



# Everything

the riverside artists group magazine

Number 1

July August 1992

# listings

July/August

**Accademia Italiana**  
24 Rutland Gate, London SW7.  
tel 071-225 3474  
'Rediscovering Pompeii'  
200 objects excavated from Pompeii  
Until 2 August  
Daily 10.00am - 6.00pm Wed until 8.00pm

**Anthon D'Offay**  
9,21,23 Dering Street, London W1  
tel 071-499 4100  
*Anselm Kiefer*  
'The Women of the Revolution'  
Until 24 July, Mon-Fri 10.00am - 5.30pm, Sat  
10.00am-1.00pm

**BBC White City**  
201 Wood Lane, London W12  
*David Ross*, Paintings  
Until 15 September  
Exhibition is open to visitors and workers of  
the BBC.

**Benjamin Rhodes**  
4 New Burlington Place, London W1  
tel 071-434 1768  
*Simon Edmondson*, Paintings  
Until 7 August

## ALMUTH HARGREAVES "STEEL PIECES"

UNTIL 31ST JULY

JANUS AVIVSON GALLERY  
26 BOUNDARY LANE  
LONDON NW8

**Central Space Gallery**  
Closed until September

**Centre 181 Gallery**  
181 King Street, Hammersmith London W6  
tel 081-748 3020 x3532  
*Mary McGowan*, 'Initiation' Paintings on  
Glass, 14 July - 14 August, 10.00am-5.00pm  
Mon-Fri  
also: 'The W14 Girls Project with an Exhibi-  
tion of Large Puppet Sculptures'  
18 Aug - 4 Sept opening times etc as above.

**Commonwealth Institute**  
Kensington High Street London W8  
tel 071-603 4535  
*Kathy Shaw*, 'To Po Me Te Ao The Dark and  
the Light' Stained Glass Panels,  
until 2 August

**Connaught Brown**  
2 Albermarle Street, London W1  
tel 071-408 0362  
*Tony Bevan*, *Hughie O'Donoghue*, *William  
MacLraith*, *Robert Mason*, *Terry Setch* &  
*Victor Wiling*, Until 31 July (phone for times).

**Courtauld Institute**  
Somerset House, Strand, London WC2  
tel 071-872 0220  
C16 Bolognese Drawings, until 31 August

**Edward Totah**  
13 Old Burlington St, London W1  
tel 071-734 0343  
*George Condo*, *Jiri Georg Dokoupil* and *Tom  
Wesselmann*, until end July.

**Janus Avivson Gallery**  
26 Boundary Road, St Johns Wood  
London NW8 OHG  
tel 071-372 7230  
*Almuth Hargreaves*, 'Steel Pieces'  
1 July - 31 July, 12.00-6.00pm Wed-Sat

**Karsten Schubert**  
85 Charlotte St, London W1  
tel 071-6311 0031  
*Keith Coventry*, New Works  
Mon-Fri 10am-6.00pm; Sat 10am-2pm  
until 1 August.

(continued on page 11)

# editorial

AS WE OVERLOOK OUR PRESERVE FROM the heights of the **everything** editorial suite, we see a panorama. Hundreds of Artists (and artists) working in studios, workshops or in their homes, in many cases selling their skills as teachers, running workshops, engaged on municipal arts projects, or working in a job not related to the artistic life.

It is an economic reality that most practising artists have to decompartmentalize their lives, selling their skill and yet reinsensitizing their sensibility when they clock on at work. "It gets me the money to do what I really want to do". So we seek an equilibrium between Work and work.

In the first of our articles entitled "Strategies" we look for alternative ways an artist can work within society. "Strategies" is the first of a series of articles which approach funders, curators, artists groups and individuals to get their side of the big picture.

Also in this issue: The old saying goes "Wall Street sneezes and Acton catches the cold". West London novelist Celia Toler reports from a recession hit New York. Pangloss picks over the bones of the Francis Bacon obits and muses on the profound nature of the ephemeral, plus our as yet less than comprehensive listing section.

Our credo ELITISM FOR ALL attests to the fact that excellence can occur in any field, be it

in the White Galleries, within the context of the community or on the easel. Culture demands diversity and is not the preserve of (or reservation for) any one section. In the coming issues of **everything** we hope to cast our net wide. We also provide you with slogans and sayings which you can use at your own convenience in whatever context you choose. Also, the first ever microdot competition: just find the microdot containing the design of a secret weapon which is hidden in one of the matrix dots from which the text and images of this magazine is composed and sell it to a foreign and unfriendly power. [E]

The **everything** editorial collective.

**Everything** is compiled and edited by Keith Ball and Steve Rushton and produced by the Riverside Artists Group, Crisp Road, London W6. ©Copyright Riverside Artists Group.

We welcome your letters and comments which may be printed in future editions.

Deadline for submitted articles is the 10th of each month prior to publication.

Send submissions to: **Everything** editorial, Small Mansion Art Centre, Gunnersbury Park, Popes Lane London W3 9LQ. For listings deadline and advertising rates see page 11.

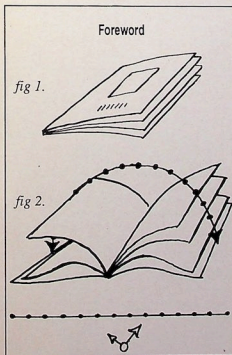
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Cover: 'Bog Oak Too', Keith Ball 1991.





# Toler: skin deep

Celia Toler in  
New York



Celia Toler

## SO WHAT IS HAPPENING IN NEW YORK?

In Metro Pictures there was a discreet sign warning parents that they might want to view the works inside before letting their children see them. "Walk Don't Walk" said the lights on pedestrian crossings. Even so, what Cindy Sherman was doing with prosthetics needed a certain kind of humour.

It was Saturday and the whole of New York was doing the gallery rounds (post riot). It's the time to meet friends and discuss dinner arrangements in front of the latest offering by Dennis Hopper in the Tony Shafrazi Gallery, 4th Floor in the Louver Building. What a day it's been already! "Did you see the show in Salvatore Ala? It's that guy Bainbridge doing something with stretch nylon 3 piece suite coverings....". "Meaningful man, that's interesting. Did you see the Schnabels at Pace?..." According to Geraldine Norman in the Independent (25.5.92), all 7 of Schnabel's huge abstracts had sold before the exhibition started, from \$100,000 (£56,000) to \$175,000 (£93,000). This is wildly different to what was being said in January when one gallery owner said he wasn't selling anything and certainly not to New Yorkers.

But expressionism is in again. Sitting in Michael Goldberg's studio eating salmon, there were no complaints, certainly not about the salmon, but Mike was not sure he'd finished the painting on the wall. "Is it the top left corner you're worried about?" "Oh

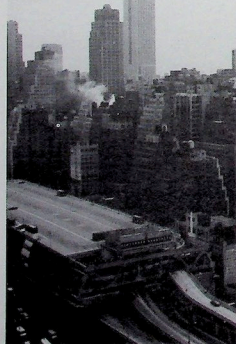


Photo: Steve  
Williams

no, I think it's the bottom left". Mike said nothing, just smiled, and answered the phone again as, on the dot of finishing dinner, it rang three times in succession.

In early May the gallery scene was abuzz with what were going to be the auction results from Sotheby's and Christies: was the Twombly going to reach its reserve? Were the Jeff Koons photographs going to sell? Would this be a sign of recovery? Over the last 18 months many of the 400 odd galleries in Manhattan have closed. May is the beginning of the season with four shows opening per night. Some are still serving champagne but most are on Perrier water. To counteract a questionable market, there's a trend for galleries to get outside help: the role of guest curator is now established. Basically it means nobody really knows what to do, but that's New York.

Over in Brooklyn, a derelict building was hosting an open show of the Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Co-operative. Stepping round pools of water and ventilated by broken window, vast concrete floors mocked the high varnish of Manhattan galleries, and one kept warm by walking briskly from one piece to the next. Outside down by the river, a small sculpture park has been opened in which New Yorkers can picnic and play. Guided more by the Parks Authorities and community projects, activity here belies the old familiar names that many galleries only dare to deal with. A stranglehold from the 80s of feeling that everything has been done and can now only be repeated, is not a problem ultimately for artists who will continue whatever, braver and more angry in hard times. Painter Steve Davis, in a bar off the Bowery, was saying that good work that criticises and reveals is still what is missing and that galleries have forgotten that it is artists who provide the product not the dealers who turn over the debris.

With the LA riots Americans have plenty to criticise, and in Manhattan, apart from blocking every road on Friday evening 1 1/2 hours early in an endeavour to get out of town, a thin cold rain made rioting less attractive on the East coast. In Washington Square on Saturday there were still plenty of people to join a demo, listen to a band and mingle with live theatre from Gorilla Rep doing an adaptation from Alfred Jarry's 'Ubu Roi'. On the subway where we all trying to keep our skin colours to ourselves, a native American told us all to go back home where we'd come from. Even so, divide and rule is firmly in place, starting with schools organised along bus routes rather than within communities.

On Sunday, in the Spring Street bar, people talked languidly about all this and more over their cafe creme and brioche whilst reading the NY Sunday Times where, in the arts section, they knew they would find the directives necessary for what to see next week. The Japanese left en masse to visit the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens where the cherry blossom was blooming but only one space was allowed for sitting on the grass. [E]

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Toler

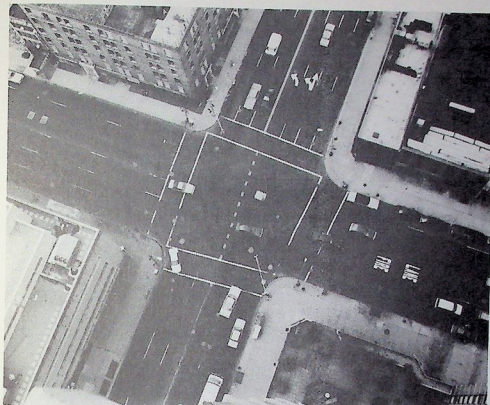
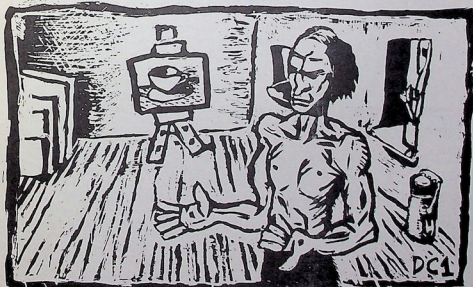


Photo:  
Steve Williams



Today Deep Colin visited my studio. He showed me the stigma and said: "That's what you get for thinking too much about God."



## strategies

## Everything

## EVERYTHING INTERVIEWS TIM EASTOP, Hammersmith &amp; Fulham Visual Arts Officer.

Let's put the resurgence of the interest in public arts into a political and historical context. In the 1980s we had the Toxteth riots and in the wake of the Scamman report we got various initiatives, things like Enterprise Zones. The Arts Council published its document 'An Urban Renaissance'. Helpline rode into Liverpool and the Garden festival came into being. This created a number of commissions for artists.

Garden festivals (appropriately for a nation that loves its gardens) have become a feature of British culture: Stoke (86), Glasgow (88), Gateshead (90), in all cases covering post industrial wastelands that paradigm of the Thatcherite era, the service industry. So it is not unreasonable to suggest that rather than contributing to the renewal of British society, public art is covering its deficiencies and making palatable an endemic industrial decline.

## Tim Eastop

I agree with the sentiments of the preamble to this question, but I'm not sure if anyone has done any detailed analysis which examines the extent to which public art is actually covering these deficiencies in Britain. In general I get the point that Sarah Selwood put forward in Art Monthly a couple of years ago in her article 'Public Arts, Private Amenities', where she was putting forward an alternative position to the establishment of the public arts world. She was trying to get to grips with why there has been such a burgeoning of interest in PA in the eighties, and I think she did to a certain extent put her finger on it. I think she was mostly right to expose one of the roots of recent developments of public arts. Garden Festivals are a classic, which came out of that appalling attempt to put a Band Aid over the open wounds in British society. They have singularly failed to help regenerate the areas, which was one of their prime functions. Theoretically light industry and service industry were meant to swamp in after the Garden Festivals had finished.

One could also take the point of view that a manifestation of this 80s boom is not only the Garden Festivals, but the Percent for Arts Scheme which also takes responsibility for provision in the arts away from central government through the Arts Council, and puts it into the hands of contractors. Also the Lottery. You take it away from government and give it first to developers and then to the gamblers.

That's getting close to the ultimate in terms of private funding and support for the arts. Don't forget, however, support for the visual arts is already at a low ebb. It was at a low ebb up until the 80s and then it was cut further by Thatcher's government. I'm not an art historian, but in this country it has always been the private sector, the wealthy patrons which have supported it. There have been periods when the state has come in, but we have never had a tradition of significant state support for visual arts in this country.

And it shows: The Percent for Arts Scheme is only

voluntary in 55 planning authorities in Britain. In America it's mandatory in 21 states and 98 City Councils. Given that situation, is anything going to happen with the Percent for Arts Scheme, particularly in this borough?

What's happening now is a convoluted and complex debate about what Percent for Art, and public art in general, is capable of doing and how to implement it and how to use it. It's still being developed. Percent for Art was actually started in Sweden in the 30s and has been in the States for many decades, but not necessarily producing a wealth of innovative, challenging, provocative and quality art.

What they call the Turd on a Plinth.

Yes the Turd in the Plaza, there is that whole approach. The fact that you make Percent for the Arts mandatory is no guarantee that the private developer, who has this imposed ordinance, is going to be cooperative and show good will or understanding and allow for good quality art.

What's the best way of ensuring autonomy for the artist and less direction from a corporate patron?

We have pushed the idea of Percent for Arts, because it's a kind of catch phrase which has caught on with architects, town planners, certain crafts people and public artists. It's useful to use, but it's not the panacea that a lot of people have put it up as. We have a very live and active debate in this borough about how Percent for Arts should operate as part of an overall arts strategy, from politicians through to our artists groups, who would like to bring even closer into this debate, to forge an effective way for producing funds for artists. The question of autonomy for the artist will be part of that process.

Architects have now latched on to the Percent for Arts label. To what extent do you think we are moving toward a genuine collaboration between artists and architects, or is art still an afterthought to architectural schemes?

I think there are still only a few architects who are confident enough of their own creativity to allow artists to work in close collaboration with their own thinking. That's not just a reflection of their competence but has a lot to do with the way architecture is taught and a reflection on the way our environment is built. Architects are so bound up, particularly in the last couple of decades, in the demands of financial constraints on a building and the profit motive, that inevitably they have not allowed themselves the 'luxury' of collaboration with artists. I don't think there's a national trend that I can pick up on of any real significance despite the work of groups such as Art and Architecture, the Public Art Forum and RIBA. And there are a growing number of architectural firms, however, who are willing to discuss Percent for Arts. Artists collaborating with architects is only one aspect of Percent for Arts, an aspect that has been pushed to the

foreground of what public arts in general means to a lot of people and that I's worry. What about Percent for live art, temporary installations, educational projects, the building of more studios, galleries and an improved public infrastructure for the visual arts?

It's also to do with big budgets, big budgets mean commissions, which doesn't necessarily need to be the case. You could give commissions which are specific to the community rather than say "What this place needs is a big Richard Deacon".

To my mind the former of what you say is actually more important than a few show case works...

They become show case works because they are after-thoughts. They have kudos for the developer.

The big catch sentence for every public art administrator is, that as long as artists are permitted entry to the design process right from the outset, you will have a user-friendly artistic environment that people can identify with and which will induce a sense of civic pride in a particular area.

Let's talk about the idea of a pool from which the local authority could collect money from lots of different patrons through the Percent for Arts scheme and then in some way make that money available to artists.

That is one of the specific objectives of the next phase of our PA strategy. Phase One has been to deal with a growing number of, albeit ad hoc, arrangements with developers and our own council capital programme to come up with a series of commissions ranging from quite large ones with the new developments at Hammersmith Broadway and developments at Elyth Rd right through to small integrated pieces of work on a small refurbishment scheme for a school. There's been a continual pipeline going of about five to eight works per year across quite a range. We have at the moment about 15 on the books at various stages which will be produced over the next three years. Phase Two is to build an accountable machine which operates a Public Art Fund which will be responsive to the variety of public artists.

Does that include arts groups' studio space organisations?

I think the categories for this type of funding have yet to be defined but in Phase Two we also want to support works of art which are of a temporary nature. Time-based, live art works which quite consciously, and quite offensively perhaps, intervene into areas and make political comments if necessary. We want that as a category area. The borough is supporting that through our grant aid to Riverside Studios and its public art programme, which has actually, some may disagree, been very very good, very powerful. Same with ACAVA, it has a public art element running alongside its exhibition programme. We want to bring in works of art which make comments about society as well as the aesthetic.

Let's talk about the limits of public art. Take this hypothesis: An artist puts forward a proposal stating that she wants to put up a series of brick walls around the borough, carved into them are various slogans like 'Fuck a Copper', 'Wogs Out', and 'God is Dead'. Now a debate about what can or cannot be said publicly would be the norm in certain contexts in the gallery space.

I don't necessarily accept the scenario which you painted as a useful one for this discussion, although it does raise the questions of censorship and the defining of art.

How about the London Docklands poster project?

Which is an ongoing project which is political, socio...

So is our hypothesis.

I accept that your hypothesis is political in so far as it would provoke political reaction from different communities, particularly against the 'racist wall' which would presumably be the expected response by the artist. It's unlikely people would leave the 'racist wall' as a metaphor for the structure of institutionalised racism, even if it was one of the intentions. Having said that, it's depressing how much racist graffiti is actually allowed to remain in our streets!

Are you saying that there is a certain danger for public art: art is only allowed to enhance aesthetically or have an involvement with the community which is conducive to it?

I am specifically not saying that. One of the areas I mentioned before was interventionist art work, art which is critical and of a temporary nature which is intervening into existing spaces and making political statements. That's something we want to see more of because personally, and in my role as arts officer, that is an absolutely fundamental area of visual arts. The point I was trying to make was that as visual arts officer I would find it very difficult to the give the accountable politicians the particular proposal you just put forward. It doesn't follow that the artists could not themselves independently attempt to install it in the knowledge that it would incite community action! It would be interesting to see which wall would be destroyed first and by whom. It raises the critical question about the autonomy and artistic freedom of artists in society.

But...

How else can I say it, because it's fundamental that artists are allowed to develop their own language and laws, because that's to my mind a very natural and basic part of art. I'm not saying there's a clear boundary to public art, or any art for that matter. Art and artists will survive and react against limits and censorship by the state as is the case with artists challenging laws such as Clause 28 in Britain, and the censorship of the 'Piss Christ' work by Serrano in America.

## strategies

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ACAV - Association for the Cultural Advancement of Visual Arts

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## strategies

**C** It's difficult to talk about what is not being commissioned, because it's not being commissioned for particular reasons. It couldn't be anything other than hypothetical. Hans Hacker never sells to the Deutsche Bank because he's very critical of them and you wouldn't expect them to subsidise him, but that indicates what is acceptable to patrons in a certain context. But let's talk about how artists operate in the real world. There is essential difference between support for artists and support for art. You may well get an artist who exhibits work in prestigious galleries, which is totally different to the work he does to make a living, let's say a mural. Are you subsidising artists or helping to create art. There's a difference, isn't there?

**TE** My impulsive response to that last question is that we do both; not just through our public arts. We fund artists in a number of ways. We also create through our funding the conditions for art to happen. I can't tell you whether we do one more than the other. We are one of the dying breed of London boroughs which still has an arts section within which there is a person responsible for visual arts, which supports artists and helps create the condition for art to happen. So I'm in a very privileged position to be even address those issues.

"It makes  
entire sense  
to be off the  
wall"

To answer the preamble to your question, the vast majority of artists have to supplement their living by working; if they happen to be working with some form of art work, where do they stop being an artist? Particularly artists who are moving into this new area of public arts, where do they become responsible to whoever is employing them, or to the objectives of the brief. That's a big dilemma for them, to what extent they can bring their personal issues into the public realm, and where do they draw the line, if at all.

**C** Someone is working on a community project which requires dialogue between the artist and the community, a block of flats or some other public space. The good side of that is that it keeps people in touch with what is going on and will not present them with a fait accompli. The bad side is that such dialogue can lead to design by committee.

**TE** There is a problem with setting a brief by selection panel, which often happens, particularly if the patron is a developer who wants to set down conditions such as 'it mustn't be offensive, it must be a certain size, it must be in keeping with the historic (what I would call the capitalist history of an area)...the list is never ending. There is a danger in that approach becoming the norm. I don't have a problem with the term 'dialogue with the community'. Part of the contracts that we have to draw up to protect both the artist and the commissioner is an education clause which encourages the artist to address the space in terms of social background, and it's up to the artist to decide in line with their own artistic process how they would like to make that happen. They might literally want to put up a blackboard and ask people what they would like to see on that site. To my mind this sort of thing is entirely acceptable. My personal view is that an artist sitting in their studio alone, is a really in dialogue with society.

Large part of the council budget is spent on education; is there a place for artists there?

**TE** I think there's an argument for a major look at visual arts education. We want to see artists coming in with wild, anarchic ideas, if you like, going into primary schools and engaging with kids of that age. Often the wildest ideas come from that age away and that feeds the artists' imagination. If we could build in an approach which encourages artists to have that link with the formal education sector as well as youth clubs etc, we will actually build up our visual arts education, our visual arts language, for future generations. It makes entire sense to be off the wall, eccentric, experimental. At present I have considerable concerns about art being ghettoised into areas where developers think they are going to get a profitable return on their investment, so art becomes more associated with office developments rather than where it is most needed; in areas of cultural deprivation.

It's still not integrated.

**TE** It's still being boiled on in a way. Back Together are making amazing and innovative collaborations, but I don't think the whole movement toward temporary and live arts is happening on anything like the scale necessary to make an impact on people's way of thinking. Innovative and original ways of thinking need to be taken into schools, where that debate can take place in young minds and take them forward.

How would the provision for the arts be affected by a change in the political colour of this borough?

**TE** At a certain level, officers of the council are banned from making political remarks. I'm not at that level fortunately. Personally, I would be excessively worried for the future for arts if there was a change in this borough, even despite this Labour administration's previous cuts in budgets. I would be very concerned if there was a change, for example, to the Conservatives, purely on their record during the 80s as a central Government in their support for the visual arts. Up to now this section has survived against considerable odds, through the poll tax and rate-capping. The arts section, normally the area to get cut first, has managed to survive, due largely to individual politicians and trade unions, who have been in the right place and have understood politically the importance of the arts. They have recognised that you can plug into different ethnic and cultural communities, their aspirations, cultural traditions and invention, whether it be music, performing dance or visual arts. If the borough recognises the inherent importance of anybody's culture, you have some defence of an arts section. The chair of our leisure and recreation department understands that basic principle, even though his hands are often tied by central Government. However, to be honest, I still don't think the arts are high enough on the politicians' agenda both locally or nationally, despite us pushing and pushing and having extremely good policies and provision. ☐

## PANGLOSS REFLECTS UPON WHAT THE FRANCIS BACON OBITUARIES DID NOT SAY.

The cherry on the Francis Bacon Memorial cake was placed by Maggie Hambling. She stated on BBC 2's The Late Show that she appreciated the humour in Bacon's works. There is a point after the deaths of the Great when the expressions of posthumous adulation get too much. The subject reaches a sort of critical mass and flies inside out, displaying attributes the opposite to those for which he or she was famed.

I only met Bacon once. If you can call being alone in the same room for about 15 minutes meeting someone. If you can call the top of a number 14 bus a room.

We travelled together from South Kensington to Fulham Broadway. I said nothing and he said nothing.

I wanted to ask him if he thought he was any good as a painter, to what extent his use of chance was a way of getting round problems which he could not resolve because of his lack of technical skill.

I didn't speak though, because I once heard this story about a young painter who constantly pestered Bacon, begging him to come to his studio and look at his work. Finally Bacon got tired of him and said: "I don't want to see your work because it isn't any good."

"But Mr Bacon", the young man protested, "you haven't seen it yet".

"But I've seen that tie you're wearing." This story stuck in my mind. It so happened that on this particular night I was returning from a fancy dress party and I was dressed as one of those early 1970's open university teachers that appear on TV at 3 in the morning. I was wearing a tank top sweater, kipper tie, side burns, parallel trousers and a check jacket.

So I said to myself: "I'll catch you later. You look good for another ten years or so."

I enjoy Bacon's paintings. Perhaps not to the extent of laughing out loud in front of them, but I enjoy the images and the colours whilst at the same time being conscious of their lack of facility. Reading through the obituaries there was much said about the fact that Bacon was "untrained", but little said about the success or failure of his paintings as works of art. I could only find a small section in the Guardian the Saturday after his death which suggested that Bacon's art was limited. The article took the view that under the layers of existential angst was a drawing aesthetic not dissimilar to that of a collection of Disney characters.

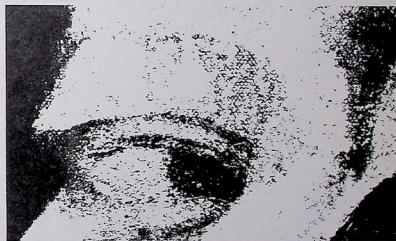
We are left with something of a contradiction: How can an artist who was happy to admit his lack of technical knowledge create images which, for many, powerfully sum up the 20th Century psyche?

I believe that this view is possible due to an unspoken orthodoxy which implies that sensibility takes precedence over technical ability. This ability is, in some sense, hostage to sensibility and that display of technical skill are seen, in the extreme,

as insincere and totalitarian, whereas in previous centuries skill and sensibility were married to form an artist.

Bacon said: "I know nothing about technique", but technique was of secondary importance, because everybody knows, an artist can supercede technique without conquering it.

It is only because of the fact that Bacon himself mentioned that he was working within limitations, that his admirers have had to spend so much time and energy doubting his word. The paradox of an artist who professes that "painting today is pure intuition and luck and taking advantage of what happens when you splash the stuff down" and is "a mysterious struggle with chance" creates the heroic myth of an artist who has a domain over chance, whose aim is the creation of a new and memorable image which is rested from chaos; of an heroic gambler who, like all true painters, gambles all. If we look closely at the paintings however, rather than a painter lassoing form from chaos, we see something which amounts to little more than an obfuscation of conventional pictorial orthodoxies. We see a clouding of the waters, an accommodation by an artist with his particular skills. The chance blobs of paint often conceal more than they reveal. Take as an example this detail from one of his paintings.



Bacon avoids modelling the roundness of the eye; there is a division between the flatness of the drawing and the freshness of the paint surrounding it. We are diverted from the substance of the picture, the weakness of the drawing is feathered away or covered over. This was Bacon's skill. The skill of making the very best of limitations which inevitably shaped his art and visual vocabulary. He was limited in what he is able to say and yet paradoxically his concentration on a relatively small repertoire of pictorial devices helped him to say what he could say most powerfully. One gets the sense that Bacon took the path of least resistance, accommodating and obfuscating the crudity or candour, if that is a word, that he has to give these skills such an imprecise name. ☐

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## Pangloss

an autopsy of  
post-mortems





## reviews

## Like Watching Ice Melt

## A SERIES OF THINGS ARE GOING ON AT THE SERPENTINE.

Anne Bean, Paul Burwell and Richard Wilson at the Serpentine. 14 June 1992.

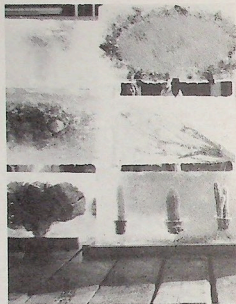


Photo: Steve Rushton

Some short events, some longer. Outside the gallery the piece by Anne Bean, Paul Burwell and Richard Wilson is melting. Stephen Cripps was associated with fire, through his pyrotechnic sculpture. A Fresh Bunch of Flowers, the piece which marks the tenth anniversary of his death, is made of large blocks of ice. Each block contains different objects. Flowers, partially corroded metal, a scorched book of botanical prints, cacti, a clock with only a second hand, a bottle of Bourbon and many other things. The fact that these things are frozen in ice gives their physical nature a greater poignancy. Their potential intensifies; the spikiness of the cacti, the perfume of the flowers. We become aware of these sensual properties because we are denied them.

For this reason I want the ice to melt so that these objects can get on with doing what all natural objects do best: grow and decay. However, in the ice these objects are suspended in the same status, presenting us with an idea of permanence which is also attractive. So I also want their relief from the life cycle to continue.

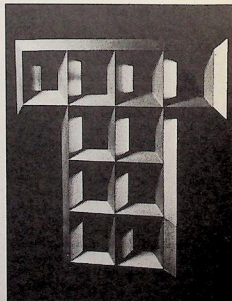
I feel these contradictory things because this work manages to bring together a wide range of generalized themes; the mortal, the vegetal, the memorial. It's essentially about what time does to things, and it's physically quite beautiful.

The temptation when describing works of art, perhaps because they often deal with issues of mortality, is to fall into that easy wonder of how things have a tendency to fall off their perches and

yet are for a moment beautiful. You know, Hamlet's soliloquy and stuff. But as Deep Colvin would say: "The purpose of art is to find new ways of stating the obvious".

**Almath Hargreaves** "Steel Works"  
Janus Pavilion Gallery, 26 Boundary Rd NW8  
1 - 31 July

"There is no up and down. Only out" - Buckminster Fuller. The space created in these pieces is very like the space in old Italian paintings by the likes of Daucio and Simoni Martini, from a time when there was an excitement and fascination with a mathematical system which created the illusion of space. Like those paintings these cast-iron reliefs are derived, initially, from one point perspective drawings. There is a playfulness in them, but they go beyond merely the subversion of pictorial and spatial conventions. They are not tricky, but rather encourage the viewer to invest space and to invest it into what are ostensibly two dimensional objects. The backs of these pieces are painted with fluorescent colour which, not visible to the viewer, reflect onto the wall on which the pieces are fixed. Each piece has an aura. Consequently, what these sculptures are disrupting is not only a picture plane but a field of light. They set up a tension between different ways of imagining space, both perceptual space which penetrates two dimensions and real space which is ambient, all encompassing and all enveloping. They allude to both the character and the appearance of space. They are both joyful and rigorous and must be seen. ☐



"Three out of Ten"

**Laure Genillard**  
13a Foley St, London W1  
tel 071-436 2300  
Inside a Microcosm" **Gavin Brown, Christopher Bucklow, Martin Creed, Peter Doig, Matthew Higgs, Jeff Luke, Marie Therese van de Kamp, Han Schuil, Jane Wilson and Joseph Mark Wright**  
Tue-Fri 11.00am-6.00pm; Sat 11.00am-3.00pm Until 1 August

**Long Gallery**  
Gunnelsbury Park Museum, London W3  
tel 081-992 1612  
**Lesley Giles**, Paintings  
Daily from 1pm, until 31 August

**Masbro Centre**  
87 Masbro Road  
London W14  
tel 071-603 1293  
**Millee Hill**, Paintings, until 31 July  
(phone for times)

**October Gallery**  
24 Old Gloucester St, London WC1  
tel 071-242 7367  
**Burroughs, Glover, Lalousschek, Olorunjoba, Rubio, Wilde and Yoshida.**  
Tue-Sat 12.30-4.30pm, until 15 August

**Photographers Gallery**  
5 & 8 Gt Newport St, London WC2  
tel 071-831 1772  
**Carl de Keyzer**, until 22 August, Ron Jude, Pamela Bannos & Dick Arentz until 14 August  
Tue-Sat 11am-7.00pm

**Rebecca Hossack at St James**  
197 Piccadilly, London W1  
tel 071-409 3599  
**Shaffique Uddin** 'Is Near a Fire' until 31 July  
(phone for times)

**Riverside Studios**  
Crisp Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9RL  
tel 081-741 2251  
**Jason Brooks, Katherine Clarke, Edward Lipski**, 'Get Real' until 2 August  
Gallery Tue-Sun 1.00-8.00pm, foyer daily 10.00am-11.00pm. Gallery is then closed until October

**Serpentine Gallery**  
Kensington Gardens, London W2 3XA  
tel 071-723 643/402

**Antoni Tapies** 'Writing on the Wall' until 9 August, daily 10.00am-6.00pm  
also: Flora Photographic's 'Master Pieces of Flower photographs, 18 Aug - 20 Sept (opening times etc as above)

**Site Specific**,  
317 Westbourne Park Rd, London W11  
tel 071-221 2766  
**Mark Constantine, Jeffrey Hickmott, Seobo Idriso, Nicholas Kirkham, George Mann, Gordon Shrigley and Brian Whitcombe.**  
Until 31 July (phone for times)

**Small Mansion Art Centre**  
Gunnelsbury Park, Popes Lane,  
London W3 8LQ  
tel 081-993 8312  
'Art of the Urban Now' 21 July - 22 Aug  
10.00am-5.00pm Tue-Sun

**Zelda Cheate**  
8 Cecil Court, London WC2  
tel 071-836 0506  
**David Hiscock**  
Official Olympic Artist for Britain, Tue - Sat  
10.00am-6.00pm, until 31 July

**Deadline for September listings: 15 August**  
To: **everything Listings**, Small Mansion Art Centre, Gunnelsbury Park, Popes Lane, London.  
Press release, B/W photos appreciated. Listings are carried free of charge. Box ads (as page 2): text only £25; with images £35.

## Backword



## listings

(cont)



**your  
ground  
is  
shaky**

**my  
position  
is  
flexible**