores that use early synthesizers and drum machines; the sound palates are similar to our other musical influences such as Italo disco and early industrial," offers Ross. "Since our music is instrumental, we sometimes rely on spoken vocal samples or sound effects to create rhythm and refrain, and this ties directly into the cinematic practice."

This marriage of musical forms directly reflects the duo's own particular musical backgrounds. "Gatekeeper is the synthesis of symphonic and dance music. Our backgrounds directly enable this," says Arkell. "Aaron's classical background, with a specific focus on film scoring, is key to the majority of Gatekeeper's melodic and harmonic content, while my dance music sensibilities ground us in a seminal tradition of electronic dance music." Ross is currently a graduate student in SAIC's Sound Department. When asked if his education at SAIC has influenced Gatekeeper's process, he cheekily retorts: "Gatekeeper occasionally makes use of SAIC's cool vintage synths!"

Gatekeeper aren't trying to update the musical tradition they are a part of. Instead, they want to re-contextualize the tropes of horror sound tracks within the tradition of electronic music from that era. "It's kind of shocking to us that we haven't found many examples of this type of film score in tandem with dance music, the fusion seems to occur so naturally," says Ross.

Gatekeeper's synth-laden progressions play out in a discotheque of fluorescent lights, unfurling green mist, bad special effects and cheap parlor tricks. It's a dance-party, for sure, but you're probably not coming back alive.

Gatekeeper play with Ga'an, White Car and Mister 666 on Halloween (10/31) at the Co-Prosperity Sphere, 3221 S. Morgan, 10pm, all ages. www.myspace.com/iiigatekeeperiii

Optimus Maximus album cover by Gatekeeper. All images courtesy of the artist.

"Gatekeeper is the synthesis of symphonic and dance music. Our backgrounds directly enable this."

Light is Waiting, **11:00, Michael Robinson, digital video with stereo sound, 2007.**

All Together Now

Artists Appropriate Pop Music

BY TOM MCCORMACK

Popular music, itself a lively contemporary art form, is also the subject of a broad range of contemporary art. There are Seth Price's meta-historical mix-tapes, which usually drag forgotten forms of music out of the dustbin of history (early video game soundtracks, something called *New Jack Swing*) and place them into attenuated sound collages, which could be seen as audio equivalents to found-footage moving-image essays. Price takes the vernacular form of the mix tape and uses it to trace the minute movements and shifting tides of forgotten culture.

Then there's Marisa Olson's *Performed Listening* series, which consists of videos of her listening to music. The pieces explore the ways that consumption has become a staged performance of the self, in which we act out the ways we identify with and react to the products we wish people to see us identify with and react to.

Another take on popular music comes from Oliver Laric, whose work often explores the way people participate with the music they listen to. Laric's pieces *50 50* and *50 50 2008* both piece together entire 50 Cent songs from 50 different YouTube videos of users singing along to those songs. Each clip is similarly staged, with the performer singing directly into a webcam, mouthing the words or rapping along. Laric conjures a world in which identity is diffuse, scattered about among so many online vids; both the similarities and the small differences between the users are monotonously, yet mesmerizingly, driven home.

A very special episode of television's Full House devours itself from the inside out, excavating a hypnotic nightmare of a culture lost at sea. Tropes of video art and family entertainment face off in a luminous orgy neither can survive. *Light is Waiting*, 11:00, digital video with stereo sound, 2007. *All images courtesy the artist.*

Another expert at pop music appropriation is film and video artist Michael Robinson. Robinson's modus operandi is to involve the viewer in waves of bald sentiment and then slowly inch them towards an experience of alterity, and pop music usually serves his purposes nicely. In Robinson's *Hold Me Now*, a scene of what looks to be a hysterical woman in conversation with her lover is paired with the karaoke sing-a-long text for the Thompson Twins' song *Hold Me Now*; the lyrics light up when they are supposed to be spoken, so the viewer forms the vocal melody in their mind, and thus seems implicated in the action on screen.

A similar trick is performed in Ryan Barone's *Empty Orchestra*, which is a silent video in which the lyrics to the Talking Heads' *Once In a Lifetime* appear on screen in time with the absent music; the song proves to be so lodged in our cultural memory that we can't help but hear echoes of the music as we read the words on screen.

Pop music appropriation is certainly nothing new in art. As far back as 1922, T.S. Eliot inserted a line of *That Shakespearean Rag* into *The Waste Land*, transforming a joyous chorus into a hysterical mental breakdown. And of course, in the world of film, Bruce Connor and Kenneth Anger stand out expert appropriators of pop; the first using the music as a kinetic backdrop to his explorations of America's collective unconscious and the latter transforming 1950s American staples into the soundtrack for obliquely occult rituals.

But there seems to me to be something new about the way that artists are dealing with popular music. We live in an age of great anxiety about the relationship between cultural products and personal identity; how is it that things come to define us, and what does it mean when those things are disseminated through corporate channels? Popular music stands at the center of this anxiety because it is so often assuredly corporate, but it speaks to us on a level so immediate and visceral. Few people can resist the simple pleasures of cheesy pop, but what does it amount to when a person gives in to those pleasures? It seems to me that so much contemporary art deals with pop music not in order to give a ruling, but to use it as a set on which they can stage some of our modern anxieties.

The Hype of Shanghai Arrives in Chicago

Still from *Savage Grow*, Bua Hua, 2008 (animation video). Image courtesy of the Hyde Park Art Center

International video artists interpret Shanghai

BY CARRIE MCGATH

The Hyde Park Art Center is host to the video exhibition, "Shanghype!" from September 20 through December 13, 2009 in the second floor Black Box Gallery. Eighteen international artists, all working with the common medium of video and the theme of Shanghai's ever-changing landscape express the complexity of modern China with the pulsing city of Shanghai as the backdrop. The exhibit has moments of surrealism with nods to the play-like filmmaking of Peter Greenaway cut with David Lynchian imagery as in *Da Shi Dai.* In this piece, the viewer is met with a room draped in red curtains, à la "Twin Peaks," with a curtain draped over a form in the room. Then a man in a white suit enters this scene and reveals the object to be a bike with a horse's head and a saddle. The rest of film features the man roaming about in urban environs, as well as traditional ones like the bathhouse, ending in the return of the horse-headed bike to the calm of the red folds of the curtains.

Another piece, *Temporary Sculpture*, shows four or five urban or industrial environments where a red balloon inflates, eventually popping with a sound reminiscent of gunshots. This temporal sculpture works well with the urban, industrial scenes, and the red of the balloon shows an edgy contrast to the gray steeliness around it, expressing also potential harm or disaster in such a landscape.

The use of red in many of these videos brought to mind the tangible presence of communism, also bringing to mind Chen Wenling's side-splitting and terrifying sculpture in Millennium Park, *Valiant Struggle No. 11: Punish the Consumer.*

This sculptural expression, as well as the videos in "ShangHype!," all grapple to express a complexity that threatens to be inexpressible, ever daring us to try to understand that complexity. The eighteen artists in "ShangHype!" met this challenge, even with the hype and judgements of the world on their backs. The complexity is flux, a necessary and unavoidable flux taking place on the glittering stage of Shanghai, a place these videos depict living up to its malleable hype. It is a flux we feel in our own landscapes of overpopulation, loss of green space and a battered economy. This exhibit is strong, intriguing, timely, and is definitely worth the trip to Hyde Park.

"Shanghype!" at Hyde Park Art Center from September 20 through December 13.

Vintage Ambiguity

John Stezaker at Richard Gray Gallery

BY AMELIA ISHMEL

"Cutting the emulsion of the photograph is always something that I've found rather traumatic," said British artist John Stezaker. "It's something I'd like to get over very quickly, because—in a way—it's very much like cutting the surface of the eye."

Ironically, cutting and incising is the leading process defining Stezaker's work as a photocollagist and a leading figure of the British Conceptual Art group.

On September 9, Stezaker gave a public lecture and a brief view of his oeuvre at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Columbus Auditorium. This lecture event initiated the commencement of the 2009-2010 Parlor Room visiting artist/curator's lecture series hosted by the SAIC Photography Department. It also preceded the opening of his first exhibition in Chicago at the Richard Gray Gallery on September 11.

Stezaker's self-titled exhibition at the Richard Gray Gallery includes 18 of his recent photocollages. Combining found images—such as vintage photographs, old Hollywood film stills, and travel postcards—Stezaker described that by working with such an immense collection of vintage images he has positioned himself as a consumer rather then a creator of images.

In *Blind III* (2006), two anonymous men stand outside of a house, one extending an arm towards the other. The image is likely one pulled from a film; it is instantly narrative and ambiguous, potent in its suggestion, yet absence of referents. But to contemplate the setting and the characters, the viewer must overlook the most striking feature. Spanning from the top left corner of the photographs frame to the back of one of the men's eye is a harsh white triangle disrupting part of the photograph. It appears as a bright light, either coming from the man's eye, like some superman laser eye beam power —or reaching down from the heavens to blind the man's eyes out, like a misdirected Byzantine image of the stigmata. Stezaker's precision and careful treatment of materials reveals that both interpretations are flawed though. The triangle has been sliced away from the photograph's substance. The white of the paper behind the photograph provides the impression of light. Stezaker described alterations such as this as "interrupting the images' legibility."

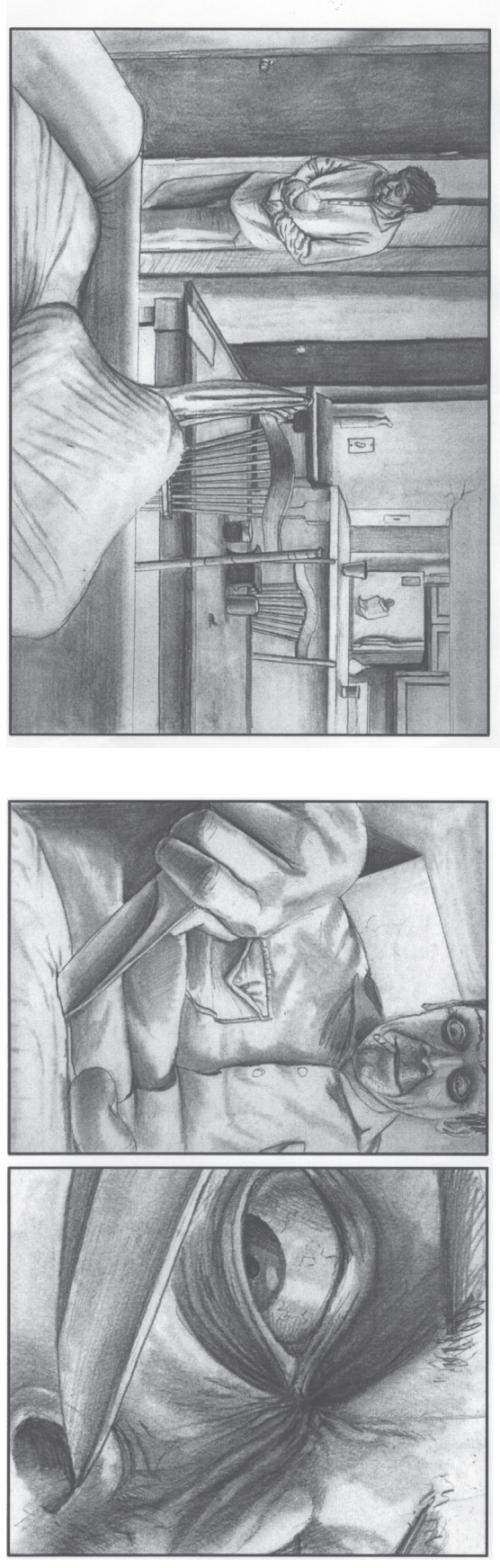
Four collages from his *He/She* series are included in the Richard Gray exhibition. Each of these collages includes two different actors' or actresses' faces cut and "fused" together to create a new profile and "pictorial trompe." Also included is one work from his *Marriage* series that combines the face of a man and a woman into one profile. As features line up wisely or are left fractured and disfigured, the results of these pictorial fusions are at times doubly handsome, at others schizophrenic, and in a few nearly grotesque. The series also seems to initiate readings surrounding gender theories and the construction of identities, both as original images constructed for films and as revisited imagery selected by Stezaker.

He (Film Portrait Collage), IX, 2007. Collage. 10 1/2 x 8 1/8 inches. Image courtesy of Richard Gray Gallery

By working with the material of vintage photographs, Stezaker accentuates the raw edges of the photographs in ways that would be difficult to simulate digitally. The direct process emphasizes the intervention of his own hand into the works. In this way, the actions integral in his process become a subject of the photographs as well. He described this inclusion as "a kind of inscription of my presence, within the realm of choice." *John Stezaker at Richard Gray Gallery, October 24, Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Saturdays.*

Joe the Man

BY ROBERT NUGENT



SEVERUS & ME

EDWARD

GOREY

BY EMILE FERRIS

HEH HEH HEH HE

THE FIRST TIME HE SPOKE TO ME WAS DOWN ON THE EL TRACKS WHERE I FOUND HIM PLUCKING WEEDS FROM BETWEEN THE RAILS. WHEN THE TRAIN WAS BEARING DOWN UPON US HE WAVED HIS WAND...

CEASE FOLLOWING ME OR I SHALL TURN YOU INTO A **TOAD**...OH I SEE THAT SOMEONES ALREADY ACHIEVED THAT END.

...AND THE TRAIN FLEW UP AND OVER US AND THEN RE-UNITED WITH THE TRACK.

WOW CLOSECALL! SO **HEY** WHAT ABOUT YOU & ME GOING OUT FOR A **DRINK** AND YOU CAN TELL ME ALL ABOUT THE POTION YOU'LL BE MAKING WITH THAT HEMLOCK THERE,

I - COULD TELL HE WAS IMPRESSED THAT I HAD IDENTIFIED THE POISONOUS PLANT HE'D COLLECTED &...

WHAT MAKES **YOU** THINK IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE TO DRINK WITH **ME** WHEN I AM IN POSSESSION OF **HEMLOCK**?

...DESPITE HIS TYPICALLY ACID COMMENT -THIS TIME HE DIDN'T **DISAPPEAR**....

TRICK OR TREAT!

...SO WE TOOK A SORT OF WALK TOGETHER...

SO WHERE'RE WE GOING SEV?

PILSEN..

...AND **YOU** MAY CALL ME *PROFESSOR!*

?

MEXICAN RESTA

YOU WANTED THESE?

YES..

ONCE INSIDE THE RESTAURANT A MARIACHI SPOTTED SEV & BROUGHT HIM A SANDWICH BAG WITH SOMETHING IN IT. WHEN I SUGGESTED THAT WE GRAB A BITE SEVERUS NODDED ONCE...IRRITABLY..

WE SAT AT A BOOTH AND A WAITER CAME FOR OUR ORDER

WHAT CAN I BRING YOU FOLKS TONIGHT?

FETCH US, PLEASE, TWO CHALICES OF REFRESHMENT

CHAL..?

UH YEAH... *SORRY ABOUT THAT...* WE'LL HAVE A COUPLE OF MARGARITAS

WHEN OUR DRINKS ARRIVED I ASKED SEVERUS WHAT WAS IN THE SANDWICH BAG...

MARIACHI TOE NAIL CLIPPINGS...SEV? **VERY WEIRD**..NOW TRY YOUR DRINK...

YES... CREATIVE POTION MAKING REQUIRES ONE TO THINK OUTSIDE THE MORTAR ...THIS CHALICE IS OBSCENELY COLORFUL

SEEING THE EXPRESSION ON SEVERUS'S FACE AS HE TASTED THE SWEET DRINK WAS LIKE WATCHING THE DARK AGES TAKE A SIP OF 1972