

Everywhere

the riverside artists group magazine

Number 3

Free

October 1992

listings

October

Accademia Italiana

24 Rutland Gate, London SW7.
tel 071-225 3474

Igor Mitoraj, Sculptures. Until 14 Oct
"The architecture of Lorenzo de Medici".
20 Oct - 29 Nov.

Daily 10.00am - 6.00pm. Wed until 8.00pm.

Anthony D'Offay

9,21,23 Dering Street, London W1
tel 071-499 4100

'Strange Developments'. Young European and
American artists.
also: *Andy Warhol*.

10 Sept - 16 Oct.
Mon - Fri 10.00am - 5.30pm,
Sat 10.00 - 1.00pm.

BBC White City

201 Wood Lane, London W12
*Keith Ball, Stephen Williams,
and C. Morey De Morand*.

5 Oct - 30 Oct.
Exhibition is open to visitors and workers of
the BBC.



art as object

An exhibition of paintings by
four artists:

Meena Jaffery, Terry Miles, ELYnne Beel,
Masgan Safa

5 October to 9 October

art as activity

A display and presentation of artwork
by local people with disabilities.

5 October to 9 October

Turtle Key Art Centre

74a Farm lane London SW6. Tel: 081-741 7548.
Level access, disabled toilets, induction loops.

Benjamin Rhodes

4 New Burlington Place, London W1
tel 071-434 1768

Eileen Cooper. 'New Drawings'.
9 Sept - 10 Oct.

Camden Arts Centre

Akrwright Rd, London NW3
tel 071 435 2643

'Northern Adventures'
European Art at Centre Galleries 1.2 and 3 and
Studio. Until 25 Oct.

Also at St Pancras Station
Until 15 Nov.

Central Space Gallery

23 - 29 Faroe Road,
Tel: 071-603 3039

'11 Print Makers',
16 Oct - 4 Nov.
Tues - Sun 10.00am - 6.00pm.

Centre 181 Gallery

181 King Street, Hamersmith London W6
tel 081-748 3020 x3532

The gallery would like to apologise for the
postponement of the video installation by
Jessica Shamash advertised last month. The

exhibition has now been rescheduled for
February 1993. This month *Pauline Voller*.
"Lean me your head, it might be of some
interest." Ink drawings and paintings.
10.00am - 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

Commonwealth Institute

Kensington High Street London W8
tel 071-603 4535

"The Art of Celebration in Bini, Nigeria".
Bose Ogoni 'Symbolism in Textiles' in the
Bhowmagree Gallery. Until 11 Oct.
Jonathan Eales. 'Pakistan, from out of the
shadows'. Today Gallery. 9 Oct - 22 Nov.
'Crosswinds, images of Asians in Scotland'
'Crosswinds, images of Asians in Scotland'
Photographs by *Herman Jai Rodrigues*.
Bhowmagree gallery.
16 Oct - 15 Nov.

Courtauld Institute

Somerset House, Strand, London WC2
tel 071-872 0220

'Kokoschka in the Princesgate Collection'
Until 28 Oct.

(continued on page 11)

editorial

ARTISTS EMPLOY:

critics, galleries, arts councils, RAB's, arts TV, art historians, curators, policy makers, arts publishers, arts magazines, arts ministers, arts forums..... It would be polite of them to at least consult their employers. Failure to do so may result in their dismissal. We have been wracking our brains, trying to remember who it was that said: "If you sit in the same draft, you catch the same cold." But after these issues of *Everything* it is clear that some kind of bug is going around. In a statement this can be summed up as: "Put art into the hands of the artists." The handoffing influence of policy documents on arts officers, Issue 1, the protracted political battles of artists who want nothing more than somewhere to work, ACAVA, last issue, and the enthusiasm and ability of Pullitt, see this month's 'Strategies'. These are all symptoms of the same thing. In the context of the recession which has seen galleries fold and arts funders pinched even tighter, it is clear that we all belong to the same system. However, policy documents exist in a world of their own, serving largely those who write them.

It is clear that, from all the policy statements and strategies, implemented or otherwise, in this country, attitudes to the arts and particularly to the visual arts, remain as unhealthy as ever. There are a lot of people talking about putting art back into the hands of artists, but artists are still, by and large, excluded from these debates. What we're left with, as ever, is lip service paid to this iden by many arts

enablers who are trying to defend outdated positions against a background of activities by artists who do the actual work. If any real appreciation of art is going to happen, it is not through the notion of consumer-led ideals. True appreciation cannot come about by targeting the product to suit the buyer. All we have done in the past ten years is change the names of the problems. If you start by defining the required end result, build up a terminology to make it happen and adhere to that terminology you will find that it will fail. Look at Docklands and inner city 'parachute art'. It will fail because it does not recognise the organic nature of art and culture. But even when the arts support industries fall away, artists will still be there. In the end the only thing that will prevent artists from doing anything they want to do is their own fear of freedom. [E]

The *Everything* editorial collective.

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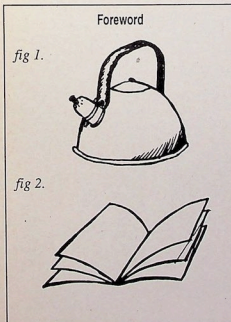
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Toler: Land Escape

Frans van den Boogaard:
landscape of an artist



Celia Toler

OH, TO ESCAPE FROM LONDON.

Those sunny days, those holidays, those memories of poems which soze with the heat and the glistening drops of ruby-red wine. I was sitting in Frans van den Boogaard's studio in south-west France, pencil poised ready to interview him, knowing that outside the sun was hot and that here inside it was cold, the beer was cold and then the realisation that the artist's work is no matter where you are.

Frans is Dutch, born in the Netherlands. He went to art school in Den Bosch and continued his work in Amsterdam, benefiting from the state grants that used to be available to artists up until 1982. Ten years ago he moved to France, taking advantage not only of the space and better weather, but also of better prices which, with hard work, enabled him to build his own house and studio. Amsterdam is as much a high-pressure city as London in terms of overcrowding, drugs, violence and a continual awareness of the world's problems. Moving to the country does not make one less aware of global problems but perhaps removes some of the continual evidence that, in order to survive, begins to dull the senses of city dwellers.

The simplicity of form in den Boogaard's abstract assemblages present a subversive calmness. The colours he uses are black, brown, grey, white and the occasional reds which screech tension. Like Anselm Kiefer's work, Boogaard's suggested landscapes have an eerie beauty that stretches beyond us. The work of Kiefer and Twombly seem to me to influence him and certainly he finds, in the work of these artists, a recognition of

his own aims.

He uses in his painting objects that have a history of their own. It is the moment before the final erosion which inspires him. He visits rubbish dumps regularly to collect the discarded, the broken and the used up. There is a richness in their history, a nostalgic romanticism, and he will gather the rough, peck-marked, corroded evidence into his studio to contemplate, sometimes for many months or even years, before it finds its way onto the canvas. There he orders and contains their existence within the painting which hints at a personal dialogue which, to explain, he feels will destroy the viewers' involvement and understanding. Fiercely defensive of the visual, he does not preclude the use of words in his work, scratched like a thunder clap, scrawled like a cry. It includes the use of the word in our lives without literary connotations but with a love of calligraphy and word as gesture.

In the studio there is a five by six-foot painting on which the open inside covers of books have been placed. They are old with curved typefaces but they are not there to be read. They are placed in two rows on a black background. They look like an enclosure, a fence or even a row of houses. Above the flat black horizon is a white sky activated by a violent storm in one half, with greys, black and a hint of red. This violence produces a tension, an unreleased tautness to those books which stand like monoliths.

Another has rusting iron, the roof of a former hen house, two wings and a lighter coloured middle. Again it is placed on a black background, not smooth but with thick and thinly painted brushstrokes, splattered with white, above which is a thin strip of white sky. Along the edge of the black horizon is written in red 'toiture' ('roof' in French.)

Photocopies are another of den Boogaard's approaches. He finds there is a rhythm to them, ten thousand can click away. They are easy, quick and modern. The photocopies are of dry bundles of tobacco leaves and other objects and, again, it is like the last imprint of their existence. Within these imprints, new landscapes form.

I am impressed by the piece in the studio, the silence from outside. One window looks onto a small green enclosure and the other, French windows, look into a stable where the sheep shelter. Country-living includes a certain amount of self-sufficiency but however impressed I am by these things that I dream about in town, Frans is dismissive of them. The cultural isolation is often very lonely. Barcelona, some 400 miles away, is the nearest place where he feels he could exhibit his work, or even find artists working in a similar area to himself. It is a complaint and also a warning. ☐

© Celia Toler 1992.



Frans van den Boogaard. 'Empty Books'

IN MAY I TOOK SOME OF MY WORK

from England to show in the Pro-Arts open studios. I have done this before in London but never in the States. It was interesting to note the difference. I can't really say anything about the quality of the other work as I was trapped in my studio, but I was favourably impressed by the organization. There were 550 artists exhibiting in a large urban area spreading across the East Bay, (the bit across the bay from San Francisco). Pro-Arts, the gallery (state funded) which organized the open studios actually managed to exhibit a piece of work from almost every artist represented. They did this by allowing exactly one square-foot per person, marked this area off with a grid of thread and all the work was hung in numerical order. The effect was surprisingly good and proved an efficient system whereby visitors could go to the gallery, choose the type of work they wished to see and look the number up on the map. Generally the response was good—enthusiastic and heartening in that people would actually come up to you and tell you that they liked the work. My experience of open studios in London is that people skulk in, looking worried that the artists might try to engage them in conversation. I

made several contacts with galleries and a Los Angeles art consultant. What comes of it all remains to be seen, however I am in two stalls in San Francisco next year.

The Bay area is quite a thriving area for artists but does tend to be a bit provincial, the main art scene being in L.A. Probably to make any kind of reputation one would have to be based in L.A., but San Francisco is fun, easy-going and infinitely more pleasant to visit.

However it's been hit not only by the recession, which has closed some of the larger galleries (many dealers are working from home, and the market for art in commercial spaces has apparently been hit hard) but also by a major earthquake and huge fire which destroyed hundreds of homes and some private art collections. Some artists in the open studios were hoping to sell, but the area is still reeling economically. Not of the freeways which fell down have been rebuilt and the building of private homes is also slow. All this sounds very gloomy, but that's not the impression one gets at all. On the surface life seems easier for artists there—all the artists I met had huge studios, often beautifully equipped.

☐
© Susan Light 1992.

Light

Susan Light
reports from the
Pro-Arts open
studios in San
Francisco



Susan Light



Today Deep
Colin visited my
studio and said:
"Truth lies
between
Assertion and
Paradox"

strategies

Everything talks to Pullit.

PULLIT IS A GROUP OF ARTISTS who run exhibitions in buildings that have been virtually abandoned by their owners. They raise their income from, among other things, organizing raves. They moved from squatting to opening, and are now on the move again. **Everything** talked to Scott Hills-Johnes and Bill Ellis at the end of 'Pullit X' (their tenth open exhibition), two days before their eviction from an enormous warehouse building in Camden.

E How did Pullit get started? What is it's history? **SH** Bill (Ellis) and another artist, Fred Alton, had an exhibition 18 months ago in Balham. I went along to help them hang it, they said: "Look, if you want to put some sculpture in, do," so I did. On the opening night we got stung for having too many people in, because this was a respectable little gallery and they didn't want too many people in there enjoying themselves. That's not what art galleries are for, also I wasn't allowed to show my work, because that was letting artists in through the back door. So that was no good. The guy who runs that gallery has got a serious problem. I mean you're talking about a couple of cupboards. It's not exactly God's gift to galleries, but the way they lord it over you, I mean, you're just an artist and they're gallery owners who seem to think they're a different race or something.

E They are.
SH I know, but it shouldn't be like that. It's a lot of old bollocks. They don't know what we charge, they've got no idea about art and they've got no idea about selling. Why should we be in charge of the art galleries of this country beats me.

E Well, the idea of many gallery owners is that it's a shop which they don't have to buy the stock for and the artists bring their own customers.
SH But we brought our own customers and they didn't like it too many. Anyway, after that Fred Alton had made an arrangement down in Brixton where there was an old warehouse, about 20,000 square feet that we painted black in return for being able to use the space, because this guy was going to turn it into a theatre. The first opening there was of about five artists. Other artists came and said: "Can we show as well?" and we said, "yeah, there's plenty of space just bung your stuff on the wall." We had a three-week licence on this place and after about two weeks there were about twenty artists showing. So we arranged a second opening for the artists who weren't there at the first one. We got thrown out that night for having too many people there. I thought: "Hello, there's something funny going on here." So we actually broke a window trying to get in. So, we were stuck on the street with the work of about twenty artists.

E That was a Saturday night and on the Sunday we heard about the Cooltan Building in Brixton being empty, so we went and had a look. We were able to get in and it was perfect, so we loaded the van up and just moved straightly the same reason. We ran an extension lead for power into the factory and that sufficed until we got a temporary builder's supply,

PULLIT building,
44 Arbour Square,
London E1.

and it was all good. Pullit Three opened about three weeks later.

SH That's when we started doing this on a regular basis, with open shows being about six weeks long. We used to have about three weeks between shows but we extended that because it got so fucking crazy. **E** You couldn't do that with this one (Pullit X), it's an enormous exhibition?

SH No, we have about four weeks between shows now. What happens is it's just forward-manage so that at the time Pullit X opens, the applications for the next one are there and are going out. It's just basic timing really, because to hang 300 paintings takes about three days, so that's not a problem, getting the artists to deliver their bloody work on time is the problem.

E Back to the Cooltan building, what happened with that?

SH We had Pullit Three to Six there. By the time we got to Pullit four we had 1,200 people round, by the time we got to Pullit Six we realised we had to move.

E Is that the main reason for Pullit's existence, this rolling programme of exhibitions?

BE Yeah, that's the breathing of the beast. We have a lot of people with a lot of enthusiasm, who put in a lot of energy, and that's how it works with the shows, because between shows there's a lot of work to do. We charge a hanging fee which is ten pounds, five pounds concessions, and if you're really cheap, then you can come along and help out on the building.

E You've tapped into a pool of enthusiasm and used that as your main resource, and made it work. From what I understand you don't receive funding from anybody.

SH We're like scavenger skip hunters really. We scout an area and rob it what it can give, because we've had to, because we've never had any funding, we've never had any cash, we started off with what we had in our pockets, which wasn't much. If you try to cash in on government grants, subsidies etc, I think it becomes too political. That's what they all, both galleries and councils, have hated about us, that we've asked nobody. We didn't need their permission or help. We just fucking got on with it. If they'd leave us alone then we'd make a success of this, and by success I mean it would be a permanent feature in the London landscape.

E So you would be in firm support of the abolition of the Arts Council and RABs etc?

SH Oh, fuck, yeah, of course. I mean why should anybody be supported? Why should anybody go cap in hand? There's this whole patronising aspect to sponsorship and stuff, you know: "You're not able to support yourself, you're not able to manage your life like you're an artist. I, the benevolent one, will help you to manage your life." What a lot of old bollocks man. I mean, really, it stinks doesn't it. It's like positive discrimination. I hate positive discrimination for exactly the same reason. "Oh, you're a woman, you don't do such successful art, so I'll let more of you in than we would normally. It's a

contradiction, it's like positive slaughter or something.

E Friendly fire?

SH Yeah exactly. I think what happens is as soon as you start to play victim, you disempower yourself. You cripple yourself and you become beholden to others.

E So, how did you manage to get this particular building (46, Jamesstown Road, Camden)?
BE Well, this one was quite curious because it actually got out. It came looking for us in Brixton. The landlord read an article in the paper and said: "I've got this big warehouse in Camden, do you want to come and have a look at it?" So we came, had a look, showed him the press books and stuff, told him what we did and he was saying, "yes, yes, yes, yes, no problem, that's fine..." He gave us six months rent free and an agreement to let us act however we wanted to in the building. He was in support of our activities which included our night club. So it's interesting to see him being the one to then serve an injunction to stop it, and effectively to cut off our income. He just got greedy and it became quite a political point as well. We see a collusion between the landlord, the council, the police...

SH Then there's also the Roundhouse that's involved, 'cos the Roundhouse was sold off the month after we were closed as an art centre. It's about a hundred metres from here.

E So who is going to be operating the Roundhouse?

SH Well, our landlord was the broker, so reach your own conclusions. I think he thought: "Oh that's a fucking good idea." It was like: "How many people were there last night?"

E About two-and-a-half thousand?"

"How much was the door price?"

"Ten pounds, that's what it was."

"Oh right, that's twenty five grand, those bastards. I could do that."

That's nothing to do with the reality, which is just that he's got to be greedy, but I think that that did cross his mind.

SH It's rented, or Pullit. What? ph, charity, what?

SH It's rented, or what, to Pullit, which at the moment is a partnership, but we will be going limited in the next couple of months I hope, and that'll open up the possibilities. It won't be such a closed shop. It opens it up to anybody who wants to buy into it.

E You mention in your Pullit Ten newsletter that you broke the one million pound threshold on turnover. Is that accurate, or just a bit of tongue-in-cheek bullshit?

SH No, it's not bullshit, it's just a figure. You can't believe everything you read, but if you take £20,000 on a Saturday night, you know that a £1 million result is within your grasp, which means basically that you are building in Docklands that we fancy, we can afford. We're still putting money into it. I think that's something that's going to change. It's a bit like running the four-minute mile, once you've done it you know you can do it again.

E Clearly it can't be just the two of you running the thing. How many people are involved at the core?

BE No, there are about 12 people now who take charge of different areas, but it's fairly fluid, people get involved. We have a system like a benevolent dictatorship. So it means that me and Scott will make the big decisions, but it wouldn't be without having felt what the others wanted. When we were in the Cooltan, we had Wednesday evening meetings.

Then we realized that there would be two or three people who would dominate the whole meeting about what had to be done, about structure, about this, about that and then they would pass off. You wouldn't see them until the next meeting, when they'd stand up and do it again. It was ridiculous.

SH What I'd like to do, when we're permanent, is to write a handbook for artists on how to do it: how to set up your own gallery, don't look for shows on the circuit, break the circuit with your own galleries. This recession is the only time to take control, to try and establish yourselves before they start kicking us all out again.

E What about the critics? Do you get any response from them?

BE They have ignored us totally, right up until this show, when O1 did something. I think because of the idea that squat art is bad art, we're all unknown artists, here today, gone tomorrow and not worth seeing. It's off the circuit.

E But that's what is interesting about it. More people get to see your exhibitions than those in Cork Street or any of the mainstream galleries. They may not all be buying, but you're widening the audience, aren't you?

SH Well that's what I think, there's not the appreciation of art in this country that there is on the continent. So, if we get them young, people who would never go into galleries, we can re-educate them by showing them that they can enjoy art in the kind of environment they're used to. They'll come to a rave, but they'll see art on the walls. It becomes part of their experience. The gallery would never buy art, because they're educated not to. So by making it part of their experience, who knows, you've got to think in the long term, but perhaps in five years time, they'll buy a painting. You're creating a market for the future and widening art appreciation. It's a long process and one which would not be necessary on the continent, but it is here. So, yeah, fifteen thousand people saw our last show, that's a lot by any standards.

E How has the projected move to Docklands come about?

SH Well, first we went to see the LDDC, and we said, more or less, "you want a crowd, we've got a crowd, let's work together..." I'magine the guy that approached them, J.C. (Pullit's magazine editor) put it much better, he said: "You've got to build, we build purpose." So we've got an agent looking around now, and basically it looks as if it'll happen.

strategies



Condensed version of Pullit cartoon from Pullit X catalogue

Hargreaves

Day Two in the Third Visit of Almut Hargreaves to Moscow

THE HANDWRITTEN POSTER

announced in black, black and red cyrillics that Almut Hargreaves from London would be giving a talk on contemporary western art (legacy of Marcel Duchamp?) on 14 May at 11 o'clock in the lecture theatre of the Stroganovskoye Institute in Moscow.

I was ready at 11 o'clock with a borrowed slide projector which changed slides at the push of a button and was therefore infinitely superior to the college apparatus which just about shone a light through a slide.

A steady trickle of students began to fill the back rows. I fussed myself projecting the first picture into the middle of the screen using a dandy, books and magazines for the fine adjustments. A girl came up to me and introduced herself with a shy smile. Caroline had lived in Singapore for the first five years of her life and spoke reasonable English. Good! I thought, if the interpreter doesn't turn up, this one will have to do the translation. Two days earlier I had handed a copy of the talk to Olga, the magenta-lipped foreign studies teacher who was assigned to me as interpreter. One day later Olga showed signs of panic - she hadn't done anything like this before and had never heard of the artists I had chosen to talk about.

How to pronounce Sol Lewitt, Damien Hirst, Julien Opic, Sophie Calle? She knew of Jeff Koons and could correct my inaccuracy in promoting La Ciociolina to Minister of Parliament. "No", Olga pointed out: "She is Member of Parliament, not Minister." Slowly the lecture theatre filled. It was eleven thirty by now and at last I spotted Olga rushing to the platform. She was dressed in a smart suit which placed her somewhere between Juan Collins and Margaret Thatcher. She looked flustered and apologised for being late. The manuscript was, however, in her hands and I relaxed - we'd be all right.

Professor Burgonov introduced me as the person who was going to try and make a temporary bridge between Moscow and London, East and West. Then the lights were turned off. All that was left was a little yellow puddle of light from a desk lamp, just enough to see the pages of my text which I read, a paragraph at a time, followed by Olga's translation. I had attempted to place the development of art at the turn of the century into a scientific and historic context - so that the work of Marcel Duchamp would seem logical if not inevitable. "The ground had been pulled from people's feet by discoveries which destabilised established thought. Newton's deterministic universe had been pushed aside to make room for the theory of relativity and quantum theory. Why should a dynamic discipline such as art continue unaffected by such changes?" ... etc.

Then I showed slides of ten very different

contemporary artists from the West in order to discuss whether the elements of Duchamp's iconoclastic gesture, the urinal in the gallery, were still present or if we had become just another generation of established line bashers. I talked for about an hour.

The questions which followed were mostly concerned with the materials from which the pieces were made. What, how, why were they used? Craig Wood's water-filled plastic bags lying on the gallery floor prompted far greater energy than Jeff Koons fucking La Ciociolina in explicit technolour. "If we had such plastic bags we'd put our food into them to keep it fresh," said one young man wearing American style camouflage army trousers and a black

T-shirt. Damien Hirst's real pickled shark was met with "This artist must be very secure to think of making artificial fear." (When I later told Damien Hirst about this reaction he pointed and said that he wasn't at all secure - he had had to borrow the money from his bank manager to finance the piece!) Terence Bond's pastel-coloured solid wooden toilet rolls caused hoots of delight; Sophie Calle's photographic records of her work as self-styled private detective in an hotel were met with disbelief. "Is this allowed?"

I talked to the students about the art school system in Britain and finished by inviting a general discussion on the material I had put before them. One student who spoke excellent English asked me whether I was aware of the implications of psycho-analysis in Russia. A tutor broke out, the Russian-only speakers didn't want to miss a word and Olga had to translate and pacify in every direction. A student whispered to me that this person was "a cadette at all and had only come to the lecture to show off his brilliant English. One angry student asked where Jeff Koons would be without his computers, assistants and whatever aids he employed. "I can sculpt", the student boasted, "he can't?"

"We have different traditions - we can't make work like you?" "Do you like our work?" "Do you like your own art?" "What do you think we should do?" - the questions rained down on me. One woman in her fifties spoke quietly but with some authority for a long time. Olga translated the abbreviated version for me: "It's too early to make definitive value judgements on contemporary art in the West, much too soon. Later on we can assess it better."

I was beginning to realise that the direction I had intended the discussion to take had been bypassed by much more urgent local concerns. Instead of seeing the art which I was presenting through western eyes my own perspective was shifting temporarily further east. **E**

©Almut Hargreaves. 10 September 1992

MOST ARTISTS WANT THEIR WORK

to speak for itself. "If I could explain that, I wouldn't have to do it in the first place." They are dragged by their hair to the word processor by catalogue deadlines and the demands of the curator to put out a press release. In the end the truth of anybody's work is anything but self-evident. But didn't you just hear them say: "If I could explain it..."?

The best way to start a statement is to squeeze onto the sofa with a couple of luminaires and begin: "Picasso said..." or "Ad Reinhardt said..." or, "The Oracle of Delphi..." Or you could assume the guise of an art critic. These statements unanimously begin: "My art is essentially about the notion of..."

The myartisessentiallyaboutthenotionof school of statement-writing speaks the same language and with the same high SPWQ (Syllables Per Word Quota) as those articles by post-structuralist intellectuals. SPWQists love to split words up. You get things like this: "My art is essentially about the notion of the (Sub)lime and tran(End)ance and the probatnismatn... etc"

This is the freest form of statement-writing because you can make up your own, new words. But remember - any knowledge of etymology is a distinct disadvantage. The problem with SPWQ writing is that you can alienate(A) your audience because people get scared by it. They think it makes sense. You know the sense of it can be contained in as few as four letters. It's essentially about the notion of bullying other peoples brain cells and dressing up common place ideas in a grandiloquent soufflé of (significations). Ploy three is to climb into the skin of the third person. This gives a statement the feel of objectivity and in the right circumstances can also give the impression that other people have heard of you. The danger of this approach, however, is that it can look transparent, a fake version of the stick note to the games teacher.

But statements will always be necessary in order to tell people what to think. Artists will always want to stick the reader in a position to see things from their own perspective. These days art cannot be seen innocently because we all believe different things and each of us uses a number of different ways to see different things. In the absence of a pedigree you are stuck with writing statements, until the day when everybody will know where you're coming from, and your work can be summed up with an emblematic cliché: "Very Amish Kapoor," "Very Rachel Whiteread," "Very Ken Brasington..." Then other people will write inaccurate responses about your work. You will complain of course, but only after reams of words have been written about you will you be able to say: "If I could explain it I wouldn't have to do it in the first place." **E**

I VISIT DEEP COLIN and get him to deliver the above article to the editors, the bald one and the one with the beard. I return home through the autumn rain (or my bolt-in-the-bag meal-in-one. It's cod with a pizza topping in olive-oil-coated breadcrumb). I place the casted sacket into a pan of boiling water and smile. I am happy because I'm saving so much time. Time, which I can now devote exclusively to the exigency of aesthetic contemplation. But the passage to my longed-for communion with Goethe's Mothers (the primordial architects of intellectual forms) is blocked by the ringing of the contraption which links my tie to the outside world. I answer. It's an editor. The bald one. He says: "It's all very well, this stuff about artists' statements but I asked you to write about why things are beautiful - why can't you stick to the brief for once?" I respond in the usual fashion and walk away leaving the receiver to pendulate. The bald one wants it in a nutshell, a bite-size piece of functional truth that his channel hugging little mind can, like the tongue of a chameleon, catch. He can't understand our understanding of beauty is derived from our entry through the painted portals of birth, when we appear like wrinkled moles into the warm, milky reception of life. Long before a huge adult points a finger at shapes like A, B and C, five planets orbit our lives in perfect equilibrium. They are: taste, smell, touch, hearing and sight. Long before the white noise of babbling adults forms into recognizable sounds we are engulfed by the oceanic realm of the senses. Before we can encase ourselves within the citadel of language we are both infinitely vulnerable and infinitely receptive. In this state we acquire a grammar far deeper and far more mysterious than the grammar of verbs and nouns. We are free-floating in a sea of sensual literacy, the literacy of forms which are themselves, forms without association, the building blocks of colour and texture which make metaphorical life possible. In this state of innocent grace we are shown everything, understanding only the things we are shown and nothing of what we are told. That, my bald friend, is why we can begin to find things beautiful. That is how we can begin to understand works of art that are more than descriptions of themselves. On reading the above I see in my mind's eye the bald one knitting his Cro-Magnon brow and saying: "I could give a bouquet of this bullshit from Interlora," because he doesn't understand the essential paradox which makes life worth living, nor does he understand the difference between being shown something and being told something, the uncommunicable dilemma of writers, since 'someone' made the first ever beautiful thing. I feel a cold sweat on my palms. I release my fingers from the typewriter and smell the burning of a plastic sacket. **E**

© Pangloss 1992.

Pangloss Bogus



Pangloss has been taken ill and has been given a month's leave. He will be back in issue five. Editors.



Photo: Stephen Williams

Almut Hargreaves

reviews

GEORG BASELITZ PRINTS 1964-1990, TATE GALLERY UNTIL 1ST NOVEMBER

"Baselitz? Oh yes, he's the guy who paints his figures upside down." This complex and fairly heavyweight artist has also been cute enough to offer to critics and public alike (now both grown lazy on an increasingly bland diet of insouciant art strategies) this convenient one-liner for the history books. (Even if the bath water of art history is being emptied the baby is still screaming louder than ever). Irritating though, that it's so hard to address Baselitz's work without paying at least lip-service to this seemingly glib, though relentless artifice.

Labeled a neo-expressionist, Baselitz, in the self-conscious mid sixties, adopted the conceptualised strategy of the inverted image, choosing these "unaccustomed ways" of organising his pictures "to discourage any narrative interpretation and to assert that I have no interest in directly representing or imitating the visible world".

In asserting the pictures identify as picture in its own right he achieves, at his best, a powerful if uneasy balance between formal elements and (despite his repudiation of content) strong figurative imagery. At his worst the picture as 'thing in itself' comes very close to the merely decorative or evokes nostalgic memories of earlier expressionist idiom. Baselitz himself found little to admire in expressionism. It was Dada that interested him and the inversion of imagery is a subversion of expectation not a freedom from it.

For a child, painting from all angles on the floor, there is no up or down and the orientation of the finished picture on the wall is of no consequence - it is the process of painting that is important. Baselitz makes a product and has his white wall destination well in mind and behind the anarchy one senses a precociousness. Ultimately the banality of the upside down concept puts one in a facetious mood. How upset would Baselitz be if his pictures were hung the wrong way up?

© High 1992

ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH SCULPTORS, WOODLANDS ART GALLERY, 90 MYCENAE ROAD, BLACKHEATH SE3 7SE, 19 SEPT - 18 OCT

"The continuing presence of a wide range of sculpture is a fact largely unacknowledged," said William Tucker. "Modernism was born and developed mainly through painting, while sculpture, even its more modish and conceptual extensions, receives relatively little exposure. A substantial group show of British sculptors, the RBS at Woodlands, is therefore to be welcomed."

But what are our expectations of such an exhibition? The very name 'Royal Society' may engender dismissive thoughts of academia, of fixed professional standards and craftsmanlike skills; even elitist society-serving and old-boy network public commissioning. In fact the RBS is changing radically, dynamically committed to increased cooperation between architects and sculptors to engender "a

revival on a scale unprecedented in post-Renaissance sculpture".

The Society, formed in 1904 and given its Royal Charter in 1911, is now of charity status and has a vigorous program of events and exhibitions including initiatives outreaching to the public, corporate, and private sectors, as well as to education and young developing sculptors. It also sponsors, together with the National Gallery, the Woodlands Art Gallery. Here, the 28 selected artists include some well-known names - William Pye, Glyn Williams, Roand Piche, John Skelton and James Butler to name a few. None are fresh from art school its true (Willy Soopkop is now 85) but the exhibition is none the worse for that. The sculpture, whether figurative or abstract, reflects the resurgent interest in "traditional" materials - bronze, stone, wood, water. The concerns are of form and content. There are no "interventions" or "appropriations", no buzz-words at all in fact, but a solid show of free standing works that exist in a real world of gravity and light.

1) "The Condition of Sculpture" 2) Philomena Davies, President of RBS, 1992 brochure. © High 1992

TAI SHAN SCHIERENBERG AT ANGELA FLOWERS GALLERY AT LONDON FIELDS, 282 RICHMOND ROAD, LONDON E8, 12 SEPT TO 11 OCT.

Tai-Shan Schierenberg is an artist who has decided to take on the figure as subject matter. This is not the 'new age' figurativism we have been used to, with badly drawn figures floating whimsically all over the place, but work, like that of Celia Paul and Nicholas Volley, which requires rigour and total dedication to the act of looking. His painting comes from Siebert out of Auerbach, and is not without a touch of Freud in the isolated figures in the studio. It is devoid of narrative except, perhaps, for one of the largest pictures, a naked man with two clothed women and two children on a sofa, where some sort of story is implied.

But mostly the story is in the paint, which is streaked, smeared and coerced into the semblance of features that keep shifting in and out of focus making the sitters convincingly real.

Schierenberg is interested in the processes of perception and realises that we do not see in sharp focus all over the field of vision. This awareness enables him to take audacious risk, such as the creation of an area of white studio wall that flows over the figure's shoulder, breaking up its hard contour, and yet the effect remains totally convincing.

In the smaller Norfolk landscapes, also on show, the bracing wind and rain are almost tangible. These paintings are not putting forward any sociopolitical ideas. They are one person's honest reaction to the problem of depicting the three-dimensional world on a two-dimensional canvas. And they succeed. © Spicer 1992

Goethe Institut

50 Princes Gate, Exhibition Road, London SW7.
Tel 071 411 3400
Wolff Vostell, "Works on Paper".
2 Oct - 7 Nov.
Mon - Thu, 10.00am - 8.00pm.
Fri 10.00am - 4.00pm, Sat, 9.30am - 12.30pm.

Hammersmith and Fulham Public Arts Project.

Stephen Willats, "Living Tower".
Photo-montage installation made with residents of Linacre Court.
Viewing 3 - 17 Oct.
Linacre Court, Great Church Lane, London, W6.
Tel 081-748 3020 x3532.

Janus Avision Gallery

26 Boundary Road, St Johns Wood, London NW8 0HG.
Tel 071-372 7230
Jimmo Kang, "Granite Sculptures"
Until 19 Oct.
12.00 - 6.00pm Wed to Sat.

Karsten Schubert

85 Charlotte St, London W1
tel 071-6311/0031
Abigail Lane
Until 10 Oct.
Bridget Riley, "Works on paper, 1982-92".
15 Oct - 14 Nov.
Mon - Fri 10.00am - 6.00pm,
Sat 11.00am - 3.00pm.

Laure Genillard

13a Foley St, London W1
tel 071-436 2300
Gladstone Thompson
from 10 Sept.
Tue - Fri 11.00am - 6.00pm,
Sat 11.00 am - 3.00pm.

Long Gallery

Gunnery Park Museum, London W3
tel 081-992 1612
"Battle of Brentford 1642".
An exhibition about Brentford in the Civil War.
26 Sept - 18 April 1993.
Daily 1.00pm - 4.00pm.

Masbro Centre

87, Masher Road,
London W14.
tel 071 603 1203
Maria Murtagh and Martin Chesterman,
ceramic artists. Until 31 Oct. Phone for times.

October Gallery

24 Old Gloucester St, London WC1
tel 071-242 7367
"Contemporary Art from Trinidad and Tobago",
Until 10 Oct.
Julietta Rubin
15 Oct - 14 Nov.
Tues - Sat 12.30pm - 5.30pm.

Photographers Gallery

5 & 8 Gt Newport St, London WC2
tel 071-831 1772
"Desires and Disguises", Contemporary Art
from Latin America. Until 10 Oct.
Sallya Biswas, 16 Oct - 14 Nov, *Karina Litagova*, 9 Oct - 7 Nov, *Suzanna Pieratzki*,
"The Five Senses", 9 Oct - 7 Nov.
Tues - Sat 11.00am - 7.00pm.

Rebecca Hossack at St James

197 Piccadilly, London W1
tel 071-409 3599
Masmat Teraaka,
Until 12 Oct.
Phone for times.

Riverside Studios

Crisp Road, Hammersmith, London W6 9RL
tel 081-741 2251
Magye Roberts, Photograph-based installation
in the foyer and alcove spaces.
Until 1 Nov.
Foyer daily 10.00am - 11.00pm.

Serpentine Gallery

Kensington Gardens, London W2 3XA
tel 071-723 643/402
Richard Serra, Drawings done in situ.
7 Oct - 15 Nov.
10.00am - 6.00pm daily.

Small Mansion Art Centre

Gunnery Park, Popes Lane,
London W3 8JQ
tel 081-993 8312
Paul Butler, "Passers By". 13 Oct - 15 Nov.
1.00pm - 5.00pm Tues - Sun.

Deadline for November listings: 15 October.
To: **Everything Listings**, c/o 65 Thorpe Road
London E17 4LA.

Press releases, B/W photos appreciated.
Listings are carried free of charge.
Po ads (as page 2); text only £25; with
images £35.

listings

(cont)

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