

NEW OBSERVATIONS

133

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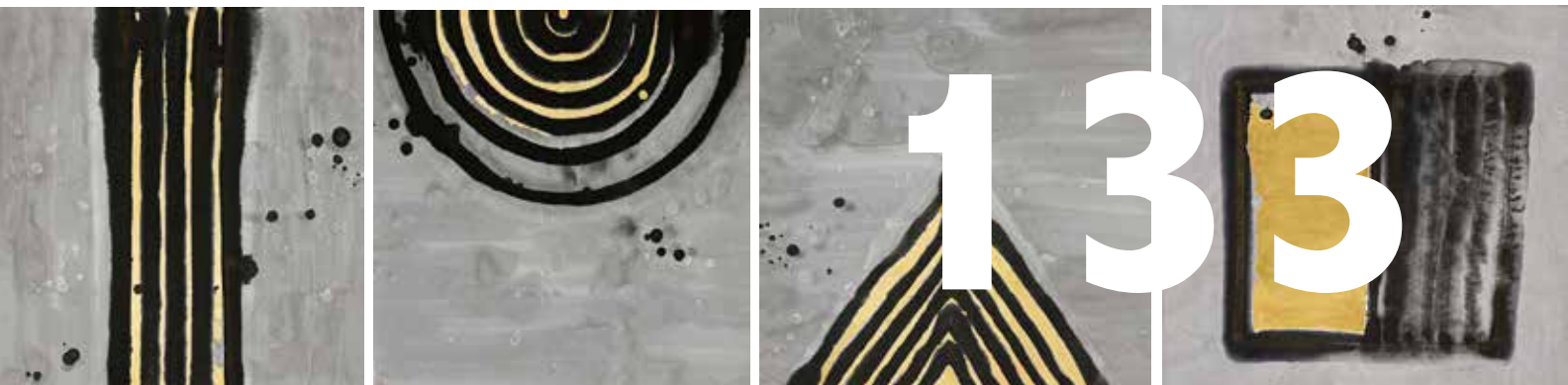
CONTRIBUTORS

Elysabeth Alfano
Jayson Amster
Ben Barson
Marnie Benney
Adriano Berengo
Alberto Bisin
José Luis Corella
Antoine Desjonquères
Lisa Di Donato
Magdalena Gómez
Mafe Izaguirre
Salem Krieger
Chun Wan Li, PhD
Wei Ligang
Lu Mei
Vik Muniz
Mario Murua
Maria Giovanna Musso
Leah Poller
Nidra Poller
Lyle Rexer
Judy Rosenblatt
Naomi Rosenblatt
Federico Salvitti
Steve Schapiro
Lisa Streitfeld, PhD
Doratheia Thompson
Pang Yongjie
Silvio Wolf

REAL $\neq$ REALITY
The Transgression of Fact



**"There are no facts, only interpretations."
—Frederich Nietzsche**



PYRAMID
LuMei

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Publisher
Mia Feroletto

Guest Editor
Leah Poller

Graphic Designer
Naomi Rosenblatt

Front Cover
MINA© Vik Muniz

Copy Editor
Leah Poller

Proofreader
Judy Rosenblatt

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Marina Urbach

Terence Van Elslander
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Christopher Williams
Martha Wilson
Elemire Zolla
Jody Zellen
Lisa Zwerling

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purchased at:
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For additional
information and to
contact the publisher,
please email
mia.feroletto@gmail.com

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REAL ≠ REALITY

The Transgression of Fact

PUBLISHER: Mia Feroletto

GUEST EDITOR: Leah Poller

MIA FEROLETO

Publisher’s Letter

“He’s lost control of the narrative.”
—Dan Rather commenting on Donald Trump
during an interview on CNN. 10/20/19

Christmas came early this year. That is how I felt as I looked through the draft of #133, the stunning issue assembled by guest editor Leah Poller and designed by Naomi Rosenblatt.

The contents of Issue #133 cover both the inner and outer realms of what is considered “real,” from kundalini power to Donald Trump’s multiple daily lies. The former represents our highest kind of energy, while the latter indicates the profound loss of truth in our world.

As publisher of *New Observations*, I encourage others to develop their innate spiritual gifts, and to express themselves from that core. My spiritual life is the center of my universe, and I believe that intuition and creativity enable us to grow and thrive, individually and collectively. We are not meant to follow the spin and propaganda being disseminated around the globe. Individuals in countless countries are waking up to the reality that control has been layered over their cultures in the form of fake news and fake facts that are designed to confuse and manipulate us. The more we are connected to our central core of being, the more difficult it is for others to influence and control us.

While “fake it till you make it” has become a social norm, art remains a force of truth. Artists, in general, are somewhat deviant and willful people who are connected to their inner life and to higher realms of thought. Artists, as individuals, are difficult people to control. *Issue #133, Real ≠ Reality* explores the thoughts, ideas and concerns of a group of artists and writers who are grappling with what “real” means—to what extent does our subjective perception create “reality”? How does our understanding of reality change in authoritarian states? And how does artificial intelligence (AI) influence human reality?

To this last point, Elon Musk warned almost two years ago that we had four years remaining before we reached the point where AI would overtake humanity. In fact, a piece of Obama-era legislation (the National Defense Authorization Act or NDAA) called for all Americans to be micro-chipped by March 2013. Happily, we missed that goal. But Musk, understanding that he could not stop AI transformation from happening, decided to benefit from it by developing technology that would help to facilitate the process.

How will the emergence of AI change our understanding of the real? How easily can we be—if not manipulated—then successfully censored? After my own recent experience with surveillance and censorship, I can share with you that, as an average person, my ability to express my opinion has been curtailed. The Tuesday after Labor Day, I awoke to find an email from YouTube stating that my account has been suspended. I do not post videos on YouTube, but I do post comments. I have heard from others that they have received warnings and lost privileges for a period of time, usually for four to six weeks. I received no warning from YouTube. Rather, their email stated that I could contact customer service to request a review of their decision.

About two hours after completing their contact form, I received an email stating that they had reviewed my case and confirmed that my account was suspended. Permanently. Every single comment I have ever posted on YouTube was/is gone. Every comment I have posted on YouTube has evaporated into cyberspace. Real ≠ Reality.

YouTube is not required to provide me with a reason for my suspension. I have no idea why I was censored, since my comments are virtually identical to those posted by countless other people. I suspect that my work in consciousness is a big part of why I have been cut

off from posting comments—in which I encourage others to stand up and express themselves politically and, within their communities, to become socially active—in fact, to become activists.

Even in 7th grade I possessed a rebellious streak that has stood me in good stead. I could not accept being told what to do unless it made sense to do so. I was a Catholic schoolgirl. For the most part, I was educated by nuns, but my 7th grade teacher was a layman with a bulbous nose and terrible dandruff. I will not share his name here, but I will say he definitely had a thing for me—and not in a good way. I was the only girl in my class to receive an “F” in conduct. Not an easy thing to explain to your parents when you are 12 years old.

Decades later, I find myself still sorting daily through illusion and lies. Just as I was banned from YouTube, I received an email stating that my Gmail account was to be canceled. I spent two days saving all of the contact information in my email account so that I would be able to continue working to organize conferences and publish *New Observations Magazine*. To date, my Gmail account is open, but I am vigilant about what I write in my emails.

Our contributors to *Issue #133* understand the threats posed by fake news, suppression, surveillance, and censorship—if we continue down this path. Guest editor Leah Poller, for example, spends time in China, where the people are being graded with a point system for good behavior that affects their credit rating, ability to travel and other privileges we have taken for granted for most of our lives.

Yet, sharing information and ideas is one of the most important things we can do for each other, to keep our vision clear and our ability to discern fact from fiction alive.

I spent the past few weeks sorting through the inventory of back issues of *New Observations* and mailing sets and partial sets to museums, art schools and public libraries around the country so that students and the general public can enjoy the extraordinary work that countless artists and writers have produced over the past 35 years. Following in the leadership of past publishers: artist and magazine founder Lucio Pozzi, Vice President of the Holt-Smithson Foundation Diane Karp, and artist Erika Knerr. I took over as publisher in July of 2018 and have not looked back.

Our goal in 2020 is to create a free, online digital library of all back issues of *New Observations* with new issues being added to the collection as they are published. Some major institutions are involved in helping us to accomplish this goal. Print copies will continue to be available at Printed Matter in New York City and on Amazon through their print-to-order option.

Thank you, all, for standing with creative people all over the world who hold a vision of a positive future for humanity. Thank you, Leah and Naomi, for your beautiful work on *Issue #133*, and to all of the artists and writers who have contributed art and articles to this issue. Thank you to Elysabeth Alfano, Jayson Amster, Ben Barson, Marnie Benney, Adriano Berengo, Alberto Bisin, Jose Luis Corella, Antoine Desjonqueres, Lisa Di Donato, Magdalena Gomez, Mafe Izaguirre, Salem Krieger, Chun Wan Li, Wei Ligang, Lu Mei, Vik Muniz, Mario Murua, Maria Giovanna Musso,Yong Jie Pang, Leah Poller, Nidra Poller, Barbara Rachko, Lyle Rexer, Judy Rosenblatt, Naomi Rosenblatt, Federico Salvitti, Steve Shapiro, Lisa Streitfeld, PhD, Dorathea Thompson and Silvio Wolf, for your generous participation in this issue. Space here cannot accommodate individual praise for all of the contributors in *Issue #133, Real ≠ Reality*. I prefer to let the art and writing speak for itself and commend Leah Poller and the constellation of everyone involved in the creation of this issue for their outstanding contributions. The beauty and eloquence of your contributions sparkle. Your work is amazing. Our strength comes from joining energetically with each other and with all individuals past, present and future who carry the creative force within.

May we continue to support and inspire each other in these challenging times.

In spirit,
Mia Feroletto

REAL ≠ REALITY

The Transgression of Fact

Publisher: Mia Feroletto | Guest Editor: Leah Poller

Mia Feroletto	4	<i>Publisher's Letter</i>
Leah Poller	6	<i>Guest Editor's Letter</i>
Lisa Di Donato	7	<i>Darkness Above, Light Below</i>
Antoine Desjonquères	9	<i>Reality Always Wears the Colors of the Spirit</i>
Magdalena Gómez	12	<i>And So The World</i>
Mafe Izaguirre	14	<i>The Unknowable Reality: Machines That Feel</i>
Naomi Rosenblatt	17	<i>Truth in the Time of Trump</i>
Silvio Wolf	20, 28, 51	<i>The Pillars of Truth, Parts I, II, and III</i>
Lisa Streitfeld, PhD	22	<i>Eros As the Unifying Force of a New Modernism</i>
Lyle Rexer	27	<i>Crow Experiences Unreality</i>
Nidra Poller	30	<i>Reality Beyond Realism: So Courage & Gypsy Motion</i>
Federico Salvitti/Alberto Bisin	33	<i>Perception is the Only REAL That Matters</i>
Maria Giovanna Musso	34	<i>Real Dolls Never Say No</i>
Chun Wan Li, PhD	36	<i>Ephemeral Permanence: A Review of the New Work of Leah Poller</i>
Ben Barson	38	<i>Fighting For Our Senses: Musical Activism and the Struggle to Define Ourselves</i>
Dorathea Thompson	40	<i>If There is no Real, There is no Reality: Neither Exist</i>
Marnie Benney	44	<i>Pixelated Future Depictions</i>
Elysabeth Alfano	47	<i>Real Food: Consumer Empowerment May be the Solution</i>
Salem Krieger	49	<i>\$2500 a Square Foot</i>
José Luis Corella	52	<i>A Painting Should Be Vivid: An Interview</i>
Leah Poller	54	<i>Glass Is Real: An Interview with Adriano Berengo</i>
Footnotes	58	
Quotes	59	
Contributors	60	

Real ≠ Reality

The Transgression of Fact

LEAH POLLER, Guest Editor

What is, is. Isn't it?

I see...what I see. Don't I?

These questions plagued me enough to hit the dictionary to try and differentiate Real from Reality. To my enormous chagrin, they have merged in modern times to both be synonymously false...

Real is indistinguishable (the drop of water in a like ocean of drops) from Reality (more "plastic", more malleable, and perhaps more "saleable").

Is there something to be made out of the answers to "Is Real the same as—or different—from Reality?"

Real wasn't an illusion before. Hunger was Real. War was Real. My love for another was real. It did serve a purpose—an irrefutable anchor in "is" as a known, a truth, a FACT. No longer. We have been cut loose from our moorings, slipping into the tide-waters of Reality which meander through the murky bogs of "I guess so – I read –He tweeted –I saw it on TV –Did you hear?" Nowadays, Real bears little distinction from Reality. We have forsaken our oars and now float aimlessly as flotsam and jetsam on the sea of the new "IS", riding on a plastic wave, the same bloat that is killing our oceans.

How does one mourn the loss of subtlety—that extraordinary, refined *astuce* of mankind to read between the dots of the matrix and discern the shadows lurking, ever watchful of the danger of losing this specificity unique to an evolved human state? One way is to mark the moment. Leave traces of the struggle for others to identify. Breadcrumbs that may lead us back to a simpler moment when Real and Fact were real and fact—cardinal points, ground zero on the moral compass of humanity.

The writers, poets, photographers, painters, sculptors...provide those

breadcrumbs in the 133rd issue of *New Observations*.

If a true work of art can be birthed from machines, if love is no longer a prerequisite for mating with a cyber doll...if food can no longer be attributed to an organic source, if fiction is more real



LOTUS • Wei Ligang

than fact...if a President can lie 10,000 times with impunity...if psychedelic drugs can deliver a reality beyond any that we have known... If 50% of the population is again at risk of losing the right to choose, and white trumps (pun intended) all human skin color...then, these daring creatives chime in: "What remains of Real?"

Artificial Intelligence, Love as a Lost Art, Art as a found Medium, Cardboard to satisfy lodging lust, Fiction as an assertion of truth in the coming, Images that reveal the Wizard behind the curtain, Black and White histories that defy reality, Notebooks of the inner mind, Music for our souls to deafen the cadence of boots on the ground, and Poets, Gods and Goddesses to put poetic truffles

on our tongues, to awaken our senses to what may be lost if our attention to Transgression weakens further.

From Beijing to Birmingham, Warsaw to Milan, from the inner mind to the outer mood, from stillness to cacophony, from the void to plenitude, from pure black to a rainbow spectrum, what you see on these pages couldn't be further from what you get: our visualists offer a round trip ticket to optical titillation which invites you to salivate, drool, lust and despair—despair and then rejoice as the artists, photographers, graphists, painters and sculptors make manifest the unseeable.

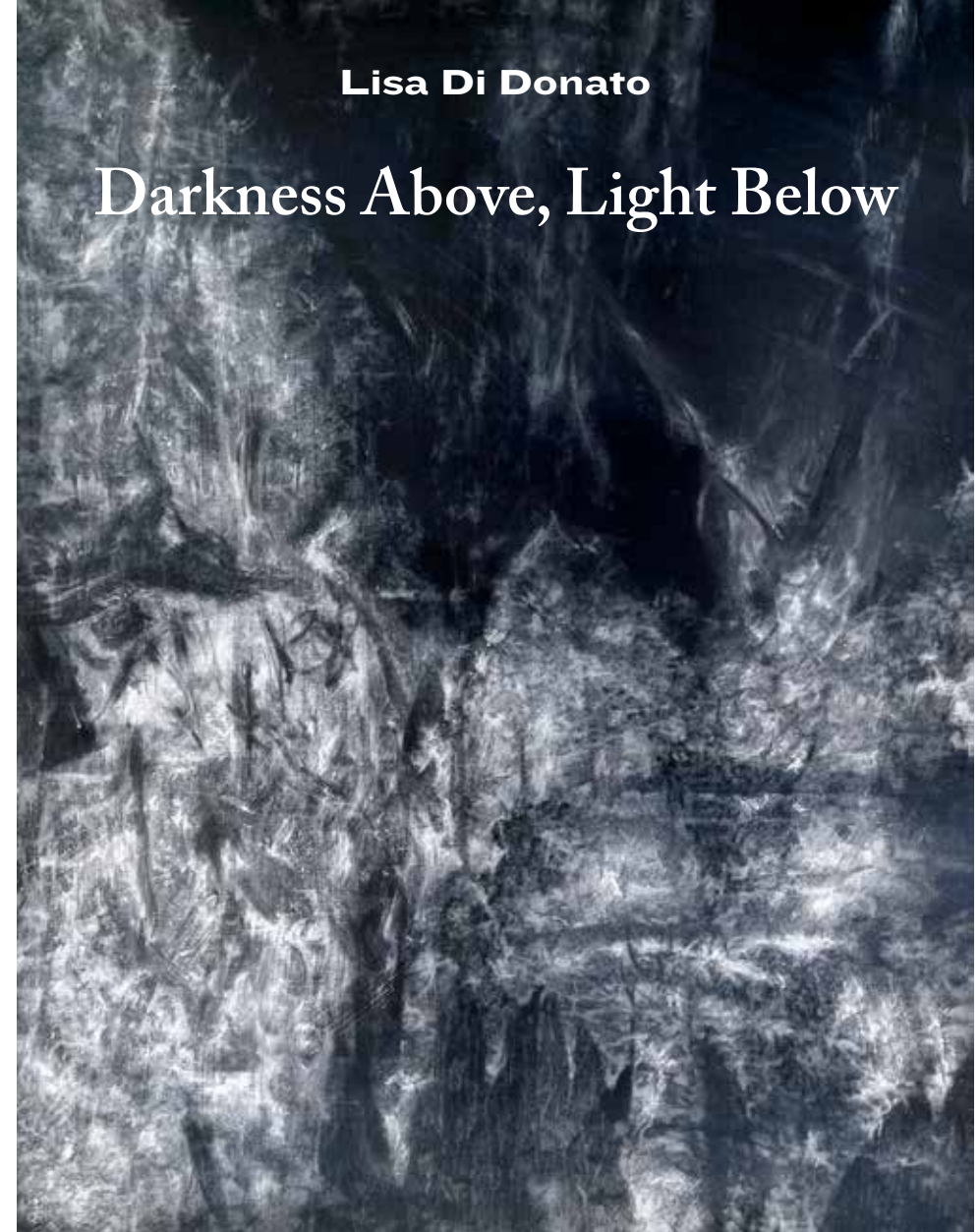
We thank our contributors on bended knee before the altar of the 1000 third eye goddesses of the visual wanderer and the voracious reader—pen and ink, words, brushstrokes, camera lens, a mallet, join fire and brimstone to deliver an alchemy worthy of worship: uber thought, uber image. Eyes wide open. Rejoice that in this issue, what you see...is far greater than what you are seeing.

My New Observation: We as a culture, are living the Age of Post Truth. How it once mattered as the warp and woof of Humanity has been replaced by poured plastic; there is no thread. Be data, give me the data, make the data speak, control the data... we have entered the Age of Data. True or False. Fact or Fiction. It no longer matters. What is, is...to some. Especially if it can be counted like 1-2-3 counted, to mean something. Anything. Data is the new voice. Our plastic in the Ocean.

Number 133 did it for me, with the supportive, sincere and original thinking of my friends from literature, art, music, science, and soul. It has helped to resolve the anguish of seeking an answer to Real ≠ Reality. I thank you all for your contributions, even if the answer confirms my growing concerns.

Lisa Di Donato

Darkness Above, Light Below



THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL
Lisa Di Donato

Society's hyper-expansion and the subsequent collapse and dismantlement of its traditional historic and universalist cultural and political structures by the very means that built them have wrought an uncertain world, without boundaries or distinctions. The smart devices in our hands are perceptibly like holding the infinite, transcending physical limitations. We are nowhere and everywhere simultaneously. Suspended in a continuously expanding and receding kaleidoscopic landscape, from where do we draw our perspectives in this network of reflections generated by a "machine looking at itself?"

The chaos produced by this inarticulation poses a challenge to the essential perception of control within society and over oneself, threatening the tidiness of a well-tended existence, rupturing its seams to release collective anxieties for the future and undermining the authority over interpretations of the past. To render our environment more agreeable and stable, we devise novel technological strategies to transcend the limits of representation, erasing the distinction between the natural and mediated. Every advancement in the ability to manipulate and intervene is another

extension of ourselves, opening new dimensions through which we reconstruct the world according to our own image.

Despite possessing this power over reality as a seemingly stable structure, photography has its physical and perceptual limitations, which I took up as the framework for my own explorations into what these fallibilities reveal to us about the relationship between images, reality, and ourselves. For several years I frequented the 39 intimate urban gardens on New York's Lower East Side, carrying an old Polaroid Land camera and expired instant black and white film. Born from the decayed excesses of a devitalized city, these fragments of urban land were reclaimed by neighborhood residents and are the expression of the desire to connect to something "real"—the natural world that exists independent of our thoughts. The gardens are as much material base as they are imaginative, utopian concepts of what pint-sized Paradises ideally ought to be.

My intention was not to simply see through descriptive photographs, but to open the image space up with the process of image-making through the introduction of chance and error, where overexposure or insufficient chemistry resulted in material corrosion and the value of the photograph as a visual record of a

time and place. No longer determinative of anything more than its own condition, the photographs do not testify to the truth of appearances or even presences; they are translations whose reality resides not in what they reflect, but in their being reflections.

Paradoxically, the agency of light required to produce photos also destroys them, and whereas ordinarily black would represent a lack of information, the voids become white. The original photographs are small, direct positive 3x4" Polaroid images, the sun blanked spaces on the document were vacant lots, realty (archaically, "reality" translated to "realty") for a mental universe. Through these emptied pictorial spaces I render in pencil not a literal representation of the lost landscapes, but the memory of how my eye experienced and moved through those vital spaces of hallucinatory light, shadow, life, time, and the perception of "being in the world" that reflects our human consciousness.

The Polaroids (*Poladrawings*) are rephotographed and enlarged, reworked in pencil, then rephotographed again, alternating the creation of empty spaces with the filling of them. The expansion produced through enlargement is stepping closer to and into the image, dematerializing details and generating passages to new territories previously hidden. The result is a largescale rendering of a landscape and a new photographic representation, an inversion of the drawing that creates a correlation where both documents differently interpret the same scene. These artworks leave entirely behind the original 3x4" image source they were born from to produce new highly perceptual images of fluctuating landscapes. Contradictory and connected, optical and perceptual, the project queries the structuring of our vision and seeks a more dynamic representation of existence through the coexistence of oppositions as two sides of the same reality.

The oscillation between positive and negative, mass and void, light and dark, dematerializes the figures and forms into flowing energy fields that will not definitively

resolve themselves. Viewers are obliged to engage the images in the inventive theatre of their minds, animating the world into a place where the material world is conscious itself and autonomous, but also dependent on our mental, emotional and physical relationship to it.

As we study the Universe, we are also a part of its fabric, and the expectation that an independent objective reality must exist beyond our own perceptual limitations may overlook the potential that there is no separation, that 'us' and 'it' are One. Through the deliberate use of ambiguity, I confront presumptions about the stability of forms and the feeling that another reality is 'out there' since the presence of an observer will always alter the reality of the observed phenomenon. Likewise, our vision is not static, and we are continually negotiating oppositions, internal and external, into a coherent picture or expression.

To propose heightened imagination as an adaptive tool in a post-fact and anti-Enlightenment era where reality is stranger than fiction is impractical, but what I suggest is not parochial or self-centered, it is open and empathetic. Imaginative vision is crucial to rethinking our world and providing resistance against the contemporary realities of factious ideologies, translocation, and the monotony of cultural regurgitation. Until we learn to recognize our interpretations as such and their limitations, we will never "see the world in a grain of sand."



HOW SWEET
I'D ROAM
FROM FIELD
TO FIELD
Lisa Di Donato

Antoine Desjonquères

Reality Always Wears the Colors of the Spirit

Almost every year for the past 10 years a notebook is completed, each one very different from the next. Sometimes full of words, sometimes full of paint. They have one thing in common: their pages are filled by spontaneous collaborations with the people I meet and resonate with. Each page crystalizes memories and creates little anchors in time. In the first notebook, more than 300 people participated, each in their own way, yet always free of form and constraints. In one page you can read, "Laugh—and the world laughs with you. Stare into the abyss—and the abyss gazes back at you." Behind these sentences lies the conviction that we are both creatures and creators of reality. That we are continuous with the universe, yet that we don't have access to absolutes nor to the essence of things. Reality is the production of a dialogical relationship between us and ourselves, but also between us and others, as well as between us and the world—most probably a triangulation of all three. I wrote this short text by diving in my notebooks to look for information concerning what reality is:

Etymologically, the word real derives from the latin *res* meaning matter. In physical terms, reality encompasses the whole universe known and unknown. From a philosophical standpoint, reality is also an ontological status and a mental construction.

We can't see the world as it is, only as we are. Our account of reality, whether inward or outward, is incomplete at best. There seems to be a reality beneath reality and yet another beneath that one. There is without a doubt a world beyond the one we frame. Even though language forms the temporal fabric of reality, as a whole



CAHIER TWO MOODS
Antoine Desjonquères



it can't be forced into linguistic boxes and conceptual categories.

We are all pupils of the cosmos—apertures through which the universe observes itself. Nature is not mute; learning to listen is key. I always tell myself to never ignore any of the things that are—to sharpen my ‘antennae’ and listen to the whispers of the world. When you are silent, everything speaks. When absence is heard, presence is felt, allowing space for wonder and immanence. Perception is selection.

Reality always wears the colors of the spirit. The world as we know it is a fragment, an illusion where everything seems separate. Yet there is no such thing as ‘us and them.’ It's all us. What I am involves who you are, we all define each

other. Reality is a web of webs, a network of interwoven interdependent systems. There is no such thing as ‘things.’ A ‘thing’ is a noun. It isn't a part of reality, it's a part of speech.

All phenomena of the universe are words that teach reality. The universe is anything but dead matter, it is living presence. Our skin doesn't separate us from the world, it's a bridge from which the external world flows into us and we flow into it. Reality is a process, it's a conversation. It's being here, now. The world is as much you as your own body. Reality is what we believe it to be and what we make of it. Meaning acquires

weight according to the extent by which it is shared.

The more we learn, the more we realize how much we don't know. What we call consciousness might just be one drop in an ocean of intelligence. From this perspective, there are only gradients of believing. Today's truths become obsolete in the eyes of tomorrow's. Be wary of absolute truths that are like monoliths, rigid and cold. Yearn for living truths that are always growing and becoming when shared and challenged.

Our egos are ferocious editors of reality,

they tend to admit only the narrowest bandwidth of what is. It might be for the sake of comfort, coherence or perhaps sanity. Assimilating what's real is an intimate process and sharing reality is a hard task. Sometimes consciousness seems to be less of a window on reality than the product of our imagination. Living in a world of myths and symbols is the best we have; we'd better pick them well. Science is art, it is an attempt at sharing the ineffable. It can help us to learn to look at “things” as they are and not as we want them to be.

Reality is life aware of itself. To live the authenticity of the world, we have to leave our sphere of comfort, to meet difference and to journey towards the fullness of being. We can dive into the collective subconscious where the void is fertile, where imagination becomes tangible and the human ego loses its

imagined monopoly on subjectivity. Imagination is our ability to distort images, yet it also has a creative function. Painting is always a journey, and often an internal one as well. Art is about expression as much as it is about discovery. I don't think many artists know what it is they wish to express before completion, I certainly don't. I know that every painting in my notebook is a co-creation and window peering into the depths of reality.

The nature of the world is to cultivate being. Yet everywhere Being escapes us, except in ourselves. We are vicarious entities whose power grows as it is shared. All unconscious artisans of a difficult work—reality.

STARE INTO THE ABYSS AND
THE ABYSS STARES BACK AT YOU

CAHIER 1: LA RAISON EST A CELUI QUI
A DONNÉ SON COEUR A LA VIE

Antoine Desjonquères

Magdalena Gómez

And So the World

"My prayers are with you."
Cyber salutations
from *The Book of Me*.
Global warming for the planet.
Hypothermia for the soul.

White fist emoji
the Presidential Seal.

Good.
Bad.
Very.
Good.
Very.
Bad.
Jobs.

Money. Two syllables.
Get the most respect.
Shadows cling to walls disgusted
by the flesh that owns them;
they flee the monogrammed,
their too cheerful valets
smitten by petit pois bourgeois
who smugly ink schedules
certain they will live another day.

The sinister plot you're not imagining.
The tin foil hat you're wearing.
The hoarding of water.
The canning of food.
The end of the world.
The beginning of you.

No, I don't think you need a shrink.
I won't ask God to save you.
I'll take you to lunch.
We'll laugh at impending doom.
God is indisposed, weeping plastic.

Spools of inspissate blood
thread their webs
from manic lathes to cowbell harbors
from solitary confinement
to construed constipated paradise
rolled out as parade floats
pulled by starved Azteca horses
whipped for the fatigue of hunger.

The animals, the earth,
have no #MeToo no #TimesUp
in their empty holsters.
Children eye styrofoam peanuts.
Press growling stomachs against
the bulbous face of God in cages
of our disbelief.

Empathy's song
a sickly jam spread too thin
"I send my love"
(However, I will be lost in the mail)

It appears that Jesus
has misplaced his wire cutters
en route to the camps.
He was confused about
being called a Christian.
Loaves and fish rotted
in his pockets nailed shut
as sycophants slept.

The Book of Me
"Lice and crabs"
The sniper mocks;
his eyeball dry on the scope.

Childhood's sarcophagus,
dusty archive of innocence
an early withering.
Lorca's teeth bite through
the flesh of our 5 o'clock
his ghost un-haunting our stupor;
with borrowed castanets he scoops
our throats of mud.

15,000 children in 100 cages.
Look in on *your* angels, now.
Snoring like raccoons
drooling pink and blue
drugged by August snow.
Corporeal boots wag tongues
seep into their dreams
offering apples then
removing their teeth.
Cuckoo chimes of midnight
rattle inside their skulls.
Children travel the veins of air.

They know adults too well.

Mortality denied;
brute mentor of unkind acts.
Curiosity does not kill cats.
Nor children.
In a moment they would end
the horrors of Gaza
with childhood's lessons of sharing.

Greed's nipples erect
for a sucking that never ends.
Broomstick sodomies
witches indicted
by chamomile penitents
who secretly drink their coffee black
"Best wishes for a magical holiday"

When all have swooned
into delusion's ashen arms
assured that Death can be cheated
(poor old bastard shows up only once)
a Cyrano with single grape
conjures all mysteries of wine.
Inevitable, most gracious guest,
made cruel by humankind.
Stubbornly, furtively unnamed, dismissed,
as if this beggar did not own
the whole damn vineyard.

Welcome the musk of history's
heuristic graves.
Chomp memory bones for gratitude
or remain recklessly alone.

"Condolences"
Friend of the Ferryman
who by erasure from our lives
rules every nation; every action,
underscores each thought.
Every little orgasm, every bar of soap
every bitten nail, every piss, every kiss
impersonate what we think we know.

Every jewel another burden to release
as waters rise above the brow.
Unmarked graves of tenderness
the casualties of war.

Life's prodigal twin presides
over first and final widening
of our eyes;
bodies turn towards
endless pastures.
Private horizons. Infinite skies.
All welcome.

Gods of every nation,
a forest of fingers broken.
The burning of hair to the scalp.
Extraordinary rendition.

In need of our hands.

BANG. BIG. NOW.



WEI STATE
Wei Ligang

The Unknowable Reality: Machines that Feel

To properly read this article, follow these instructions: This is a multilayered interactive article that accesses online content in social media and web pages. To scan the QR codes, some smartphones use the built-in camera, while others need to install an additional application depending on how updated both the operating system and the device may be. This article implements augmented reality content (AR+) that can be properly accessed by downloading the free app Blippar® in order to scan the photographs. For more information about how to obtain this technology, follow the detailed scanning instructions provided at the end of the article.

No longer do our senses or our reason provide the philosophical “tools” for understanding our existence. Comparable, perhaps, to the idea of god, there is something beyond—higher, wider: The Data. We are living in a new era that is organized by influencing forces within the laws of *Diffusion of Innovations*,¹ driven by early adopters, catalyzers and trends. Data itself is the most valuable asset on the planet and humans are the commodities—the useful and valuable object of the biggest invisible industry of our times: data mining.



The Guardian News, Christopher Wylie, the former Cambridge Analytica employee turned whistleblower, appears before a committee of MPs. (London, Distributed by Youtube Guardian News Channel Worldwide, 2018), (ca. 3:53;12).

The notion of a multilayered, multifaceted reality is not news. The rational reality, emotional and psychological reality, experiential reality, sensible reality, metaphysical reality: all of these dimensions of truth are part of our nature. So what has changed? Never before have such powerful communication tools been able to unfold the mechanism of individual language on a massive scale; never before were we able to target personalized messages to each individual within a group of billions; never before have we had a large scale platform to study and manipulate the image of the world for individuals and society; never before could we pull triggers that move us from one emotional state to another—controlling both behavior and culture.

Using data and our available resources to process the content of our world, the technology industry is creating a model of possible realities that drive human minds to political actions. Our identities are monitored, our movements are caught by the internet of things to record our interactions, thoughts, what we like, our fears and our anger. An infrastructure has been designed that captures our attention, our location, our purchases and

our images. Every single object that could become a piece of a bigger traceable pattern builds and feeds a logical model of our system of beliefs, actions, and relations. It is like a projected hybrid soul or an extended unconscious that is able to predict ourselves with such accuracy that it can have us believing (and living) in any of the fabricated illusions created by unknown third parties that favor their financial interests. The boundaries of *What We Are* now reach the material and symbolic residuals connected on a vast network that occupies everything. I am not referring just to the Internet but to all the analog and postdigital networks in which we are mired.

Facts are objects, subjects to be molded: fragments that suddenly emerge coherently as cultural products. This is not a paranoid neurosis (despite that it feels like one), it is the dynamic of our technologized reality running on real-time and attached to our identities. Never before were we able to project such a strong sense of individualistic reality, pushing the boundaries of our vulnerabilities, leading us to the limits of the unknowable realm of the real, making us transparent to machines and opaque to ourselves.

With the tools of today we can construct a subject’s personality: a psychological frame to predict the behavior, impact, and the role that each of us plays in society. Measuring our openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism, these tools leave us susceptible to a dangerous lack of privacy. Under the shadow of ignorance, as co-creators of the “new real”, we surrender our rights by accepting the terms and conditions of any free app. In a leap of faith, without reading carefully to what we are agreeing—and without knowing who is “behind the red curtain”—we happily join these channels to access the personalized technological dimension. Designed to steal our imagination, organize our lives, and occupy most of our time, an artificial system arises to collect and tell us our existential value, to manage our part in a global storytelling, and to persuade groups of individuals to modify their worlds. We buy in without awareness of the consequences and without interest to know the rules of the game to which we are surrendering.



The Guardian, Carole Cadwalladr: Google is not just a platform. It frames, shapes and distorts how we see the world. (2016) <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/dec/11/google-frames-shapes-and-distorts-how-we-see-world>

My story started before childhood and adolescence could be experienced through the lens of digitized perception. I wasn’t born into the Internet reality. But even if I didn’t want that early period of my life to be recorded and shared in this new media model, fragments of my life’s story are collected and organized into Facebook, as artificial memories built by myself, my family and friends. Our personal stories become the path for developers to find a way to influence our decisions, manipulate our emotional moods and create objects that conform our sense of what is real. Delivering what we need to see and hear at the right moment in the right place, these platforms are able to change perceptions of reality.

When I was six years old, I had surgery in one of my eyes. During one year I went almost every day to my ophthalmologist who performed a visual exercise that required me to move a gigantic binocular machine to put a bird inside a cage. The doctors had shortened the muscles of my right eye and I needed to exercise it in order to recover its normal functioning. I think about that exercise now with my understanding of how our perception of what is real works. Nothing is what it seems. It was the bird and it was a cage. The reality of a bird into a cage was just an illusion. Our sight is limited to the range of a small part of the lightwaves we are able to perceive. It is the disposition of our organic machinery that determines how we configure the world. It is our mind that builds the sense we make of it, and it is language that gives us the means of connecting the dots.

I became aware of my hybrid reality in my early twenties while I was studying digital media. In 2007, I was writing my first statement regarding a study that presented the evolution of technology, predicting the creation of

personal agents.² Fascination, and fear ran down my spine. The vision had gobbled up my skin and mind, leaving me naked, paralyzed. We were talking about the idea of technological control over ourselves. My vivid dreams about jumping between dimensions and accessing other realities started in that period. I resolved to create my own discursive tools to navigate the future years of my life - to go through this layered universe of machines with language. I wouldn’t be passively waiting for the future to come, I thought. Instead, I will work to understand, to be conscious of what is to come. It took me a decade to build a notion about the mind and find ways to connect my ideas, my experiences, and my senses to join the art conversation.



Nova Spivack CEO & Founder Radar Networks. Powerpoint Deck: Making Sense of the Semantic Web, and Twine. (2007). <http://www.novaspivack.com/technology/powerpoint-deck-making-sense-of-the-semantic-web-and-twine>

But the country I was living in (Venezuela) had been left behind in a state of devaluation and destruction; a place moving backward. In that reality, my art didn’t make any sense. It was a chimera, an impossibility. Within that context, my symbols meant nothing. My need for change became apparent. In my mid-thirties, I decided to leave my current life and find a place where I could be fully dedicated to building an extension of myself, an artifact to augment my abilities to experience reality in the interaction with other living beings. Understandably, New York became that place.

DETAIL: THE
EMOTION MACHINE
Mafe Izaguirre

My interest in energy and electro-magnetism regarding our body-mind presence arose from my curiosity about the philosophical and political implications of the technological mind and the boundary between reality and fiction.

Using myself as the subject “O,” my installations became experiments addressing the challenges I confronted trying to understand my transformation into a hybrid mind within the world and the new contexts it proposed.

Would my machines be able to expose and extend my senses beyond my human capabilities? Yes. I couldn’t fit in other shoes, only in ones I could make with my own hands—In 2016, I was completely dedicated to creating an invention able to bring back to me the sensations of this new augmented world: a tool to have access to feel more, beyond my body and mind and my own presence. I wasn’t interested in creating a mirror to see my own reflection but rather, I wanted to create a channel through which I could see and feel other dimensions of reality: the reality of the other, a residual reality of etheric bodies, the immaterial, the mind, intentions, emotions and symbols. I wanted to



create an abstract memory capturing other bodies and codifying them into a language that the machine and I could share and understand. I wanted to create a new realm of language, a hybrid one to codify emotions.

My machines and I are attached to a structure of emotional codifications, a system of objects completely reprogrammable, where new data can be added, substituted or removed from the group based on the associations with memory, a memory contained in a collection of sensitive moments. I am creating an artificial emotional system through which I am able to draw the ephemeral in an effort to render concrete my “emotional objects” into a living visual scene. There is no “undo” but there is a possibility to “redo”—to reshape and to rebuild. The scene is always new—data is never repeated. The data processed by the machine’s sensorium generates a real-time expression of what can be defined as my “extended sense of sensing”. Collecting this data, I am able to share a visualization of my abstract, hybrid, emotional mind.

There are certain objects that serve to organize reality. One is time. Technology has changed the way to experience and

perceive time to a more flexible and variable sense of momentum, building an elastic reality. This evolution reflects systemic details and complexities of a layered informational architecture. This is the way I design forms of reality to mold the world. Real-time as an analog experience is a perception relative to the entire human-body, but digital time—the machine time—is a regular timecode making the experience of time discrete, capable of manipulation, refigured as one desire.

We are running our lives to conform to the forms of reality that machines provide. This implies a latency, a time lag that digital communication needs in processing and configuring the elements that compose its “reactions.” Facts, described as what you see when it is happening, don’t describe the reality of the machine. Within the technological realm, facts can be real, even if they are true or false. A false fact is the natural alternative of truth. Both potentially exist—one into another. Both find their way to expression including states of inactivity. Reality is defined by a set of permutable possibilities. Those are the facets of truth. The realization of one implies the manifestation of its opposite, more or less

opaque in the light of our perspective—of our gaze. Everything and nothing is happening at the same time. What we finally choose to light up, to believe in, is then placed into the composition we are picturing of the world. That becomes what is Real.

It takes time for my computers to translate the world into data. This natural characteristic of machines makes possible the perception of the echoes from the vibrations in the dynamics of human-machine communication. The reverberation of the back and forth data of the electromagnetic wave loaded with information takes time to disappear in space-time. So, by losing the opportunity to share the same instant through our mediated reality, we are gaining some visibility of the invisible realms of truth.

Language plays a main role in this truth. The indefinability of consciousness makes it more difficult to concretize the role that all conscious states might play in my system. The information about our surroundings rests not just in facts but in psychological and physical terms. A computer might never be able to concretize internal states for registering and processing data about the world to produce “consciousness” but it can

influence our decisions. Despite the complexity that this system needs to have to become an emotional intelligence, there is no guarantee that a robot will have any feelings without using humans to complete the circle.

Until now, robots have objective information about humans, identifiable goings-on in the brain. But recently we learned that five thousand data points³ can define a human personality and having that multiplied by thousands or millions, makes it possible to breakdown a democratic system.

Even if one doesn’t want to be part of this artificial consciousness, some sort of residual memory is captured within the system with the capability of sketching out at least a minimum image of us. Close to the “real” one or not, each one of us exists in this technological realm. Both what we are and what we are not - our being and our not being, is portrayed by data association. Data associations have come to define our humanity.

Scanning Instructions:

QR Code scanning apps can be found on the Apple Store and Google Play. You may have trouble scanning the code if it’s tilted at an angle. Make sure it’s level with the surface that the code is printed on. If you’re holding your phone too close or too far away, it won’t scan the code. Try holding your phone about a foot away and slowly moving it towards the QR code.

Augmented Reality Blippar® is free and it can be downloaded from the Apple Store and Google Play. After installing and opening the app on your mobile device, proceed to scan the photographs included in the article to display the videos. For more information about Blippar® app, please visit: <https://www.blippar.com/>

For Footnotes, see page 58

Naomi Rosenblatt

Truth in the Time of Trump

“The party told you to reject the evidence of your eyes and ears. It was their final, most essential command.”—George Orwell, 1984

Nietzsche wrote “There are no facts, only interpretations” from a philosophical standpoint. From a scientific or legal standpoint, there are facts. How do facts differ from interpretations? A fact is apprehended through our senses—Orwell’s “evidence of our eyes and ears.” For example: *I have a runny nose. I just ate scrambled eggs. He’s walking upstairs.* A fact can be corroborated by multiple witnesses. Interpretation is a story about facts (that may invoke, or even contradict, them).

Facts provide evidence, a criminal’s nemesis, while interpretation gives criminals cover. For example, as I walked down my NYC street last year, a young man dashed by, followed by a woman shrieking: “Stop him! He stole my phone!” Several men overtook him, recovering her phone. As he stood shaking in captivity, the young man protested: “It wasn’t me!” In other words, we did not see what we just saw. In a Zen or philosophical sense, this statement might pass muster. After all, what is “me?” Am “I” not but a transcendent illusion?

Yet, in daily life, this blatant lie is an example of gaslighting—a manipulative technique that encourages people to question their sanity and perceptions. A favorite practice of the Trump administration, gaslighting was exemplified by Rudy Giuliani’s 2018 declaration that “Truth is not truth!” This Orwellian “doublespeak” reinforced Kellyanne Conway’s 2017 claim that a fact can become “alternative” to itself: If you don’t like the size of Trump’s inaugural crowd, go ahead and invent another one.

Giuliani and Conway are not Zen masters, surrealists, or philosophers like Nietzsche. They are con artists with an agenda: priming the public to accept lies from Trump and the international crime cabal that empowers him. “He committed impeachable offenses, but they do not rise to the level of impeachment.” *Well, okay... there was collusion and quid pro quo. But no crime. It’s just what we do. Get used to it.* When truth is not truth, crime is not crime.

The technique of projection takes gaslighting a step further: *It wasn’t me; in fact...it was you.* Classically, Hillary Clinton is “a criminal who should be locked up.” Now Nancy Pelosi is “unhinged, nervous, dumb!” Adam Schiff “should be impeached,” Joe Biden “should be investigated for corruption.” In these examples, Trump describes himself, but projects his qualities and circumstances onto various opponents.

Between gaslighting and projection, truth has jumped through more hoops than usual under this so-called president. His power derives entirely from lies, including false promises, a fudged election, and an average of 13 public fibs he spews daily, according to *Washington Post’s* Fact Checker column. If such fakery was limited to only Trump, it would mean little. Unfortunately, his example has emboldened a culture of believers that, in turn, support him.

On the following two pages, I have extracted examples of how truth is held hostage by public figures in the Trump news cycle. I’ve montaged their quotes with portraits that are traced from photographs, and with an essay about Frankfurt School luminary Max Horkheimer by my friend Eike Gebhardt, PhD.

Public figures who have served as Trump’s henchmen are sadly legion, but I’ve aimed to portray the epitomes. Jeffrey Epstein is as sinister in death as he was in life. Mitch McConnell is probably the most traitorous elected official in American history, and William Barr the most traitorous appointed official. The demagoguery of Bernie Sanders mirrors and enables that of Trump, as he claims to be “the good guy.” I have omitted Trump because I am weary of seeing him, even in caricature, and because he would have no power whatsoever without the complicity of his sycophants.

Truth hasn’t been truth for a while now. It is up to each American to trust the evidence of our eyes and ears—in fact, to insist upon it—before the clocks begin striking thirteen.



THE EMOTION
MACHINE
Mafe Izaguirre

"I'm not a sexual predator, I'm an 'offender.'
It's the difference between a murderer and
a person who steals a bagel."

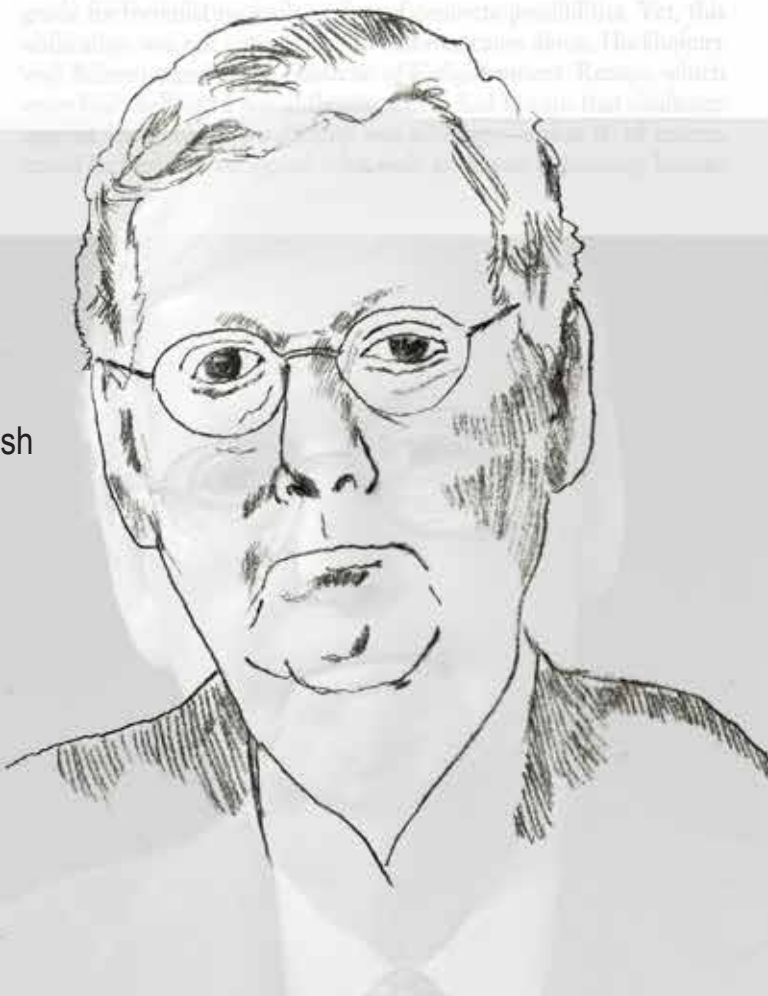
—Jeffrey Epstein, 2011, *New York Post*



reality, was an ideal and task, and we may fulfill it not just by adapting our ideas to a given reality (which we thereby affirm), or by exorcising those ideas that do not already correspond (as did the ideal of scientism). Truth (the whole) is not the opposite of illusion but of reality (as is).

"Non-identity" in this sense is the starting point for a critical theory—and an index of oppression, of reason chained as a force of production. Any idea overshoots reality, and instead of reducing consciousness to a mere reflection or correspondence, we should favor those cognitive faculties which do not share "the mythic scientific respect for the given." For Horkheimer, as for Adorno and Marcuse, true science and cognition were distinguished from ritualistic procedures by its anticipatory aspect, and those human faculties that shared it had a clearly cognitive function. Rather than silence them, they should be considered integral parts of human reason, Horkheimer argued. Yet, the idea of reason itself had undergone this reduction. Once a corrective and critical standard, reason seemed to be moving more and more into a servile position; today, it is to implement goals and values which themselves are neither products of reason nor, therefore, subject to rational discussion or challenge. The idea of a reasonable goal is inconceivable to the current idea of rationality, Horkheimer complained; even the faculty with which this could be conceptualized as a loss becomes atrophied. The "rationalization" Weber had spoken of was hardly the triumph of reason; to them it was the abdication of autonomous reason, its reduction to its instrumental dimension. Horkheimer left no doubt that he considered this development a regress, and an index of historical immaturity.

Instrumentalized, reduced to questions of inferential procedure (so



"Modern-day McCarthyism is poison for
American democracy. It is shameful to
imply that policy disagreements make the
other side unpatriotic. The people who push
such unhinged smears are doing Putin's
destabilizing work for him."

—Mitch McConnell, July 29, 2019

Twitter

Drawings by Naomi Rosenblatt
Excerpts from Afterword by Eike Gebhardt, PhD
to Max Horkheimer's *Dawn and Decline*
(1978, Seabury Press, New York)

Of course, Marx had never suggested the necessity of one party. Moreover, to assume that the same groups would always and inevitably be the—quasi-predestined—agents of revolutionary change, seemed tantamount to saying that the historical situation had not changed, and could not change in this respect. Given obvious shifts in the makeup of the working class, given the split between subjective and objective class interest (evident, for instance, in the widespread proletarian support of fascist movements, as one of the first empirical studies of the Institute discovered), perhaps for the first time different groups had to become guardians of Marx's legacy. Who and what were to be counted as contributions to the revolution is not decided by an a priori principle but by the future, Horkheimer insisted. Because of the growing pacification of the proletariat, he had even counted on a temporary victory of fascism. Yet, to Horkheimer and

"I was not
interested
in putting out
summaries."

—William Barr,
April 10, 2019

Congressional hearing



"...any attorney general in this period is going to
end up losing a lot of political capital..."

—William Barr, May 31, 2019

Interview on CBS This Morning

"I am not a Democrat. I despise Democrats."

—Bernie Sanders, 2014, *The Progressive*

Democratic candidate,
2016 & 2020

Of course, Marx had never suggested the necessity of one party. Moreover, to assume that the same groups would always and inevitably be the—quasi-predestined—agents of revolutionary change, seemed tantamount to saying that the historical situation had not changed, and could not change in this respect. Given obvious shifts in the makeup of the working class, given the split between subjective and objective class interest (evident, for instance, in the widespread proletarian support of fascist movements, as one of the first empirical studies of the Institute discovered), perhaps for the first time different groups had to become guardians of Marx's legacy. Who and what were to be counted as contributions to the revolution is not decided by an a priori principle but by the future, Horkheimer insisted. Because of the growing pacification of the proletariat, he had even counted on a temporary victory of fascism. Yet, to Horkheimer and



faith in the mechanistic notion of an "applied" theory. Marx's dictum, that theory would become praxis upon grasping its essence, had been fatally misunderstood, Horkheimer felt. The theory presupposed that a certain (emancipatory) theory had to be the correct or natural form of consciousness for the masses; that they would blindly follow an allegedly vicarious reason regardless of their understanding. An "applied" theory obscures the dialectic between theory and praxis: any praxis is theory-mediated—we always deal with a conceptually approximated reality, never with reality per se, as Marx kept insisting. The dialectic between theory and praxis is that between two levels of theory: a preconscious, "naive" one informing our everyday behavior and orientation and containing the "self-evident" and "natural" options about the way things are. In that sense, an ideology is only the common sense of a given reference group. On the other hand, an avant-gardistic theory and consciousness, as forces of praxis, transcend assumptions about what is or appears to be the way things are (the quasi-ontological "facts" of everyday life), and reveal why people did, and had to think a certain way. Marx had spoken of "necessary illusions." In other words, theory exposes the social contingency of forms of thought and behavior. To expose these forms means to have already transcended them. A new perspective literally constitutes new objects, and thus praxis orientations. The ideological, "naive" consciousness indeed merely—despite its accuracy—"reflects" the base, and is nothing but "consciousness." In this sense, it is both a truth and a lie—a lie about the objects of experience, no matter how reified and secularized, that had been "constituted" by human beings, and thus could be changed by them. A merely reflective consciousness however, can never find a perspective beyond the given (from which to legitimize or criticize it), and thus would have to leave change to the immanent dynamism of history for which humans can, at best, act as "witnesses"—a common argument during the Second International (Bebel). Intervention would be "bad subjectivism." But as long as history blindly follows its natural course (its prehistory, Marx would have said), it does not fulfill its human destiny, Horkheimer



WARSAW, NOVEMBER 1946
© Michael Nash-AP Photo/ANSA

Silvio Wolf

The Pillars of Truth · *Part I*: Encounter

Had I not lost my Polish Grandparents during the Second World War,

Had they not been persecuted Jews in Warsaw,

Had my Father found a single trace of their unspeakable destiny
In his after-war research,

I wouldn't have been obsessed seeking the traces
Of where and when they were murdered.

Had I not been morally compelled to honour their memory,
Tracking any information about the loss of the family ancestors
I never met,

Had I not browsed the Internet looking for a truthful needle
In the dark haystack of the Warsaw Ghetto liquidation,

I wouldn't have connected the past with the present,
In this unpredictable realm of exactitude and chance.

Had they not been immersed
In the mysteriously manifold, sacred,
Realm of Reality,

Had History offered me
A reason, a meaning, a scrutable horizon
To the unfathomable experience they lived,

I wouldn't have encountered
This photograph by Michael Nash,
Shot among the ruins of Warsaw in November 1946.

This picture tells one story and many stories.
It talks about the power of the image,
Our wish to exist and survive,
To be and resist time,
To imagine.

It is about shaping our existence
In spite of history, occurrences and death,
Being who we want, where we wish to be:
To reframe our lives.

It talks about Reality and make believe,
Fiction, imagination and Truth,
About Human being-ness.

This picture has been there for the last 73 years,
Only to be recognized Now,
Buried under the ruins of oblivion,
In the encompassing over-accumulation
Of infinite and simultaneously available information.

This image will be my
Pillar of Truth
Within the temple of all questions.

It is built by the photographer's eye,
The architect of all that is Given,

To stage one's Life
The way he and she would have wanted it to be.

Everything is out there,
At our disposal,
To be selected, reflected and recognized,
Offered on the silver plate of Imagination,
Tendered when ready to be had.

As soon as the photograph is taken
The object is turned into an image,
The narrative born,
Stemmed from the ashes of Reality.

What necessarily existed,
What had to be there
For the photographer's encounter,
Is tailored into a garment of the Real,
The semblance of a subjective thought
In the reflection of one's mind-eye.

The Real is shaped into Reality,
The 'thing in itself' cast into the image of the thing.
It is no longer and forever will be,
To exist in a new visual semblance:
The finite image of an infinite one.

Power,
Aspiration and desire,
The Human Theatre of Life
Is staged by a visual backdrop,
The screen of desire,
A window that obliterates the unbearable presence
Of the inalienable, tangible Real.

Through the camera lens,
The constraint of the eye and the beholder's viewpoint,
An Image is born.

The inception of a journey
In the desired time, envisioned space,
Memory, imagination:
In Life after Death.

Life within Death.

My Dear
Brucha Rojsa Piatkowska,
Hersz Laib Wolf,

Will an image,
A word or a sound
Ever-present Us
With Your Presence,
Your Life?

Shall we ever know
What you lived:
Your Reality?

Eros as the Unifying Force of a New Modernism



FIG.1: Zadik Zadikian “Six Points (Double Triangle)” is an icon of Self-contained Mastery explained by the creator: “Every single triangle was sculpted individually so that they can survive by themselves as a total finished work and together they form another pattern: the 11 black triangles versus 11 gilded with 24 karat gold leaf. Extreme black absorbs all the light and pure gold reflects all the light. The balance to similar forms interweave so perfectly that it creates a mystical pattern that is entrancing, and these qualities are very important in this work.”

Nine-eleven was the marker between the death of postmodernism and the emergence of a New Modernism. The Twin Towers destruction on the date identifying the disaster reflects the destruction of the binary. Indeed, 9/11 is a key date in the occult calendar. It marks the dual pillars of the Temple as the passage to wisdom, thereby provoking the charge among conspiracy theorists that the timing of destruction wasn’t a synchronicity, but was pre-planned as an “inside job.”

This “Truther” notion tells us something crucial about the cultural meaning of the Twin Towers destruction. The binary of two global economic systems shattered by the fall of the Soviet Union created a chaos that gave rise to a hidden threat: terrorism. Cut loose from the geopolitical binary, the enemy of the 360 perspective is the Shadow guarding the Third (Streitfeld 2014). The post-9/11 world became a far more uncertain place. Yet, this Uncertainty is where we find the buried treasure.

The Yod is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet that rabbis use to read the Torah. In mysticism, the configuration is known as the Finger of God, which establishes the context of the eureka moment. In 1997, one of these breakthroughs prompted me to place Mircea Eliade’s formula for Sacred Reality [Force (A) = Duration (C) + Effectiveness (B)] into the Yod (Streitfeld, 2017). These three formal characteristics make manifest in time/space the lasting value of the *hieros gamos* as the configuration of a new modernism. I use this apparatus to briefly deconstruct the Sacred Reality (D) hosting the 21st archetype projected as the new horizon (E) of a holistic 360-perspective in the work of three artists, each with a single characteristic of the triplicity highlighted.

The post-9/11 world became a far more uncertain place. Yet, this Uncertainty is where we find the buried treasure.

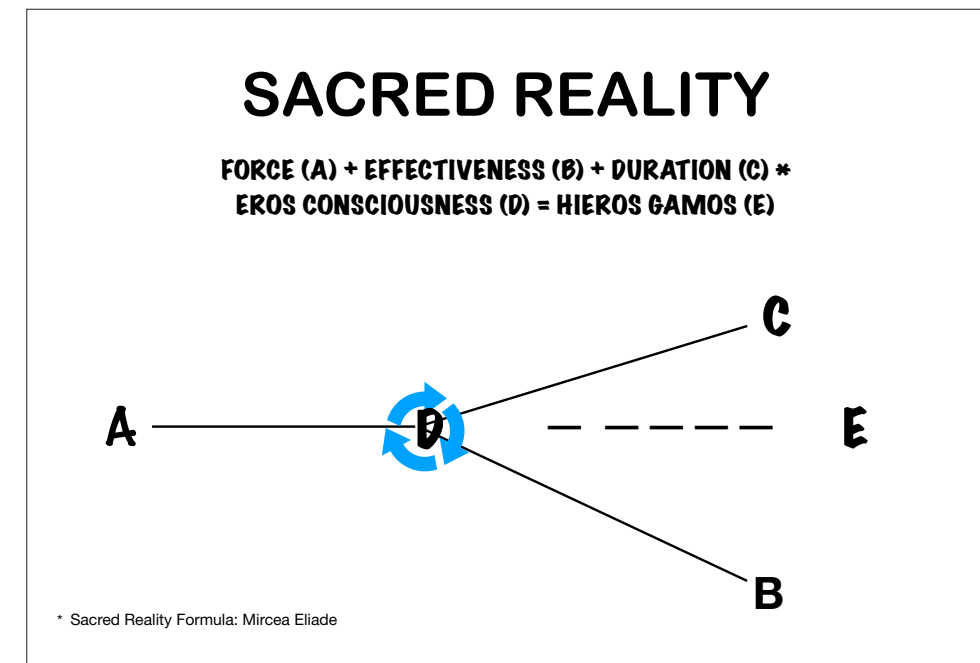


FIG. 2: Eros Consciousness is simultaneously the passage (D) and destination (E) of the Hieros Gamos—in which Subject/Object are interchangeable. Divisiveness is rooted in the subconscious struggle against the internal dynamism of the emerging icon of unity.

Tripartite Approach to Eros Consciousness

The methodology of the Third (Science of Magic) utilizes the ancient art of sacred geometry to create a definition of a new modernism resonating with artifacts (Art-I-Facts) excavated from lost civilizations. Representations of a “sacred reality” in *illo tempore* (Eliade, pp. 80-86) are cultural Signifiers. Like the Lady of Lemba (FIG. 3), these figures are obscured in time to arise when the collective is ready to receive them.

If personalized expressions of the Emergent embodying intrinsic truth-seeking towards the Sacred Center are unrecognizable in the marketplace, it is due to their primacy as Strange Attractors transforming the divisiveness of love vs. hate. Truth arises in the vegetative body, where synapses crackle with electromagnetic energy projected from above/below. These complementary polarities attract/repel within a Self-contained system, catalyzing the long Nietzschean night of Uncertainty culminating in a new expression of love — not only as a force of energy (Subject), but as the (Object/ive) containment of the dynamic interplay of the tension between opposites. This *jouissance* is both worldly and divine, communicating across all boundaries.

FIG. 3: *El Gran Secreto* was a slide projected at an AECA conference at Reina Sofia in Madrid (June 2018). The Lady of Lemba is a key Cypriot Art-I-Fact of the Sacred Marriage Rites practiced in Cyprus two millennia prior to the Mycenaean invasion that appropriated the Love Goddess KYPRIS to establish the mythology of Aphrodite landing in Cyprus after being born at sea from the discarded genitals of Ouranos.



DREAMING A NEW MODERNISM: THREE SYMBOLS

- *The first dream* — a passageway extending up an ancient stone tower. This external journey of transformation between Earth and Heaven reflects the inner spiral of the **KUNDALINI**.
- *The second dream* — a bookshelf in which every individual text was complete unto itself, yet connected to the others as an ongoing series. Inside each of the covers, the principle of autonomous interconnectedness extended into every paragraph, every chapter, reflecting a literal **HOLISTIC NARRATIVE**.
- *The final dream* — a black patent leather clutch purse constructed in a way that the interior couldn't be separated from exterior. Inner/outer were erotically intertwined as a mysterious conundrum collapsing boundaries by means of the **MÖBIUS STRIP**.

—Lisa Paul Streitfeld

FIG. 4: Three dreams of the author highlighting the three main characteristics of a New Modernism: FORCE (Kundalini) + ENDURANCE (Holistic Narrative) + EFFECTIVENESS (Möbius strip)

Three artists working in different mediums have taken the night sea journey of the Love Goddess heralding the Nietzschean dawn of a new collective value. This surrender to process reverses the linear time relation of subject/object; the proactive artist becomes the conscious object/ive of a creative experiment in *illo tempore*.

YULIYA LANINA: THE KUNDALINI SPIRAL

The metamorphosis of the invisible primordial energy through the Yuliya Lanina aesthetic of the Kundalini spiral into visible form has produced a full cast of original 21st century icons—and a new role for the artist to cast herSelf creation thru DIY digital multimedia, incorporating personal corps/universal corpus. A beguiling ferocity of feminine holistic Beingness sourced in an erotically Self-contained bisexuality characterizes Lanina's witty figures. The amorphous proactive pursuit of a Kairos reversal makes them the delightful icons embodying a *jouissance* liberated from the male gaze. Embodied meaning is the Third Eye of a 360 perception of a (r)evolution in feminine consciousness—the artist's motif of multiple eye embodiment sourced in the female attuning her internal rhythm with the cosmos.

FIG. 5: Yuliya Lanina: Kundalini Awakening in ever-shifting Forms



FIG. 6: Barbara Rachko pastel paintings as self-contained narratives of the universal 9/11 epic

BARBARA RACHKO: THE EPIC NARRATIVE

A New York artist known for transforming pastel into painting, Barbara Rachko's journey took her from earth to the skies (she was a pilot); and from inside the Pentagon (ancient symbol of Venus) to the center of the art world. All art comes from a personal place, but paintings as chapters in a continuum, embodying a narrative transcending the personal Self-creation into the universal marriage of gender equality, is epic. Rachko's containment of every narrative component is integrated within the whole, like scenes within a film. Her three series inspired by her collection of Mexican and Guatemalan folk art—Domestic Threats, Gods and Monsters and Black Paintings—leading up to her most recent Bolivianos narrative climax, invite the observer as participant in the passage through the personal to embrace the Shadow. Passing over the threshold of fear into the 360 integral perspective of Eros Consciousness (FIG. 2), we arrive at the integral consciousness of Sacred Reality. This new expression of "art for the people" is the Art-I-Fact of Ouroboros self-devouring proactively masking the artist's process of life/death/rebirth.

ZADIK ZADIKIAN: THE MÖBIUS STRIP

An Armenian classically-trained sculptor in museum collections, Zadik Zadikian left everything but the clothes on his back in a daring escape from the Soviet Union. Leaping into an Unknown future, he began the difficult passage of letting go of formalism by way of creating a new vocabulary of the golden center between the two opposing late 20th Century styles: abstraction and figuration. Holding this tension in balance took him to the center of the exploding Manhattan arts scene, where his gold studio became a gathering center, opening up space for the Third. Into this Void entered a vision for modernizing ancient symbols such as the Seal of Solomon (FIG. 1) and the Yod (FIG. 7) by means of new language of Bracketted embodied meaning (Brackett 2026). The Blossoming Lips epitome of the very simultaneity of this inner/outer process are multidimensional sculptures in which there are no boundaries of time and space, no beginning or end, as in the Möbius strip (FIG. 4).



FIG.7-8: Sculptures by Zadik Zadikian that reference the female figure



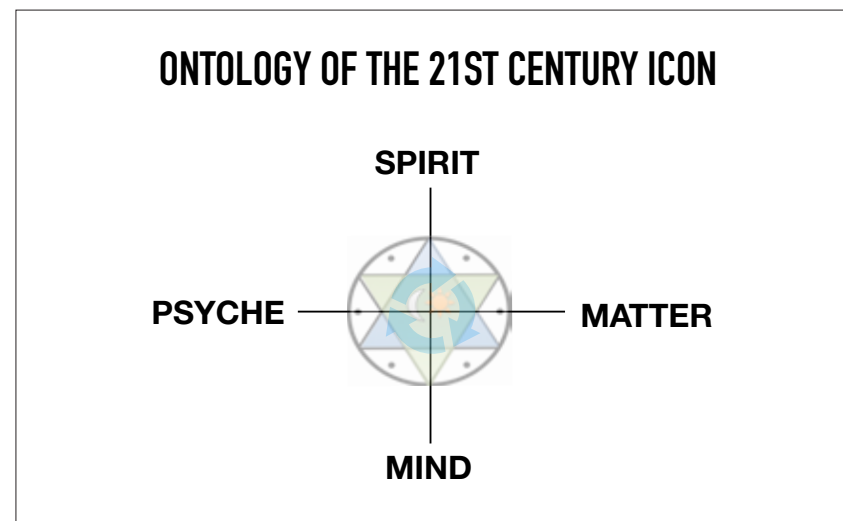


FIG. 9: The 21st century archetype of the Hieros Gamos is the fourfold relation between Masculine (Spirit/Mind) and Feminine (Psyche/Matter) in the eternal cosmic erotic dance.

Conclusion

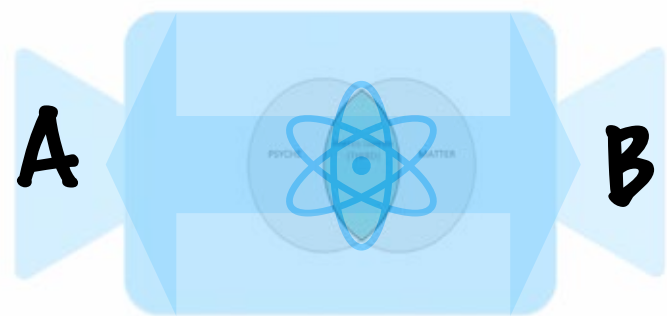
The ultimate truth of a New Modernism is the dynamism of an Eros Consciousness embodied in the process of shedding skins on the fourfold journey to the essence of life itself. The achievement of an authentic Self-contained wisdom is what makes the Art-I-Fact (the discarded skins of the Kundalini serpent) recognizable as a transformation process of the Shadow (Lead) into Illumination (Gold), demonstrated in Figure 1 (page 22).

While Art-I-Facts of the paradigm shift into quantum reality come in all colors, sizes, shapes and patterns, they share three characteristics integrating form with content: Kundalini, Ouroboros Self/Containment, and the Möbius strip. This process of eternal BECOMING defines the absolute truth of holistic Being. Unifying in its universalism, the art of a New Modernism is an abrupt departure from the “anything is art” postmodernist era. Rather than serving the system, the artist serves humanity by materializing the myriad forms of the universal via mastering the synchronizing process. This externalizing the internal dynamic tension of the fourfold relation between masculine (Spirit/Intellect) and feminine (Soul/Matter) is signified by the Twin Towers tragedy marking the explosive birth of the Age of Aquarius. We now approach the 20-year anniversary of the 9/11 date, symbolizing the twin pillars at the entrance of the Temple where the Seal of Solomon was placed above the portal to the Holy of the Holies. The universal body politic is striving for universal love as the new stage on which to create from a holistic template.

Is this universal love the optimum truth?

What else could it be? The new Real returns humanity to its origins—the Sacred Reality, reflecting the Galactic Center where an unbounded universal love is the unifying center of Mind integrated with Spirit, complementary to the marriage of Psyche and Matter. At the center of this fourfold relationship is the dynamic spiral of aliveness, the 21st Century icon of the *hieros gamos*. This dynamic spiral, this aliveness, is the s/he/art of a 21st Century Modernism.

ONTOLOGY OF A NEW MODERNISM



SUBJECT (A) = OBJECT (B)

FIG. 10:
The New Real: A
Galactic Center of
unbounded
universal love

For Footnotes
and Sources,
see page 58

Lyle Rexer

Crow Experiences Unreality and Appeals to Martin Heidegger for a Solution

Crow had always felt a certain sense of unreality, as if he were wrapped in swaddling up to his eyeballs and looked out on the world like some kind of spy, or even less than that, like a passerby. He was puzzled by everything he saw but lacked the interest to probe it, query it, wrest new meanings from his experience. It was a little like being a zombie or a ghost, in it but not of it, there but not there. Crow had always chalked this up as an avian problem, but lately he wasn't so sure.

Crow heard the sound of gunfire in the distance. All the birds around him scattered, and the larger creatures of the field, the charismatic mega-fauna—the deer, bear, coyotes and foxes—took off like bats out of hell. Crow was mildly fascinated to watch a bear run, a kind of propelled waddle that gained such incredible momentum that the animal had trouble stopping. The guns kept sounding, a pointed pop pop pop that seemed to drift on the air. Sounds that had no consequence, something from far away carried to Crow's hearing like a rumor.

But he could see the men with rifles. Every now and then one would catch a glint of light. For that instant they seemed almost real. But Crow didn't believe in them, or if he did, the problem was, he felt absolutely nothing. He searched himself for fear and found nothing, no emotion at all. Courage and cowardice (it has often been remarked) can have the same appearance: in the simple act of doing nothing. Crow did nothing. He watched as the men with the guns drew closer to his perch, where he was obviously exposed.

They were there, he was here, and he felt they could never be connected, in any world. They could never reach across the chasm that separated whatever was real about them (to themselves) and what was uniquely real to him, that is, his swaddled self. Even the shell of a shotgun was impossible. To reach him, it would first have to travel half the distance, and to do that, it would first have to travel half that

distance, and to do that it would first have to travel half that distance, and so on until it was frozen in some infinitesimal micro-second of complete stasis. Besides, Crow wasn't a game bird. He was just biological furniture. Why would anyone not a farmer shoot at him?

The spray of pellets ripped through the branches above his head. Still he didn't move. He realized that this sense of the world's unreality was the source of the insane belief in one's own invincibility. Like his Native namesake, Absaroka, the Crow Indians, whose vision quests gave

uncomprehending departure. One minute you were there and the next minute you weren't. How was that any different from a fly snapped up by a frog's tongue? Being-unto-death. It's a jungle out there and not a pyramid with cerebral Crow at the top, just a flat landscape of death, and men with guns. And speaking of leopards, Crow had taken advantage of more than a few downed ruminants. Leopards were not his particular *bete noire*. In fact, he had once admired the performance of a leopard hanging a buffalo hide in a tree, though he couldn't for any earthly reason see the purpose. Later, he wasn't above taking a sample. It was worse than jerky.

But this was Crow's basic problem: he should have been on the wing and instead he was wool-gathering, pondering.

The next spray of pellets caught the tip of his wing. A flesh wound, some feathers, a bagatelle. The problem now became: what to do? If he moved, he'd be even more visible. If he didn't, they would probably just shoot again in his general direction and might get lucky. He could drop to the ground and play dead, but the dog they had with them would probably chew him up just for fun. Dogs were so stupid and would do anything for a little human affection. Crow's only choice at this point was to go with his own passivity. No sense fighting against your own nature. Crow hung down. The hunters were only yards from the tree. The stupid Irish setter was barking up a storm.

“Fucking bird's already dead and just doesn't know it. Why waste another shell on something we can't stick in our bag? Target practice is over,” the hunters said.

Already dead and just doesn't know it. For Crow, the thought was worse than being shot. Will I know it when I'm dead? If not, if I can't know that, the most important thing, then all this really is unreal. And it may not be true that birds don't dream and I am not dreaming this.



them special powers, especially in battle. So they thought, and maybe on another level it did. But not on the material one. Better to have it all hard wired, like an antelope. You get wind of a lion or a leopard and you take off, no hesitation, no strategizing, no feelings of nameless dread. Just pure adrenaline and speed, and the winner depends only on the luck of the genetic draw. Likewise, no celebration when you outrun the latest threat. And no regrets when the leopard gets his chompers on your throat. Just an

The Pillars of Truth · *Part II*: Reflection

Once upon a time, a man believed his eyes. He thought that what he could see existed, that things as such were precisely the way they appeared to be, and appearances were a door of perception that led to a truthful way to Reality: things as they actually were. For this reason, he made his choice, became a photographer and began to capture, depict and record his visual experience of things as if every picture that he took were a question he posed to Reality, and his images the optical answers to his retinal quest.

Strangely, the more he photographed, the more his pictures revealed aspects of things his eyes were not directly able to see, as if his images were pages of an unknown language he was learning to read, offering him access to what his eyes could only superficially grasp. He began to realize that the surface of all visible things was like a skin, the first and literal level of an all-encompassing and infinitely complex entity he referred to as Reality. He sensed that the depth of its manifold nature could disclose multiple levels of perception and meaning.

Through this practice, he was posing new questions, wondering whether he was looking at the actuality or the images of things. Could he only be seeing pictures formed in his mind and defined by his thought? Why were his photographs looking so increasingly different from what he thought he had seen? In the developmental process of his ever-evolving photographic language, a deep distance grew between the vision conveyed by his eye-sight and the language spoken by his pictures, until he realized the medium he most trusted had led his eyes to a naive temptation of truth, dissolving Reality into unfamiliar forms without a bond to the past.

The gap between the ‘irrefutable given,’ without which no picture can be had, and its ever-expanding interpretive content had become so vast, that his work no longer represented any objects, but only its vague and at times indiscernible allusion.

He accepted the radical transformation of his photographer’s experience, convinced his photographs were acts of faith in Reality, demanding to be reframed as part of a much larger scheme of interpretation. One day he saw himself writing:

“All my work stems from an experiential root, the recognition of a pre-existing element lived, appropriated and transformed into a metaphor for Reality. I feel that things in themselves are unreachable and unknowable, and I wonder: what if things already contained all their possible images? Since each of us looks at the same thing and sees it differently, couldn’t every image we produce be the projection of a corresponding internal one, out there? Otherwise, how would we choose the very image that corresponds to us among the potentially infinite, existing, revealable ones?

I think that every photograph can be understood as a symbolic form of the mind, implemented through experience. I am struck by what I cannot directly see, and capture, process and accompany it towards the formation of its image. I observe where this

process leads me, and ultimately, the form it takes to assume the ‘idea’ of the thing. It is a mystery how trivial things that belong to the every day and the undifferentiated may contain extraordinary levels of complexity that lay there where we are, exactly in front of us.

I am not interested in what binds us to the memory of the photographed events, nor the narrative produced, but the power of transformation in a new Reality: no longer the thing seen nor the one represented, but perhaps the summa and the overcoming of both. If men have created an image for everything and the sensible universe is entirely mapped, we no longer have to look at things, but see through them."

Photography had taught him to see his practice as a way to simultaneously look towards the visible outer world and the lightless inner one and see his picture as a plane of coincidence: the Threshold where these two different, yet tightly related worlds, coexist.

Eventually, he stopped looking around and seeking new subjects, and turned the lens towards his latest photograph: a completely black one. This image was the sum of all his previous negatives and files exposed onto a single sheet of photographic paper. It no longer retained the information of any individual pictures, so that the excessive amount of information had blackened the photosensitive surface, making his images retinally invisible.

This all-encompassing image of all the images reflected his presence in its black mirror-like surface at the moment he stood before it. Looking into this blind photograph, the only thing to be seen was this ghostly-reflected image of an invisible man, the metaphor for his overexposure to the images of the world and their constant, bulimic consumption. What was left to be photographed, he wondered, still unmatched by the presence of an existing image?

He titled his ultimate photograph *Meditation*: a blind gaze and a chance to see, a light negated and revealed and an absence from which a presence was born. His black-mirrored photograph was a meditation on Photography, the Subject and Reality at the same time.

This meta-photograph emerged from the ashes of the visible, at the end of any possible photographic representation, and inspired him to write the following words.

If

Reality ‘as it is’ is unattainable:
Present and distant, literal and obscure,
evident and complex,
Multilayered and enigmatic,

If

Through our vision and expression
The *things in themselves* become things as they are for us:
Our visible ideas of what we call
Reality,

If

It is not about the way things are,
But the way we see them,
I wonder:

Isn’t our mind the special place where Reality
Becomes *Exactly Who We Are?*

If

Reality is the object of our thought:
What unity lies behind the diversity and complexity
Of the manifold appearances of Reality?

Is there a way to grasp such elusive unity
Through the windows that we open on Reality?

How can we allude to such unreachable wholeness
Through the limits of our languages?

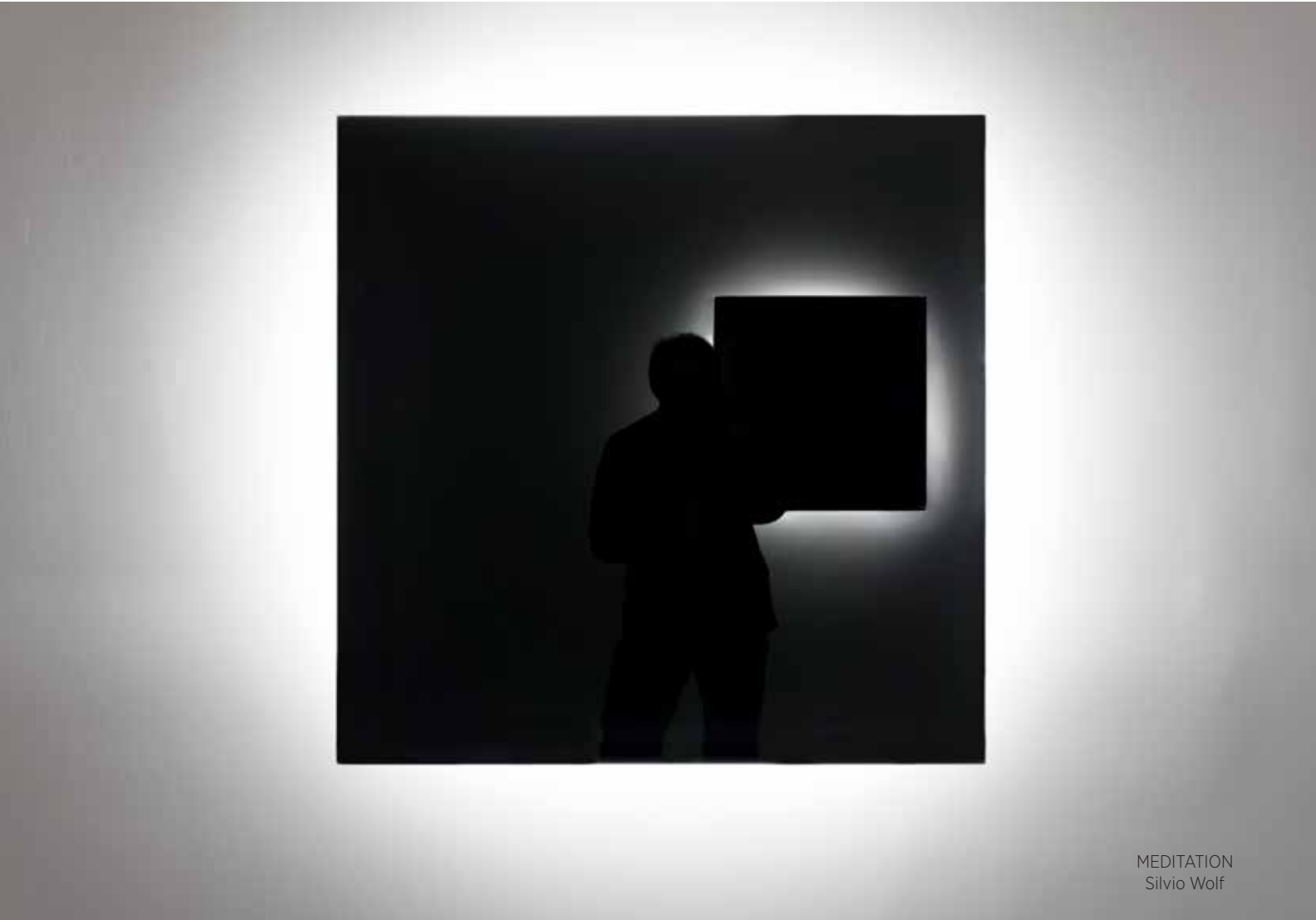
If

The forms through which we express ourselves
are mysterious,
Literal and symbolic at the same time,

If

These planes simultaneously exist
And one offers access to the other,
Can an Image tell me

Who I am?



Reality Beyond Realism: *So Courage & Gypsy Motion*

The real cannot be transformed into its opposite—fake news, polluted stories, twisted facts, deliberate lies. This junk can be passed off as reality, swallowed as reality, but nothing will turn the phony into the real. Denial of reality is powerless. Reality prevails. But reality is not the monopoly of newsmakers, power brokers, and assorted specialists.

The art of the novel is a magnificent form of creative reality.

After experimenting with a series of non-figurative short works, I wanted to portray lifelike characters in recognizable settings and satisfy the reader's taste for storytelling...without building heavy outworn structures. *So Courage & Gypsy Motion*, my transatlantic novel, written in the mid-1970s, published in 2019 [authorship intl], travels from Washington DC in 1968, to Paris, Toscana, Ibiza, ending on a beach in Formentera in September 1973. How could I bring to life the collective realities that inspired the novel: racial conflict in the United States, the hotly contested Vietnam War, exile and identity?

If I would describe my technique in one word, it would be “freedom.” There is no narrator to set the framework; the subjects are autonomous co-authors of their own sequences. I made the connection between the private and the public by linking the life story of each of the subjects to some geopolitical upheaval. Then I worked in depth, in intimacy, creating intricate figures of resonance, discovering reality as it impinges on individual heartfelt desires.

My co-authors, each with a singular vision of reality, engage in passionate, sometimes lengthy, debates about world affairs and personal relations. What do they expect of the world they live in, locked in the eternal struggle between freedom and tyranny? What do they expect of themselves and each other, in love, in friendship? Who can be trusted?

These are the seedlings from which the novel grew. Organically. Musically, with the freedom of jazz improvisation. Aesthetically, with an eye on African art and my senses tuned to all that surrounded me in Europe, and the world I had left behind when I moved from Baltimore to Paris in 1972.

The novel opens with reality as a TV news report received in a suburban Maryland living room [p 10]:

“Fourteenth Street is burning. Washington is burning. Cold flames splash up, spurt out the windows. Firetrucks rush to the scene. Small figures fall whisper as leaves, float and tumble into nets.

Pip! pip!pip! Snipers. The firetruck turns tail, dragging its hose behind. There, just around that corner they run carrying armfuls of baked hams. Lightning flash of white teeth. Lips moving. What are they saying? There, joyous procession dances out of the drycleaner's, arms filled. No ticket no sweat.

“(Voice Off) Looters carrying a console model color TV, surprised by guardsmen, drop it and run. It breaks like Humpty Dumpty. And all the king's horses and all the king's ...

“— There, you see what's behind all that agitation for ‘equal rights,’ now you see what they really want, violence and destruction and theft. They want to steal what honest people have worked their whole lives to acquire. And that's not the worst of it. Barbarians!

“The Armory. After the flame and smoke, shock of cold bright light. Businessmen, professors, washing machine repairmen, students, accountants, government workers, draughtsmen, drugstore clerks, bill collectors, insurance salesmen, real-estate agents and lawyers pass through the locker room and into the echoing hall, become National Guardsmen.

“The camera follows one, a black man, up the stairs of the armory two by two, dressed in a white suit and flowered shirt, sunglasses. Discreet passage through the locker room. Now, in uniform, baggy pants tucked into paratrooper boots, he moves from pile to pile, helping himself to the self-service buffet: helmet, gas mask, tear gas canisters, rifle, ammunition belt, shield. He takes his place with the others, now an orderly rank, two by two, nothing left black but his hands that clutch the rifle. Loudspeaker shouts instructions lost in the echo chamber of the hall. Marching as to war.”

The public reality is: riots in black neighborhoods of Washington DC, enraged by the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Politicians, historians, sociologists, activists, and assorted commentators puzzled to make sense of the racial conflict that exploded in those riots. As a novelist, I wanted to flesh out the context of that TV news reality by giving voice to individuals whose lives touch and are touched by the conflict. They had to be free to express their gripes, their hopes, their hearts and souls. And I had to be free to help them exist as a literary reality that does not follow the same rules as real life. Literature is not impersonation, it's not identity theft or the new bugaboo of “cultural appropriation.” My affectionate complicity with dozens of subjects (“characters”) is in itself a response to the sharp divide that afflicts their counterparts in real life. The energy and luminosity of the novel comes from the positive-negative charge

of stretching across the space of visible difference.

How could I treat the resonance between outward events and the delicate reality of singular human beings? Without hard edges, heavy-handed mechanical manipulations, or contrived suspense? It had to be done in light brush strokes, to deftly capture the reality of those years in those places and make it manifest in the intersection of myriad threads that form delicate patterns in hand-woven cloth. To capture the taste of things!

One might say I gave birth to the subjects of the novel. Conceived them in love, protected them in the womb of my spirit, and let them push their way into the outside world and be themselves, not miniature copies of me, not obedient marionettes of a willful showman. That, I believe, is the source of their vitality. They are not crushed by any authorly domination. They are the whole story, their energy bears the whole weight; when one goes quiet, another picks up and takes us somewhere. We're never left high and dry. And, obviously, no form of censorship could be allowed to suppress

their freedom, not then, when the novel was written, not today, never.

How much I love my *So Courage & Gypsy Motion* people! Barbara, Cindy, Arletta, Maya, Jakob, Joelle, Lorenzo, Shirley, Tony, Giancarlo, Bruce, Ted Stefanidis, Marshmallow...Richard Long, the bestselling Iowa workshop novelist and his pregnant hillbilly wife; Robert Thomas Williams, the earnest Liberation College student who becomes the first road rage killer; Leeroi, the son of a US soldier on R&R in Japan...

Each one is unique. The challenge was to capture the music of each unique voice, to hear my co-authors tell how they got there and where they want to go. The musical composition of those personal lives— so particular, so specific, so poetic, so colorful and flavorful— shapes into the collective public reality that makes the news and the history books.

Is this fiction? In fact, when literature captures the intimate it achieves the faithful recreation of the world in which we live. Today, decades after my *So Courage* people spoke up, their reality connects us, from generation to generation.

Arletta tells her best friend Cindy that she had second thoughts about taking courses at Liberation College [p. 39]:

[Cindy] — *I gotta girl in my section goes over there, she tells me the same thing, but she's hanging in anyway ... that girl just loves bookworms she see a man carrying a book she give him some pussy without he even ask her, that girl is crazy for anything to do with books....*

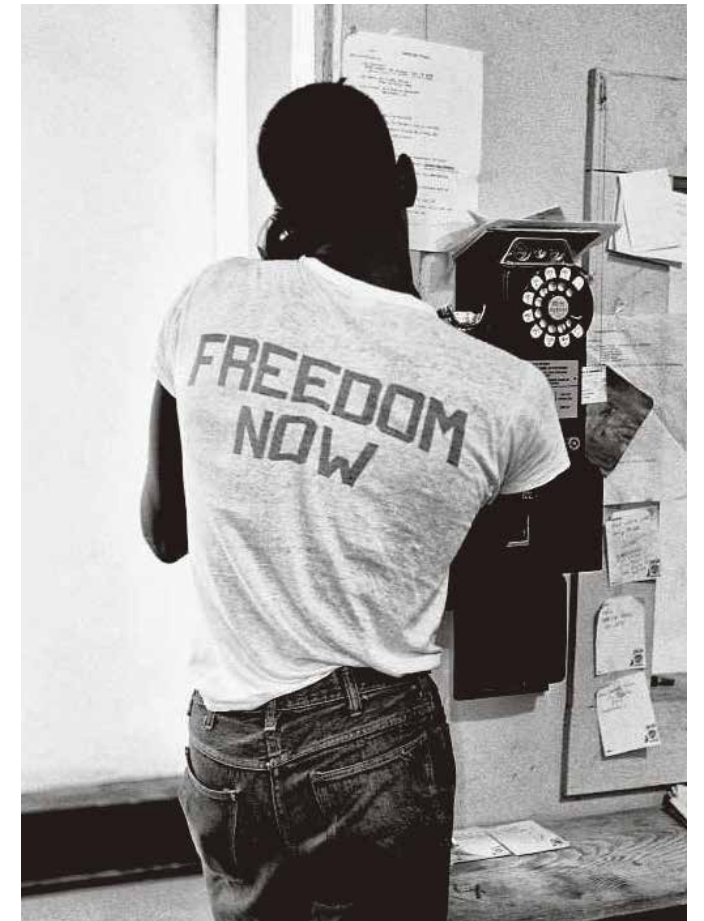
— *Sometimes I think about going to Africa.*

— *AFRICA? What would you do there?*

— *I don't know. I don't know much about it...but I'd like to, I'd like to study something right down to the bottom, you know, all the way, until it's familiar as my home town.... something big, something worth knowing. Like Africa. That's where we came from, and we don't know word one.”*

A history professor makes an impassioned speech at a faculty meeting at Liberation College. Students protesting the Vietnam War are on strike ... again [p. 59]:

“Which brings us to the international



Photographs
© Steve Schapiro/Courtesy of TASCHEN

situation. The military might of the United States is crushing the people of a small country that is no threat to us. And who are they using for this dirty work? You know, everyone here knows. BLACK MEN. Black men, who have never received the freedom and dignity that was their due from the minute they were brought to this land, against their will...."

Barbara learns that her colleague Maya is leaving Liberation College [p. 89]:

[Maya] — One thing is certain: the Occidental world is finished. ..This country is old, old, antique... it's a myth, all that crap about young and fresh, it never was, it was born old. I'm leaving... I don't know, I don't have any place to go back to, not exactly... You're Greek?

— My parents are. I was born in Severna Park.

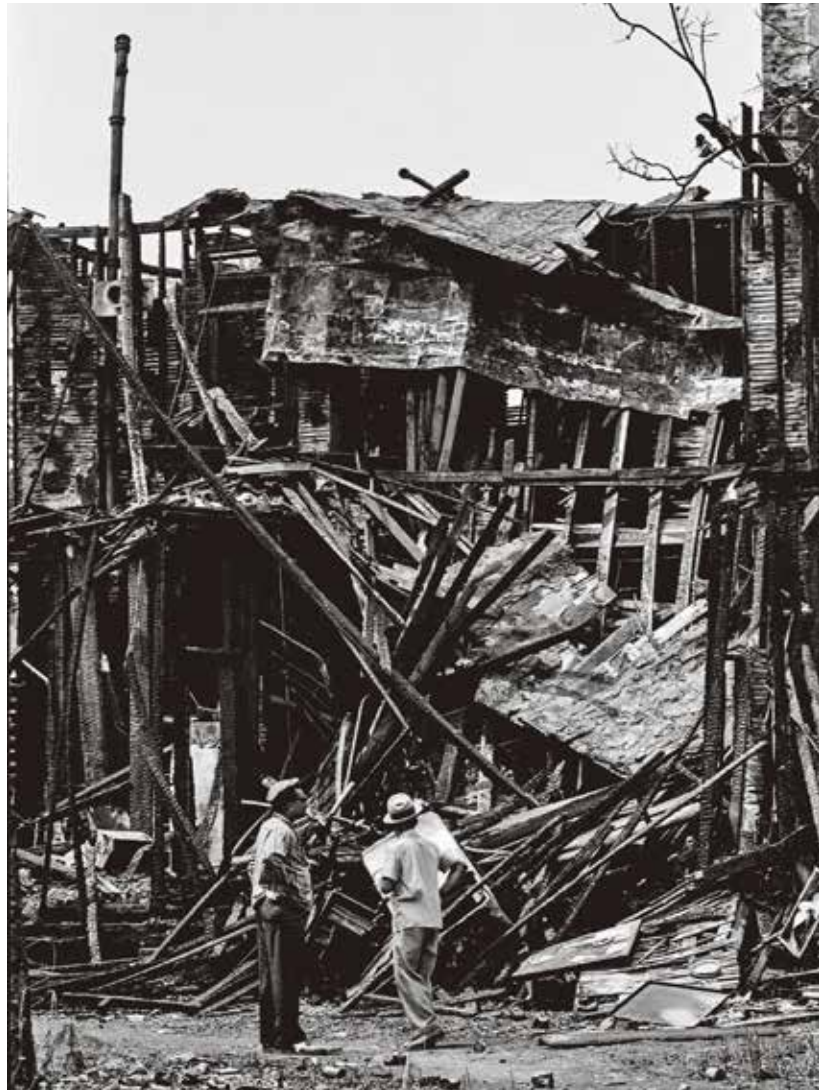
— Where's that?

— It's a suburb of Baltimore.

— Baltimore. I've passed it on my way to New York, but I've never been there. Well... did you grow up in a ... Greek atmosphere?"

Arletta and Lorenzo share a precious moment [p. 101]:

"He stood at the sink, washing himself. As if her eyes were his hand, she felt the weight of his jones. Carefully, almost solemnly, he washed himself. She shared his adoration. Clean. Cleanest part, the private. After love, clean like a new born baby. After love, a thick film of love polishes the head to ebony sculpture. He washed off the love, washing away all trace of her. So she won't know. Reality gripped her. In a violent gesture she turned, pressed her belly against the bed, her head against the pillow. The damp place under her hips, where love had poured out; tears."



BIRMINGHAM CHURCH
BOMBING, 1963
© Steve Schapiro/
Courtesy of TASCHEN

The intertwined issues of racial conflict and the hotly contested Vietnam War take on a different dimension in the novel when Maya leaves the United States, slamming the door behind her. New international light is shed on all that came before, as it is seen from a European perspective, by locals and exiles, friends and foes. In Europe, the proportions change; style, manners, and language are redesigned; new horizons open, old bonds tug and rebound, and individual destinies intersect with the collective realities that were in the news then. Paris in the early Seventies speaks, invites, embraces, seduces, enchants and repels.

Maya in Paris thinks back to her friends and colleagues in Washington [p. 131]:

"The way they'd see it, she made her bread teaching at them, now she took her pile and split to Europe, to be with her own, split to Paris, to sit in cafés talkin about how much she knows about niggers."

Maya's young buddy, Leeroi, tells her how he came into this world... and ruined his mother's life: [p. 286]:

"My mother was seventeen. Dressed in a blue and white cotton kimono, seated on the veranda, she plays the samisen, a song about a lover who died in the time of the cherry blossoms, a lover who will come with the first snow.... And in the newspapers it was the

time of the war against Korea... you know it perhaps as the Korean War. Did you ever notice, there are no American wars?

"A tall shadow passes through the gate. She lifts her head. A soldier walks from stone to stone the path. She had never seen a black man. She bows. He bows, and greets her in the correct form for addressing a female, she thinks he speaks her language...."



COLIBRI
Mario Murua

Perception is the only **REAL** that matters

In sum, in a world where money trumps religion, Reality pays the bills.

While much has changed in what we describe as *Real* and *Reality*, in the eyes of a Social Scientist (Alberto Bisin) and a Marketer (myself), there has always been a factual disconnect between the two. In terms of perception, the key question is: Haven't expectations always clouded the Real in the minds of people, making *REAL* somewhat different from *REALITY*?

We ask: Can humans perceive Real without it manifesting in Reality? Is a reality possible that is not somehow transmitted or communicated, therefore personalized, by our own mental associations?

When expressed, any information, real or not, is inevitably transformed in its journey to another. This protocol becomes exponentially more chaotic if the number of listeners and interpreters increases and additionally, if they associate that information with other seemingly correlated data points. In the same way that the architecture of a room influences the amplification of sound, subjective opinions augment and affect the reality behind a message and its propagation.

Notwithstanding how Umberto Eco described the differences between Real and Reality in his "Intentio Lectoris: Differentia" as the gap between the interpretation of a reader and the intentions of the writer, Alberto and I are inclined to spend more time observing the formation of spontaneous patterns, regardless of the intention, and conveniently look for ways to harness data, to learn and to persuade.

By observation, it is accepted that people perceive as Real the information they can recognize and categorize. It is a simple quest to manufacture the patterns that guide each human to safety. This act of looking for the known taints the Real with expectations.

If this pattern has always been present, then real Transgression arrives from the speed at which *Expectation Tainted Realities* spread through digital channels, and how they can literally be manufactured into

self-fulfilling prophecies. Without acknowledging Digital Reality and how it exists in parallel to traditional reality, let's take pause to appreciate the amount of time we spend in its frictionless environment. To be technical for a moment: the answer (for now) is precisely 6 hours and 42 minutes. This is the average daily time we spend online. It represents 30% of our average time awake.

Google's profitability depends on the eyeballs it attracts daily, in response to our queries. Every time we use Google, Facebook, Instagram or any browser, a series of algorithms record our behaviors and preferences. This monitoring doesn't happen for Big-Brothering purposes, but rather to accurately fulfill the promise of the Digital and to manifest the frictionless Reality for which it has been conceived. This is where Transgression begins its journey.

In the past, we shared our physical spaces with others and were subsequently exposed to messages crafted for very diverse segments of the population. Today that mixed-message space has been reduced by 30%. In its place, we have made room for an Algo-Dictatorial environment that feeds us what Google knows we want to read. The machine fulfills its promise.

Similar to how vibrations travel through a concert hall in the form of music, debatably-real messages use like-minded pieces of content as a sounding board to reach followers faster than ever before. It is an explosion of collective subjectivity.

"The attempt to comprehend what news items go viral and understand their patterns of dissemination is a heroic act... it is more of a numbers game," said Alberto. "We can only operate in the realm of projections, data and speculations."

It seems that we, as people, haven't changed at all. Our Reality has always been built by adding expectations and personal knowledge to Real. What has changed is the size of the battlefield and the speed at which we can leverage pre-wired expectations and gut emotions: fast enough to chase

facts away. Therefore, the real Transgression becomes the speed at which a message gets disseminated before Facts can catch up: A set of self-fulfilling prophecies materializing themselves way before Real can ever bless their validity. A lie told often enough or for long enough has become Truth.

If the answer to the question "Will we survive this transgression?" is yes, then the compass we need to be able to navigate towards that conclusion is Reward. Quite frankly, what's in it for people to stop accepting bent Realities?

In the process of finding the right balance, society will get exponentially savvier. But unlike a tide that carries everything with it, this process, we suggest, will contribute to the democratization of society. However, the size of the knowledge gap among societal casts will likely remain identical; we said savvier, not smarter.

To the question "Will this transgression matter in the near future?," the answer is also yes, but this can be a slippery slope. It is easy to say that publishers and search engines have the moral obligation to investigate facts before disseminating messages, but at the same time, how can a business such as Google argue that shifting the definition of *Global Warming* to *Climate Change* is a lie? How can the sustenance from the advertising be paid for by the same spin doctors who pump up their balance sheets?

It would be interesting to understand from an historian what parallels we could draw from times when people toppled dictators. Will we be able to topple this new Algo-Dictatorship? We sense that the solution should be found via education, institutions and, in an ideal world, by a new sense of morality from Wall Street.

Alas, we know enough about human nature to assume this is never going to happen.

Real Dolls Never Say No

“Creature of desire” was precisely the name given by the great Austrian artist Oskar Kokoschka to the doll he commissioned from Hermine Moss, a very talented artisan from Munich, to create the simulacrum of Alma Mahler, the most charming woman in Vienna in the 1910s. Kokoschka had a passionate love affair with Alma, once widowed by Gustav Mahler. Eventually, Alma abandoned Oskar due to his morbid jealousy and insistence on total fusion. To fill the void and assuage his pain, Kokoschka then ordered the creation of this doll, painstakingly overseeing every detail¹ of this fantastic creature that he wanted by his side for life. But what was delivered to him after months of careful planning, obsessively guided by drawings, discussions and requests for precise details, was a furry and monstrous puppet that greatly disappointed him. Despite this, he kept it with him, had a maid look after her, dressing her in the finest linens, treating her with all due respect and presenting her to society. At the end, Kokoschka killed his beloved doll “Alma” by beheading her and raging over the “corpse,” having fallen prey to a fit of anger or perhaps jealousy. A symbolic femicide? Or a cathartic ritual of liberation to re-establish communication with the real? In any case, it was a chilling gesture.

A similar end befell Caracas, another doll who was the imaginary wife of Gogol, the character created by the pen of an Italian writer Tommaso Landolfi. In the short story entitled, precisely *The Wife of Gogol*, written in 1954², the author pretends that the story is being written by a confidant and biographer of Gogol, a certain Foma Paskalovic. He claims that Gogol, unlike the other biographers, was not a bachelor, but had a wife who hid from everyone's eyes because she was only an inflatable doll whose shape changed according to the husband's desire. In fact, it could be inflated and deflated to take on the features of a thin, or rotund or fat woman and, with special devices, even her eyes and skin color could be changed. She spoke only in front of her husband and always in appropriate terms. But one day, she said something wrong and terribly prosaic (also heard accidentally



by his biographer). This violation of the rules of secrecy sent him into a rage. Thereafter, when the doll began to have a life of its own and the quarrels were daily, Gogol could no longer bear it. He killed it by inflating it furiously until it exploded. Another femicide? Yes, however imaginary. And even more tragicomic than the first, because in addition to the doll-wife, his son was also killed, a second doll born secretly from the relationship between the lovers.

Long before these examples, Pygmalion—the king of Cyprus and a skilled sculptor whose myth was handed down to us by Ovid in the Tenth book of *Metamorphoses*—had conceived and created for himself a simulacrum of perfect femininity. Apparently, he was “outraged by the defects of which nature had abundantly endowed the woman.” Pygmalion was an artist and a man terribly disappointed by the women of the island of Cyprus, the Propetidae, known for their lasciviousness and ignominy. But the unbearable loneliness led him one day to sculpt a large, ivory statue, depicting a beautiful woman, Galatea, a creature perfectly adherent to his ideal of perfection. He fell in love with her, and Venus, moved by his prayers, helped him to make her alive by making her his life partner and generating a son. We do not know what happened to Galatea nor how long the “real” story of this “ideal” love lasted. The myth stops, in fact, at the time of the birth of his son, Paphos.

We do know, however, that the myth of the perfect woman, one that is beautiful, docile, mute and always ready to satisfy the desires of the man who owns her, has now become reality. Tired of waiting for the miracle of the gods, men have built their Real Dolls³, a new generation of sex toys, covered with cyberskin⁴ and more and more lifelike (also with the help of AI)⁵. You can buy them for a few thousand dollars, book time with them in *maisons closes*, rent them for home or hotel use, in place of an escort. You can have them whole or in parts, for varying time periods. The motto that accompanies the sale is, “If you don’t find the ideal woman, you can always order her.”

Ordering, buying and composing are the keywords, since the manufacturers promise a high level of product customization. From the catalog, it is possible to obtain a large assortment of interchangeable parts and accessories that guarantee the satisfaction of each sexual, ludic, and emotional desire. In Japan, Love Dolls are sold in body parts because—as one of the producers stated—users are more likely to personalize the product, mount it and take it apart rather than use it.⁶ The body, the head, the vagina (called “the Hole”) are therefore sold separately in order to ensure the maximum choice in terms of measures, colors and shapes of the most significant parts of the doll. In order to arouse the interest of its user, especially in the Eastern world, the doll must have a human appearance and must above all embody an impossible dream, a chimera. She is more appreciated than a prostitute because with her the play can last a long time. “With a doll, it’s easier,” said Love Dolls collector Sakai Mitsugi, “—because she’s only able to keep quiet, so it’s possible to make her say what a man wants.” (Giard, 2016). Real Dolls and Love Dolls

are therefore simulacra, ideal repositories of fantasies and Idoller (this is how the user is called) projections in which he finds in them the echo and the realization of his every desire or fantasy. He also has the possibility of shaping and experimenting with the doll as he sees fit, without any feedback offered to him. The inertia and silence of the doll assures him the “peace of mind” that no woman in real life can ever guarantee him. A Real Doll is therefore not a simple substitute, *faute de mieux*, of a real woman, a lover, a wife, or a daughter (the childlike features and the child pornographic references of some love-dolls deserve a separate discussion).

The technological incarnation of Alma, Caracas and Galatea belongs, in fact, to the realm of chimeras and its maximum value lies in its being a “creature of desire,” an unfinished, deficient, stupid and incomplete entity. “Unlike women in the flesh and bone,” says Sakai Mitsugi, “Love Dolls are calm, silent and above all lacking in any personality.” It is true: Real dolls never say “No!”

For Footnotes, see page 58



Above: REAL DOLLS SEQUENZA

Left: LOVE DOLL IMPALATA

Below: FEMMES PENDUES



Ephemeral Permanence: When Process Supercedes...Reality Prevails

A review of the new work of Leah Poller

Throughout her 30-year career as a sculptor whose material of preference has always been *rex-extensive* bronze, New York artist Leah Poller embraced an art form that resided in the interstitial palimpsest of the figurative/representational.

The flight from realism has enjoyed a 40-year bull market. Bull, due to the exponential proliferation of work needed to meet the market factors of supply and demand/demand and supply, provided by a disinhibited plethora of artists meeting the voracious appetite of galleries and auction houses for the unrestrained cognitive value attributed to buyer-beware works. Not to overlook the vogue of new and expanding contemporary art museums whose cavernous spaces demand gargantuan product from a Viagra-driven artworld.

Supported by the digital age, two intervening phenomena opened a real crack in an abstract wall. First, the iPhone app of the “selfie” which, by definition focuses on self—the human form in all its pleasing, posturing and outlandish imagery in front of sensationalist driven backdrops (Kapoor’s “Bean”, Koon’s “Balloon dog”, Johnson’s “Marilyn”, etc.) and secondly, the product-hungry marketplace that finally invited photography to open its storerooms of imagery from instantaneous maestro-making shutterbugs with stockpiles of *pellicule* subjected to physical and digital manipulation.

Voila, miraculously and undeniably, the human form as subject has reappeared.

Abandoned by training in the classical, the art practitioner now provides a clumsy, expressionistic vision of “us” with the narratives that accompany each being, aka “the story”. Fortuitously, the re-immersion of a handful of classically trained masters of the real human (of which Poller never left the fold) are being re-considered. The glimmer of light on

their newly buffed talent is tantamount to a crypto currency bling, offering promising lucrative returns to the first and best in a rediscovered, hence, esoteric market. Like fashion, with its ever-adjusted hemlines and poured fabrics, the art market



SOFT BED
Leah Poller

just flipped to labor intensive brocade, silhouettes that are shape driven, acknowledging a long deserving ethnic heroism, and voila, a much heralded, precious commodity is being mined from the dark and dusty repositories of the “never sold a work till SHE died” past and the unearthing of brilliant prodigies of the present who persisted by actually being able to manifest the real.

This preface is to announce that the inimical sculptor Leah Poller, a contrarian by nature, has pulled a metanoiac move. Hidden from view in her cavernous work space in China, in *rex cognitus*, Poller has developed a new body of non-representational work with a dream-team at the world’s largest art foundry where she is considered as family after years of collaboration on her well-known series of the “Bed”.

Combatting an *affect heuristic*, Poller embraces the unsung heroes of the monumental – all that “dropped and plopped” urban furniture adorning our squares and plazas, fly speck in the cavernous muse-

um spaces financed by (another surprise!!) fortunes of “he got means” who benefitted from the philanthropic and tax beneficial giftings that funneled funds from “the rich who got richer” to the safe deposit boxes of the modern museum.

In a teeter-totter moment where Poller’s *Beds* and portraits have reached international acclaim, she has taken executive control over a series of monumental works culled from her denizen staff at the foundry, her collaborative heroes of hands-on creativity. “The art world is fascinated by process, and I can understand why. How an idea becomes a 3-dimensional creation cast in an indestructible material with 2000 years of guaranteed sustainability, is nothing short of alchemy”, states Poller.

With her gracious propensity for inclusiveness, Poller has dedicated “Ephemeral Permanence” to the art-worker, the 1000’s of dedicated individuals of exceptional talent who have been the ideo-motors responsible for molding, pouring, polishing and perfecting the dreams and ambitions of the 3-D artists—anonously.

“I personally have always physi-



ON THE CAVE WALL
Leah Poller



HE BROKE MY HEART
Leah Poller

cally wrestled with my work. And so, this round is a tribute to the many gifted hands-on that without pretension and in sincere collaboration, have enabled me to dare, like Picasso, to add an arrow to my bow.”

It comforts Poller to know that art aficionados will no longer be capable of pigeon-holing her work as purely figurative/representational. The paradox: she was right to embrace that form of expression counter current for 30 years ...and just as that boat is taking off, she makes a 180 degree turn upstream with an audacious, vigorous and weighty homage soon to inaugurate a new museum in China—an exhibition of contemporary process—the byproduct of an assiduous labor of love.

From my perspective, after viewing myriad exhibitions of abstract and conceptual work, the smoke and mirrors are about to clear up. The emperor wants to be fully clothed in custom fit, brocaded finery offering more than some string, a few balloons, a pile of rubbish, some cardboard boxes, even rows of decaying baloney or last night’s dirty dishes, to adorn his palace.

In a word, “Ephemeral Permanence” in transient hyper-frontality submits the beauty of process felt by Poller as the “reality of facing herself” as a direct



JAGGED EDGE
Leah Poller

“The art world is fascinated by process, and I can understand why. How an idea becomes a 3-dimensional creation cast in an indestructible material with 2,000 years of guaranteed sustainability, is nothing short of alchemy.”

—Leah Poller



DISASSEMBLED
Leah Poller

Fighting for Our Senses:

Musical Activism and the Struggle to Redefine Reality

In our day-to-day lives, we may concede subconsciously that idea called reality to be “what is”—the realm of the material. But on further examination, we see that what we consider real—and possible—is wrapped up in the intersection of our senses and politics. Our senses, how we convert our environment through our sensory mediums of our ears, tongues, fingers, eyes, and nostrils into reality, is as political and contested as net neutrality versus corporate control of the internet. As Marx reminds us, that is because “the forming of the five senses is a labor of the entire history of the world down to the present.”¹

Nazis banned ‘degenerate’ jazz, while in America, the House Committee on Un-American Activities blacklisted the great African American film actor and singer Paul Robeson for his communist politics. In the 1920s and 30s, a conservative government in Haiti banned Vodou and ritual music associated with it; musicians snuck it back in with a hybrid form called “Vodou Jazz,” doubling as a criticism of their neocolonial government. Indeed, with particular intensity, musicians of the African diaspora have always been fighting to expand, contest, or even overthrow state-sponsored reality which has denied their humanity and right to exist. The great free-jazz bandleader Sun Ra explained: “I do not come to you as a reality, I come to you as a myth, because that’s what black people are, myths. I come to you from a dream that the black man dreamed long ago.” (Quoted in Szwed, *Space is the Place*, 269)

The great baritone saxophonist Fred Ho, inspired by Sun Ra, also fought the colonial occupation of reality and the senses as a challenge to break the limits of this reality. “Everything that is possible has been tried and failed. We must do the impossible.” In his essay, “How Does Music Free Us? ‘Jazz’ as Resistance to Commodification and the Embrace of the Eco-Logic Aesthetic,” Fred Ho suggests that the way music is produced and con-

sumed today affects the overall health of our society and body politic:

Musical malnourishment, with increasing mono-diets and over-consumption of processed, chemically treated/created culture, entails an over-reliance upon intake from manufactured commodities such as loudspeakers, machines, and computers.



FRED HO • Leah Poller

Thus, greater passivity is generated whereby people no longer look to themselves to make music, but simply purchase it via a concert ticket or through a new electronic home entertainment toy. With declining participation in creative activity comes the musical and artistic deskilling of the populace along with its monopolization by “experts” or marketers (often, with the complicity of academia and corporations, these are one and the same). So we get a listening population which, like the general population, is obese, out-of-

shape, unhealthy, and addicted to all the wrong stuff.”

What is Ho’s answer? “Prioritize acoustic live performance over electricity-dependent situations. Live performance is a social act in which all people participate and interact and have mutual influence.”

Ho and Ra are not alone in their assessment that a connection between music, sound, history, and representation intersect to create sensorial interpretations of reality that are built for and by the status quo. The French philosopher-activist Jacques Rancière conceived of aesthetics as more than the style or the form an artistic medium takes. Rather, aesthetics are the multiple ways in which any social order establishes, manages, privileges or marginalizes different modes of perception. And this organization of perception—of sense itself—is the site of a centuries-long, world-historical battle for the senses. Rancière calls this the “distribution of the sensible” and suggests that communal forms of perception can challenge and create alternatives to what is allowed to be “visible or audible, as well as what can be said, made or done” within a particular social order.²

Together with a collective of activist artists, the Afro Yaqui Music Collective, of which I am a member, we strive to create music that challenges the matrix of consumerism, racism, and egocentrism that is killing the planet and giving rise to a new generation of fascists. We do this in a variety of ways: we emphasize communal music making, but without the “dumbing things down.” Indeed, oftentimes audiences are as musical and cutting edge as us. We choose to compose music and create rhythmic environments which move beyond the matrix of four beats per measure, the 4/4 time signature. This way of rhythming and dancing, while home to many polyrhythms, is so dominant now it almost presents itself as “what has always been.” Traditional Middle Eastern rhythms covered a wide array of odd time

signatures, such as 5 and 7. The overwhelming majority of Bulgarian folk music happens to be in odd meters—typically 5, 7, 9 and 11, with occasional combinations of those creating 13, 15, 17 and larger. Indian classical music uses a system of metrical divisions named talas, with various lengths. One of them is a 29 beat cycle.

These experiences of time are very political. They distribute our bodies in social ways that have meanings from the dance floor to political rallies to how we subconsciously structure space, time, and architecture. The fattening of the grand majority of western popular music to 4/4 time signature represents a kind of genocide that has destroyed, or at least marginalized, alternative modernities, other ways of seeing and experiencing the world. If we take Johann Wolfgang von Goethe seriously that ‘music is liquid architecture; architecture is frozen music,’ then what does homogenizing life into four sides (a box!) say about our architecture of reality? Prisons, plantations, and factory farms all are four-sided institutions, and these symbols of discipline and punishment are rigorously reproduced in the music we consume.

That is why in much of the work of our band, Afro Yaqui Music Collective—such as *Mirror Butterfly*, our jazz opera about climate change that is based on interviews with activists in Syria, Mexico, and Tanzania—we employ an odd-time signature aesthetic that is still grooving and funky but moves beyond the 4/4 colonized matrix. Songs in 15, 10, and 9 are commonplace in our work, and we often perform for dancing audiences. We also employ microtonal melodies and harmonies and a variety of non-western instrumentation (pipa, bata drums). All of these help us create an aesthetic deeply in tune with building a new reality: a reality which helps us hear, see, smell, dance to, and dream a matri-focal, post-capitalist future—neither obese, nor square.

This type of work means we must move beyond art as a representation of reality and remember the words of Bertolt Brecht: “Art is not a mirror held up to reality but a hammer with which to shape it.” Time to get our instruments ready to build the world we want to live in.

For Footnotes, see page 58

MARINA
Mario Murua



UP OUR SLEEVES
Pang Yongjie



SILENCE SERIES
Pang Yongjie



Doratheia Thompson

If There Is No Real, There Is No Reality: **NEITHER EXIST**

How do we construct our reality? What is the process? By addressing these questions, we glimpse a greater truth. We will turn to science, Buddhism and psychology in our inquiry.

Modern science is blazing new ground in helping us understand how the human brain functions. Cutting-edge research on the therapeutic use of entheogens is revealing previously unsubstantiated findings and promising applications for these substances as curative medicinal agents and facilitators for the expansion of consciousness. Entheogens is a term coined by a prominent group of ethnobotanists and mythologists in 1979 to differentiate it from psychedelics, which had taken on a negative connotation due to recreational misuse and 1960s countercultural associations. Entheogens are psychoactives that have been used by indigenous people in sacred rituals and healing ceremonies for thousands of years. They include psilocybin mushrooms, peyote, ayahuasca, and iboga, among others.

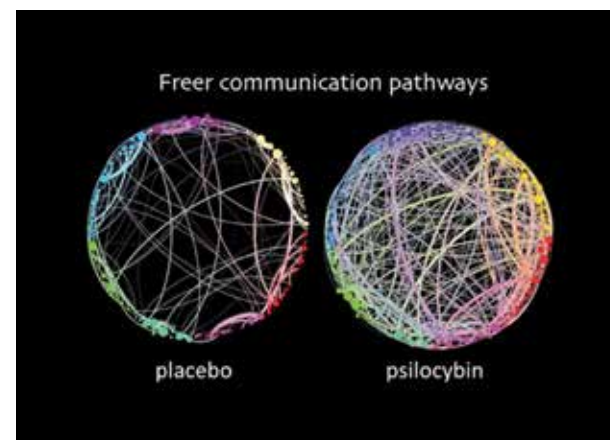
With the advancement of pharmacological synthesis of compounds and in the wake of current studies on psychedelic-assisted therapies, LSD (Lysergic acid diethylamide) and MDMA (3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine), among others, have been added to the list of promising agents.

Research into therapeutic uses of psychedelics was seriously underway in the 1950s and 60s at leading universities and pharmaceutical labs in the U.S., Canada and Europe. All research was abruptly halted in the 1970s, when these substances were made illegal. This began to turn around in the early 1990s, when institutions once again obtained approval to initiate research. We are currently experiencing what might be considered a Psychedelic Renaissance, with impressive study findings.

Several years back, British researcher Dr. Robin Carhart-Harris, of Imperial College London, captured imaging slides of brain activity under the influence of psilocybin, and those of the same brain on a placebo. A comparison, of the two, below, captures an astonishing difference in neural pathway connectivity.

What we see is that right below the layer of normal human consciousness, called our default mode network, DMN, lies a vast world of potential neural connections that can be activated by an entheogen.

Thus, we are in essence constrained by our fixed DMN. The adage that we only use a small percentage of our brain appears to be true.



Throughout human development, seemingly as an evolutionary survival mechanism, we have developed this network, a system processing sensory input through limited repeating patterns that facilitate navigating our world. Understandably, as hunters and gatherers, we could not survive being in a state of constant expansion, lest without singular focus we would become our predators' next meal. We have therefore, both consciously and unconsciously, selected, programmed and reinforced certain ways of behaving, seeing, thinking, understanding and believing, while discarding many others. This mechanism has enhanced survival probability, keeping us in an ever alert, fight-or-flight mode, but in simplifying alternatives, it has also stifled our creative potentialities.

We can glimpse what we've lost when we observe the expanded sensory and emotional capacities of children. As we grow older, these neural network connections are confined to ever more limited, comfortable and repetitive loops. We see only what we've conditioned ourselves to see through our personal, ancestral and transpersonal imprinting.

Entheogens are reclaiming their rightful place as curative agents. Research studies for the treatment of depression, anxiety, addiction and PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) completed at John Hopkins, NYU, Imperial College of London and MAPS (Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies), among others, are reporting excellent results, far exceeding the outcomes of most pharmaceutical drugs. But it is important to add that these medicines are not a magic bullet guaranteeing curative outcomes for all. What we do know is that simply taking an entheogen, without proper preparation, psychological capacity, intention and

optimal setting may engender an outcome less than desirable.

It is commonly held that the effectiveness of pharmacological drugs is highly enhanced, if not mainly dependent, on the psychotherapeutic process. Personal inner transformation becomes possible as conscious and unconscious forces reshape one's very inner reality, giving further validity to the point that reality is not self-existent, residing out there, but rather malleable and self-projecting.

Furthermore, within a comprehensive therapeutic protocol, post-session integration is essential. In these altered, expanded states, one may have an experience, or accept a narrative previously outside the scope of one's purview, which may necessitate repeated integration.

In one case study, a Marine returning from Afghanistan was thrust into a state of intractable depression. Through the therapeutic use of MDMA, guided by a caring, skilled team, he recognized that he had been frozen in guilt, unable to move past the atrocities he had witnessed and those he himself had committed. In an expanded state induced through MDMA, he was able to arrive at another narrative, that he too had been a victim of a cause and system larger than himself. This insight allowed him to begin a process of healing through self-acceptance.

Along this continuum, a new and often more salutary narrative arises. Once sparked, it must be stabilized, reinforced. The integration process is key to the long-term positive result of psychedelic-assisted therapy.

Another important factor is the quality of the experience. For some it may simply be an interesting novelty; however, a sizable portion of the population does experience ego dissolution, a

merging and unity with all there is, an experience often described by mystics.

Since this is an experience beyond our normal comprehension, we may have difficulty articulating its essence, lacking applicable references, analogies, lenses, and yet these experiences produce transformative, enduring results. In a controlled study performed at NYU, patients with a terminal cancer diagnosis struggled with depression. After a single full dose of psilocybin, Anthony Bossi, PhD reported that 80% of the participants experienced substantial sustained improvement, while 70% said it was one of the top five experiences, and for some, the most meaningful one of their lifetimes.

Since the historical Buddha's famous teaching on Emptiness, the "ultimate nature of things," Buddhist scholars have been studying, debating and contemplating the question, what is the ultimate nature of reality? Both the Diamond Cutter Sutra and the Heart Sutra contain teachings on this subject.

The Madhyamaka Prasangika school of Tibetan Buddhism has been considered authoritative on this topic. It posits that there is no self-existing reality—the origin of our reality and its qualities are being forced upon us by our karmic imprints. We are locked into our particular reality and forced to view it as Truth! This begs the question, is there is a correlation

between our modern understanding of the DMN and this ancient concept?

There are a number of other Buddhist schools with varying interpretations on Emptiness. What they agree on is that reality may not exist as it appears to us.

This premise, that the mind is malleable, vast, largely untapped, that we live in limited chambers of existence with limited modes of fixed perception, holds both ominous and thrilling implications.

From a discomfiting perspective, even when a belief is founded on unsubstantiated facts or illogical reasoning, it nonetheless has the potential to be evaluated as true and eventually become integral to one's personal and collective belief system. It was not too long ago that the world was believed flat and women healers deemed witches. In our trying era, where it sometimes seems that fundamental truths and logic do not apply and easily disproven lies are marshaled to suit self-serving agendas, the effect can be dumbfounding. However, the human potential to upend, disrupt and reimagine received wisdom and the status quo is exhilarating.

Psychoanalysis and psychotherapy are disciplines founded on the belief that we are capable of transformation, and they have established their place in mainstream America as proven, legitimate healing modalities. It is commonly held that the effectiveness of pharmacological drugs is highly enhanced, if not mainly dependent, on the psychotherapeutic process.

If we posit that there is no reality, then where do we go from here? How do we, as concerned participants in this human family, make choices that engender the betterment of our collective society, our culture, our planet? How do we work towards a positive evolutionary trajectory?

I would argue that:

- we must choose enlightened values, humanism, morality. Western civilization suffers from a crisis of identity; a loss of greater purpose, no longer guided by a collective myth. Nietzsche's proclamation "God is Dead" feels prescient. In a time when religion, as we have known it, is being transformed, we must reinvigorate altruism in our children, and ourselves. We must revive our awe at the mystery and beauty of nature, see nature as a mirror of ourselves. We must not only model but become exemplars of civic duty and planetary stewardship for our children. We must learn to listen and respect our children and demand that they develop the art of listening, patience and respect for others and the planet. We must demonstrate a healthy work ethic, vibrantly balanced by soulful leisurely pursuits. We must teach

our children to revere their elders for their accumulated knowledge and wisdom.

- each of us must strive to expand our consciousness. To be awake, aware and engaged with life. That we must cultivate an inner relationship with ourselves. We must find this connection in ways that uniquely speak to us, whether through meditation, journaling, encounters with nature, sacred daily rituals, enlightened travel, friendship, conversation, precious solitude, immersion in art, poetry, music, dance, movement.

- in a world obsessed with materialism and possessed by the virus of consumerism, we burst beyond its shallow constraints.

- in a culture languishing in a dreamlike state of denial around Death, we devote ourselves to ongoing reflections on impermanence, the ever-changing nature of existence. That we contemplate and embrace Death, as the ultimate guide and friend who awaits us just around the corner.

Entheogens have been used by indigenous people for thousands of years as vehicles to pierce the veil of perception and heal. Today, patients describe ego dissolution, non-dual experiences, oneness, joy, peace, love. In a time when egotism, bullying and arrogance are widespread globally, is the return of sacred entheogen use a self-regulating planetary impulse to restore balance towards a more humane and enlightened world?

Will we be able to grasp the aliveness and interdependence of this delicate planet, or will we instead continue to consider her an object to dominate, use and abuse for our pleasure and profit?

Will we evolve in our worldview and pursue what Austrian philosopher Martin Buber spoke of as an "I-Thou" relationship, not a self-focused one?

These are the questions that must burn within our hearts until they ignite a wildfire of concern and passion, fueling our collective Becoming.



SILENCE SERIES
Pang Yongjie

Marnie Benney

Pixelated Future Depictions

In the last decade, AI and machine learning have revolutionized artists' creative abilities and transformed the traditional notion of artwork. New technologies have opened creative possibilities. Most of these AI artworks exist in the digital world (in one form or another) allowing for broader access and distribution. Evasive and ephemeral - these no longer physically tangible works possess a gravity in their ability to reflect hauntingly, real future depictions of humanity through their pixelated outputs.

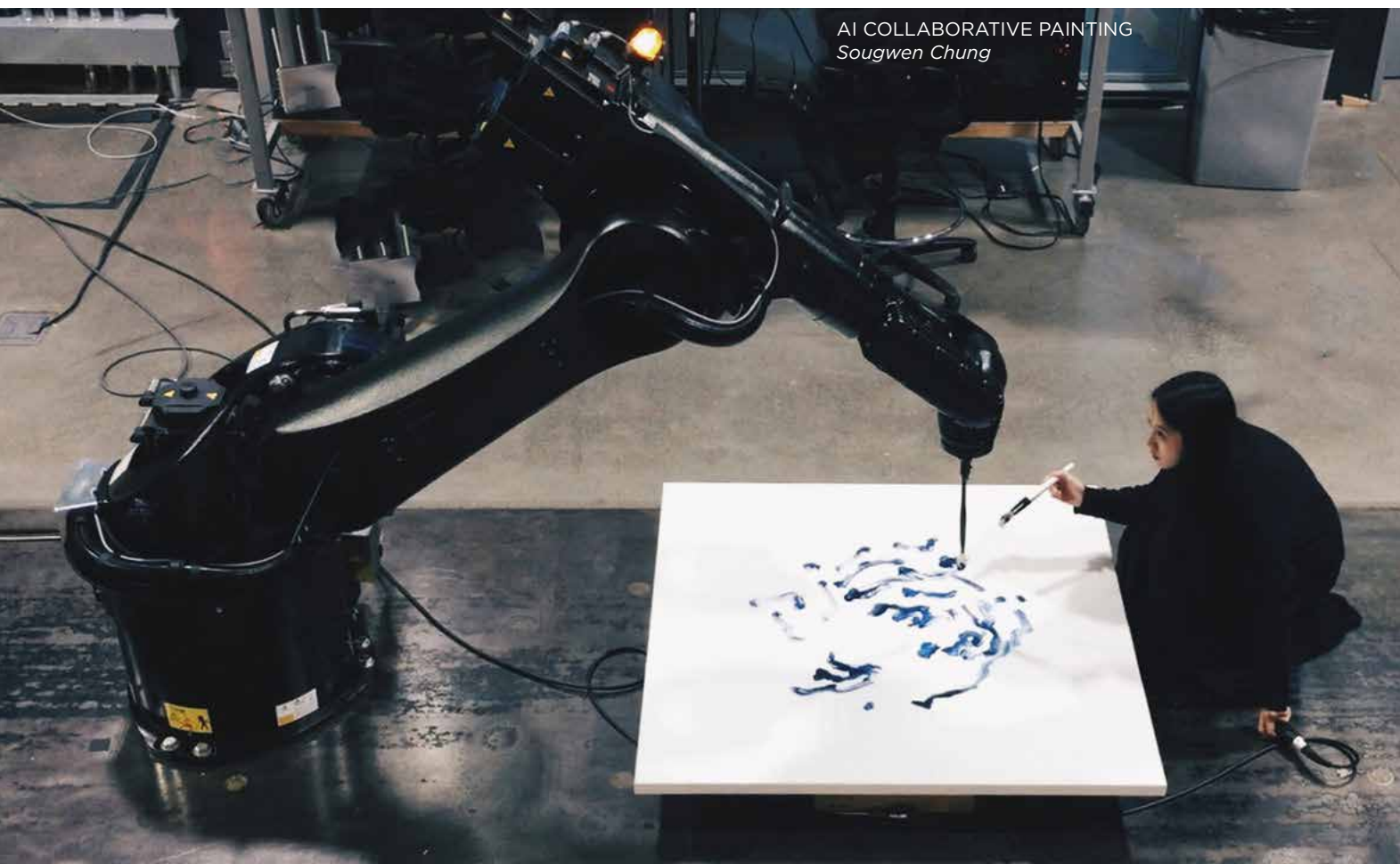
As consideration, I offer the work of three pioneering artists who are using Artificial Intelligence to push the boundaries of creativity, disrupt the status quo of the traditional art world, and explore humans' complicated relationship with machines. These artists pose important questions about how humans will interact with technology (and each other), now and in the future.

Sougwen Chung

Chung is a world-renowned painter, formerly of MIT Media Lab, whose stunning paintbrush duets with AI-powered robots pose deep questions about how we'll augment our creativity with machines in the future.

How has working with AI shaped your artistic practice?

"Being able to engage with mark-making in collaboration with a robot means not always knowing what I'm doing—and that has been really enlightening. It's helped me work through and question what narratives we tell when we engage in collaboration with mechanical agents, and technologies in general. In the conversation of AI, that gets really broad—dystopian, utopian, occasionally fraught with controversy. When people think about AI, there is a tendency to ascribe or imagine, considerable agency. Something like an artificial consciousness, however far-reaching that might



AI COLLABORATIVE PAINTING
Sougwen Chung



"NOT THE ONLY ONE"
Stephanie Dinkins

be. I'm compelled by the human capacity to anthropomorphize our relationship to machines, particularly to robots, and how that can end up being a mirror for how we view ourselves and our own interactions with others. There are didactic models that are encouraged by developments in IoT and voice interfaces. But the collaborative models are more interesting to me. It's a new stage for examining authorship and agency. It starts to question, who is in control? Who do we want to be in control? Is that the point?"

Stephanie Dinkins

Stephanie Dinkins is a New York based transmedia artist. She creates platforms for dialog about artificial intelligence as it intersects race, gender, aging, and our future histories. Dinkins is particularly focused on working with communities of color to co-create more inclusive, fair and ethical artificial intelligent ecosystems.

Tell us about your project "Not The Only One"?

"*Not The Only One* (N'TOO) is the multigenerational memoir of one black American family told from the 'mind' of an artificial intelligence with evolving intellect. It is a voice-interactive AI designed, trained, and aligned with the needs and ideals of black and brown people who are drastically underrepresented in the tech sector.

The piece is an interactive voice-driven platform, powered by a deep learning algorithm that was trained on data collected from living subjects. The AI storyteller is trained on data supplied by three generations of women from one family, but the story is told from the first-person perspective of the AI.

Multiple data sources are being used as input to provide a

broad narrative scope for the AI and tell the story of a family as opposed to the stories of individuals. The project will be repeatable and present perpetually dynamic conversation, scenarios, and stories that change according to the user's questions or the AI's mood. Over time, user input (discussion) will influence the NTOO's storytelling abilities because the AI's database of available vocabulary and topics will grow with each user interaction.

Not the Only One's narrative comes from the experiences and demographic information culled from three generations of a close-knit family. The principal character narrates in the form of voice-driven AI that uses machine learning to expand and extend its story.

The eldest contributor to the foundation of the storyline was born in the American south in 1932. As a teenager, she moved north with her family for better education and opportunity. She worked for forty years in the same factory, breaking ground and advancing from line worker to respected supervisor in the company.

The middle contributor to the project was born in 1964. She went to the same suburban high school as her mother. Part of one of few black families in a small suburban town, she had racial challenges, but she also had opportunities her mother could never have dreamt of.

Contributor three was born in 1997. She is the biracial daughter of the family who grew up with the privileges of whiteness, yet she identifies as black and is currently trying to understand what it means to be black and white in 'Black Lives Matter' America. The stories of all three will be gathered from extensive interviews. The data will be used to seed a deep-learning, emotionally intelligent AI."

Wayne McGregor

Wayne McGregor CBE is an award-winning British choreographer and director, whose innovations in performance have continually redefined dance for 25 years. Driven by a curiosity about movement and its creative potential, his experiments have led him into collaborative dialogue with an array of artistic forms, scientific disciplines, and technological interventions—including artificial intelligence.

What questions are you exploring using AI as a choreographer?

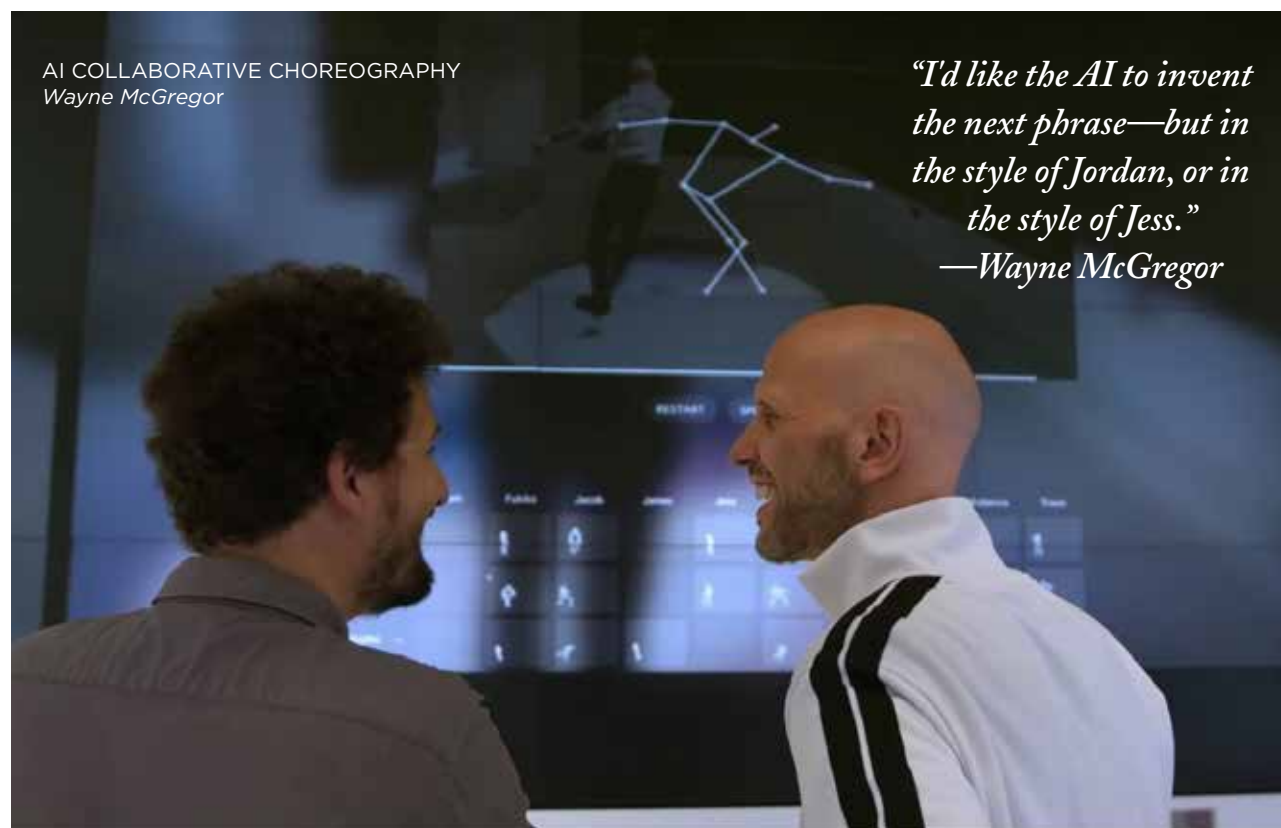
“My deliberately untitled work, which premiered July 2019 at the Music Center’s Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in L.A., is a philosophical meditation on how a dance is made. It explores questions like: what does it mean to choreograph? And can interesting choreography be made with help from artificial intelligence?”

How has technology impacted your creative practice?

“Running through all my practice is my relationship with technology. I’m fascinated by how AI might explore the potential of choreography. Normally, I ask my dancers to make iterative versions of an idea. This results in 400,000 iterations. The canvas is way bigger.”

How do you work with AI to generate new movement?

“What this tool allows us to do is say: I’m starting with this phrase, and I’d like the AI to invent the next phrase—but in the style of Jordan, or in the style of Jess. And then you can get combinations of those. It’s learning all the time and feeding back, so this iterative version gives you all of these new possibilities you couldn’t have imagined.”



Our artists’ top picks to generate AI art:

- **Runway ML** – Easy, code-free tool to use machine learning models in creative ways.
- **Magenta** – An open source research project exploring the role of machine learning as a tool in the creative process.
- **GANBreeder** – Breed two images to create novel new ones. Note that GANBreeder will soon be renamed and relaunched as ArtBreeder with several AI models to manipulate photos.
- **Processing** – A flexible software sketchbook and language for learning how to code within the context of the visual arts. Includes p5js (Processing for JavaScript) and **Processing.py** (Processing for Python). [Processing does not use AI, but is a great tool for visual art].
- **ml5.js** – ml5.js aims to make machine learning approachable for a broad audience of artists, creative coders, and students through the web.

Elysabeth Alfano

“Real Food” Consumer Empowerment May Be The Solution

In the wake of a slew of undercover video investigations documenting the horrors of “humane” and “organic” factory farming, we see (again) that our food labels are lies. Indeed, there are no happy cows, pigs, lambs or chickens. Brands that label themselves as ‘fair’ and ‘natural’ are exactly the opposite. Perhaps even worse, the public is becoming wise to the facts that not only are these products not in line with the purported marketing, but that they aren’t even healthy.

A growing number of consumers of all generations, aggressively fueled by Millennials, choose not to fund these macabre freak farms and are opting for plant-based products. According to *Forbes*, “A new survey from YouGov and WholeFoods Market finds that 63% of millennials are trying to incorporate plant-based foods into their diet.”

This finding is part of survey results released September 9 examining millennial food, health and grocery shopping preferences. According to the data, “more than 60% of those between the ages of 22 and 37 are aware of the implications their food choices have on the environment and many are attempting to take steps to lessen that impact.”

While health remains a driving factor in food choices according to the Good Food Institute, a recent study by Sweet Earth and reported on by Food Navigator-USA.com noted that 37% of Millennials follow a particular diet for ethical reasons, while 44% stated their interest in a particular diet for environmental/sustainability reasons.

In an unprecedented era of mistrust, consumers are turning their backs on the meat and dairy industries and are choosing plant-based options. Perhaps these

industries have themselves to blame. Could it be that the lack of transparency in food marketing and nutritional information has left consumers feeling deceived about the health, environmental and inhumane realities of animal agriculture? In a world of ‘alternative facts’, have corporate farms actually pushed the consumer towards non-meat meat and the non-dairy dairy?

Could consumers be turning their backs not only on meat and dairy, but on the USDA altogether?

Recently a 20-member committee charged with consulting the USDA on the proposed 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines heard from 76 experts who offered their opinions and suggestions, based on scientific evidence. The USDA

Dietary Guidelines detail what the USDA claims is healthy eating. These guidelines are powerful, reach Americans at all levels and impact school lunches and food labels.

However, the USDA Dietary Guidelines have yet to strike processed meats and dairy from their recommendation. According to Dr. Micheal Greger of NutritionFacts.Org who presented to the advisory committee, “Bacon, ham, hot dogs, lunch meat, sausage: these are known human carcinogens. The cancer risk of second-hand smoke is comparable to the 16%-18% increased risk of colorectal cancer, [just by] eating the equivalent of a single sausage link a day.”

Olympian and Switch4Good Executive Director, Dotsie Bausch, also shared



CORE & CORN (compost)
Judy Rosenblatt

her suggestions with the advisory committee, as noted by the *Washington Examiner*.

“Sixty-five percent of the global population is lactose intolerant according to the National Institute[s] of Health. This number is even higher in the non-white populations. Why on earth does the USDA have a food category on the dietary guidelines for Americans that makes over half of us sick, uncomfortable, and unable to breathe?”

Fueled by social media, the silver lining is that consumers are no longer reliant solely on one set of nutritional guidelines or health information from only a single source. In spite of mixed messages from the health and food sectors, consumers can—and should—advocate for themselves by buying products that align with their health goals and moral compass.

The timing couldn’t be better.

With the taste hurdle out of the way, ethical, sustainable, alternative protein options now abound. While it would be difficult to call plant-based burgers at fast food restaurants healthy, they are indeed “healthier.” Spawned by the likes of Beyond Meat and Impossible Foods, plant-based options are everywhere,

from the frozen section of the grocery store to the fresh meat case. In a study done by the University of Michigan, a Beyond Meat Burger uses 99% less water, 93% less land, gives off 90% less Greenhouse Gas Emissions and uses 46% less energy, all while tasting the same as meat and staying clear of animal factory farms. From the nutrition label, one can see that a Beyond Burger scores similarly as a beef burger on salt, fat, protein and calories. However, it scores better than its beef counterpart on fiber, cholesterol, hormones, antibiotics, animal heme, and trimethylene N-oxide (TMAO). In short, it’s a Millennial’s dream.

Further good news is that ultimately the consumer is empowered. They don’t need to wait four years to vote. Millennials know that when buying plant-based items, they are voting with their dollars for better health, ethical farming practices, and a sustainable planet. Their voice is heard through their purchasing power, forcing a correction of a food and nutritional information system that has failed them. With every dollar spent, consumers are taking back the power and charting the course to come, holding food growers and companies to higher standards.



BLUEBERRIES (compost)
Judy Rosenblatt



BEFORE THIS LIFE WAS ORDINARY
Salem Krieger

Salem Krieger

**\$2500
a Square
Foot**

A life-time resident of NYC, Salem Krieger brings his photographic expertise to a tongue-in-cheek series focused on the extraordinary rise of the price per square foot of real estate in Manhattan, a nightmare to NYC dwellers.

Using special lenses and dramatic lighting, glossy advertising and fabulously doctored images, Big Apple real estate entices buyers and tenants like DeBeer diamonds on velvet grounds. In the same fashion, using a playful, sardonic and deeply serious approach, Krieger photographically dramatizes throw-away cardboard boxes, provoking a lustful desire of possession. Using titles culled from high profile, mass media advertising, his images betray their humble origins, fool us with the real-unreal-never real trickery and provide the ersatz apartment of our dreamscapes.

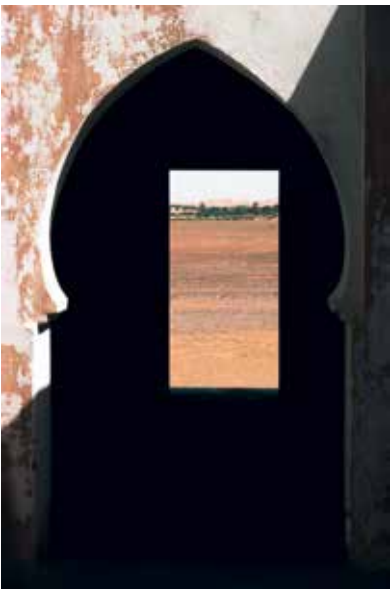
Referencing Joseph Albers’ “Homage to the Square,” Krieger extrapolates on the theme with his crafty, ubiquitous cardboard boxes rendered as coveted “Homage to the Square Foot” for the nominal price of \$2500 per square foot!



80TH FLOOR, MORE THAN A NUMBER, A LIFESTYLE
Salem Krieger



NOT ALL SQUARE FOOTAGE IS THE SAME
Salem Krieger



Silvio Wolf

The Pillars of Truth · *Part III* Doors

Doors of Perception
 Are Gates to the Unknown.

Windows, Mirrors and Screens,
 Acts of Faith in the Theatre of Life.

Transitional sites,
 Borders overlooking two worlds.

Existence and Illusion,
 Subjective Reflections in the World of Objects.

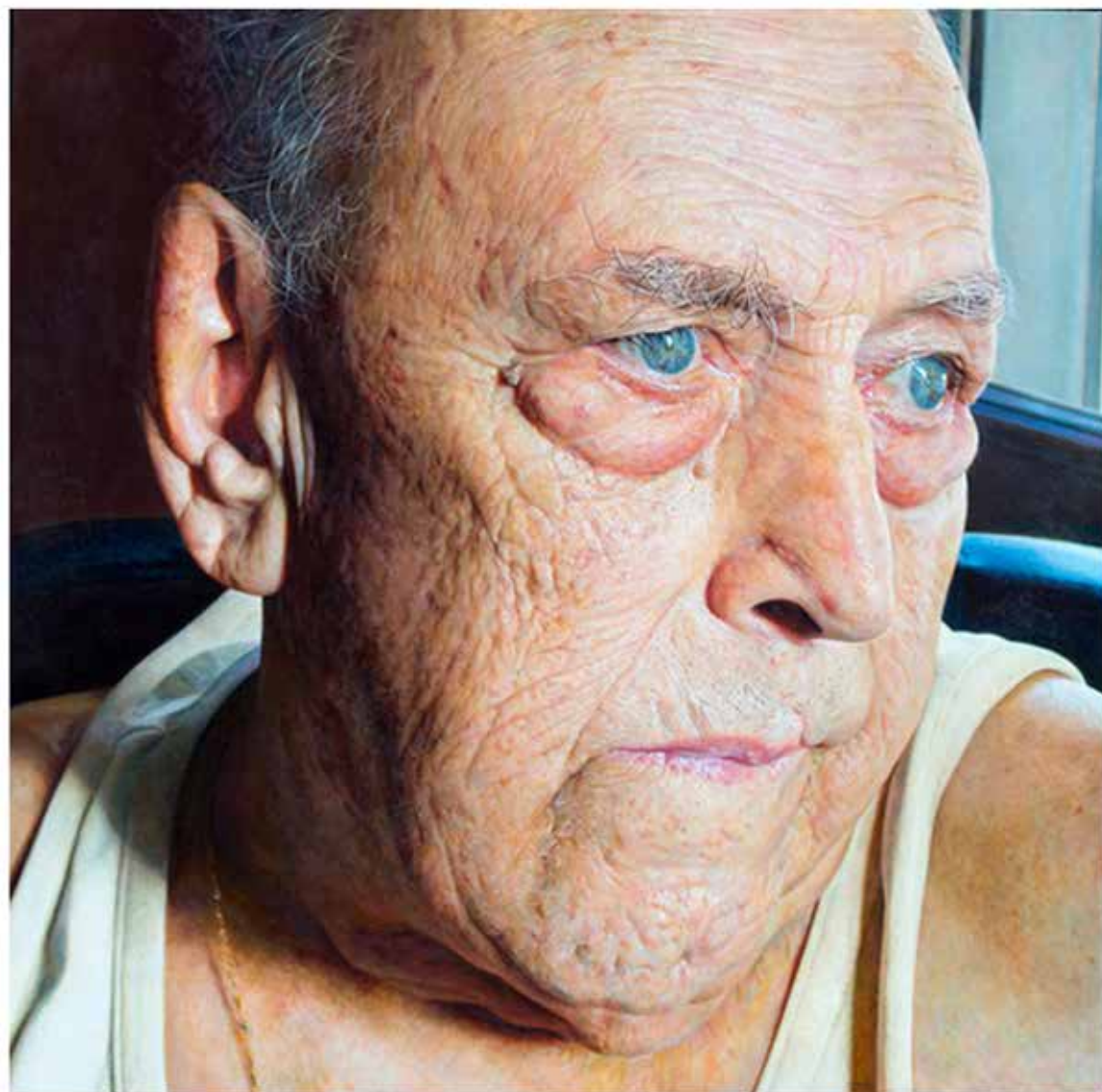
Inside and outside,
 Places connect and divide.

Images are Optical Truths,
 Thresholds of Reality.



José Luis Corella

A Painting Should be Vivid, Not a Mere Composition of Paint



JUANITO
José Luis Corella

To see Corella painting JUANITO—
and don't miss this phenomenal example of **REAL ≠ REALITY**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T33aNUtN2BE>

José Luis Corella was born in 1959 in Valencia, Spain. He describes his childhood like that of any other kid, within the parameters of normalcy. A noticeable difference though, is that he spent most of his time engaged in painting, modeling or drawing.

At the age of nine, his parents enrolled him in a technical drawing academy where he continued to study drawing of statues and stone carving and restoration until he entered the Faculty of Fine Arts of San Carlos de Valencia.

“For me, it is of great importance in work, to differentiate what we want to say and how to say it, and what would be the technique. If you only have technique you would be an artisan and that is not enough, the soul would be lacking—and that is what gives the meaning.”

Jose Luis Corella was elected as the Visitors Choice Winner at the National Portrait Gallery in London BP Portrait Award Exhibition in 2008, 2009, and 2015; in 2019 he won the First Prize “Ismail Lulani” International Award, Tirana, Albania; in 2015, he exhibited at Pauly Friedman Art Gallery of Misericordia University in Pennsylvania. This same year he was invited to give lectures at two universities in Ecuador and his work is studied in some universities in Mexico.

Corella allows the viewer an intimate moment with his paintings. A moment of truth beyond all understanding. Almost as if experiencing a frozen moment in time that has divinely captured your senses. Right before your eyes, a gaze into perfect details that define the story of an individual that most likely you will never meet, but somehow, you feel you know.

“It is my way of life. My life revolves around everything related to art.”

Jose Luis Corella is a notable and prominent representative of Contemporary Spanish Realism. The subtlety of the real-

ism of his portraits encompasses the profound complexity of the human being.

Q. Do you remember the first work of art you did? What was it and how old were you?

My first work, I cannot say it was art, was a landscape with some boats and a booth copied from a sheet, I still have it. I was 6 years old.

Q. Why did you decide to become an artist?

I did not decide, I had it inside and I always knew that I could not dedicate myself to anything else, that I had to fight to paint.

Q. What has marked your artistic journey since then?

One exhibition takes you to another, knowing a collector opens the doors of the next.

Q. What have you had to sacrifice for art?

All. The time that I dedicate to my work is important and it is ahead of everything else.

Q. What does your work mean?

I intend to surprise, call attention, say “I am here” to the viewer. It would be very sad that in front of a painting of yours nobody stopped. I try to tell what happens to me, what I think. Many times, I see my works as my diary. I reflect what I think, what surrounds me and how I see society and my family.

Q. What are your biggest influences? Are you inspired by the work of your colleagues or someone else in particular?

I do not have clear influences consciously or in whoever supports me at this moment.

I cannot think of a name. Yes, I am open to all the information that surrounds us, be it publicity, audiovisual, etc. I like many painters of all kinds and I try to keep up to date with what is done. I am interested in visiting many museums and I love analyzing the works of the great masters.

Q. Tell us about your particular style and how you came to it?

I work from light to dark, keeping the color as clean and vibrant as possible. I do not consider that I have a clear or defined style, I have never looked for it. Maybe I’m differentiated by the themes. My evolution in painting is linked to life. One is maturing, being interested in different things, discovering and seeing the world that surrounds us and those are my themes, my family, friends, my environment, what excites me, and I am able to understand.

Years ago, I sent an email to the gallery owner with whom I worked, a joke email pretending I was an emerging painter who was looking for a gallery with a work that has just ended. I was surprised that he knew that the work was mine, he told me that he had my stamp and way of doing, that I had not deceived him.

Q. What advice would you give to the next art-generation?

Living from art is very complicated because there are many interests and there are many artists and more in times of crisis, but if one is convinced that he wants to dedicate himself to it he must persevere and have the conviction of being the best in front of the easel and giving everything. There are always good and bad moments and disappointments, but you have to have the strength and above all the illusion, to move forward. We must maintain the curiosity and innocence of when we were children.

Glass is Beyond Real:

An Interview with Adriano Berengo

After days of touring the Venice Biennale, I took a break to keep a long-awaited appointment with myself to visit the island of Murano to explore the possibilities of twisting and turning glass into three-dimensional sculptures, a possibility I knew existed but had rarely seen in exhibitions.

My first stop was at Berengo Studio, where I remembered a long-ago collaboration between my dear friend and fellow artist Martin Bradley, at a time when no glass foundry was exploring the imaginative and creative possibilities offered to artists using glass from a purely artistic, sculptural perspective.

My good fortune led me to a recently inaugurated retrospective exhibition by Berengo Studio, together with the 10th anniversary of the project called *Glasstress* of exactly this: contemporary artists working with Master glassmakers. The exhibition encapsulated the wondrous exploration of more than 30 years of close collaboration between international artists and the visionary glass entrepreneur Adriano Berengo. Following the tour of the Berengo Studio retrospective and *Glasstress*'s 10th anniversary, Adriano shared his amazing journey of creativity and discovery with me.



CARROSA
with Javier P. Crez

Q: Your love of glass is visible in the extensive presentation of years of experimentation. What was the driving force that put you on this path?

In the late 1980s, I founded Berengo Studio, a glass furnace on the island of Murano. I had one goal: I wanted to bring contemporary artists and glassblowers together to produce works of art in glass. I wanted to test the medium, the creativity and the skills of the artists and artisans.

I was primarily inspired by Peggy Guggenheim's experimentations in the 1960s with Egidio Costantini and artists like Picasso and Ernst who brought their contemporary ideas to the world of glass. With her patronage, artists broke the barriers that had limited glass to its traditional decorative and functional roles and opened the door for contemporary artists to take on the challenge of this medium. Yet somehow this new movement seemed to die after its first flourish. My mission was to revive it and continue what Peggy Guggenheim had begun.

In 1989, I started to invite artists, most of whom had never worked with glass, to come to Murano and work in the furnace hand-in-hand with the maestros of Murano.

After a while it seemed a shame not to share these works of art with the world, so I founded *Glasstress*, an exhibition of art and glass, to coincide with the world-renowned Venice Biennale of Art. The first edition was in 2009.

Q: Did you seek the first artist or was it a chance visit to your studio with an artist looking for a new creative medium? Who was the first artist that you worked with?

One of the first artists I worked with I had to practically court to convince them to explore glass. It was the early nineties, and the artist was Kiki Kogelnik.

After Kiki a long journey began with artists from all over the world.

I met other artists by chance . . . some might say destiny. At the end of the '90s, a young guy named Koen Vanmechelen came to my furnace with a glass project in mind: *The Walking Egg*.

Koen has always said that he, as an artist, was born in Venice. Vanmechelen recently inaugurated a visionary project called *Labiomista*. Koen defines it as "a physical and mental space needed for biological and cultural diversity to flourish." It was opened to the public on July 6th, 2019 and it expands on a 24 hectare site and consists of three parts: a villa, park, and studio designed by Swiss architect Mario Botta, each one representing a different identity: humans, nature, and the interplay and tension between them. I invite you to visit this extraordinary place in Genk, Belgium.

Q: Since nothing creative is easily predictable, what obstacles did you encounter?

Glass, especially Murano glass, at the end of the 80s was anything but a common material for contemporary art. It still had a patina of kitsch and decorative stereotype, with only a few exceptions.

Q: The market place always hovers in the background. Were you able to foresee a very traditional commercial environment opening its vision to match yours?

I had the good fortune with this daring experimentation to be seen with interest by both existing markets: that of glass collectors and by collectors of contemporary art.

There is a growing demand for high quality works from great artists. It's not only collectors now; art fairs and museums are also showing an appreciation for artists such as Thomas Schütte, Tony Cragg, Ai Weiwei, Erwin Wurm, just to name a few.

Q: In the intervening years, how many artists were you able to work with and what challenges did they bring to the medium of glassmaking?

Since 1989 more than 300 artists have been successful in their attempt to master glass, realizing stunning glass artworks at Berengo Studio. One of these is Ai Weiwei. On the occasion of his visit to Murano at my studio he said "*I think that tradition is like an ocean...humans through these long times struggled to come up with some ideas and skills...which generally get lost when today develops so fast...I am always fascinated by classic ways and from that I can learn a lot and I can apply a new concept, a new language...*". This is the spirit that will create new projects and give a new breath to Murano and its age-old traditions.

Today, celebrating the 30 years of my glass studio, I can say that the approach has drastically changed and many barriers have been broken, but we are still at the beginning of this glass revolution.

Q: Your retrospective has amazing contributions by artists such as Ai Weiwei and Vik Muniz, who provided the cover of this issue by executing a portrait in "Millefiori" glass with outrageous complexity. Can you describe the process of selecting Millefiori - how it is created and what indications suggested it could actually be used to create a likeness to the subject of the Muniz portrait?

The process of creating a mosaic portrait in Millefiori is a complicated one. The technique is an almost ancestral symbol of Venice and part of its beauty is its complexity. The Millefiori technique involves the production of glass canes or rods called 'Murrine' with multicoloured patterns that you can see from the cut end of the cane. The rod is heated in the furnace and stretched thin before being cut into smaller individual pieces when cooled.

The intricate coloured swirls and patterns that make up even a tiny piece of Murrine adds an extra layer of complexity to the already fragmented form of the mosaic structure. In order to create a portrait of such striking likeness Muniz had to borrow tricks from ancient mosaics by studying each piece and attempting to group and cluster certain elements together. It's a long and laborious process.

BLOSSOM CHANDELIER
2017
Ai Weiwei



The wonder was really that there was nothing that suggested making such a realistic portrait would be possible with this style of glass. Photomontage portraits have been created in a similar vein but it simply took Muniz asking the question of whether it was possible at all for the work to be realized. That's where great art often comes from: it's asking the right questions.

Q: The focus of New Observations #133 is Real ≠ Reality, the Transgression of Fact. In looking at this work of art, it embodies for me the core question: Glass is absolutely real. As is each cross section of Mille Fiore glass. It exists in its nature. But the portrait is a creation. It achieved its existence through this medium. But it will never be the person it depicts. Has the artist created a new reality? Does this happen each time the material (real, concrete) is redefined and transformed by the creative process. Is this alchemistic? How is it experienced by you? And by the artist?

Glass is absolutely real. (Try to touch it when it's hot!) When an artist approaches glass in my studio I think that's the first lesson they really learn: it's an intense experience. In the furnace at 7AM working together with masters, they face the language barrier, the heat, a material that quickly transforms from powder to incandescent liquid to solid and sharp, the tensions, the

failure and the surprise when the piece comes out from the oven—this is all “real.”

The “reality” is what we do every day, with unprecedented artworks and technical achievements. As I always say, *Glasstress* is an opportunity to write new chapters in the histories of both glass and art or, how you define it, an opportunity to create a new “reality” for glass and contemporary art.

Q: Are you a loner in this collaboration, or has the Murano tradition been forever changed by others following your lead?

Changing the Murano mentality is perhaps more difficult than having Ai Weiwei in the studio! Every day I fight so that there may be a future for the island, for young generations of glass masters and to return Murano to a place of excellence for contemporary art. From abroad we continually receive many appreciations, the whole island benefits and will benefit from the success of this project. I don't think I'm alone in my wish to see real art made in glass in Murano again, but I think I'm certainly the loudest voice in the art world on the subject. Thankfully I'm now in a position to turn my words into actions, and—in this case at least—actions speak louder than words. *Glasstress* has been running for ten years now, so we've already made a new Murano tradition, and that makes me proud.



RUBRA
2016
Joana Vasconcelos

REUNION

Memory tortures age:
Our lives but stories
Recalled to advantage
Or solitary disappointment;
Created by invention
Or lost in the fog of time.

—Jayson Amster

Footnotes

Machines That Feel • Izaguirre (pages 15- 17)

1 Rogers, Everett M. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th ed.). New York, NY: Free Press.

2 Nova Spivack CEO & Founder Radar Networks. *Powerpoint Deck: Making Sense of the Semantic Web, and Twine*. (2007). <http://www.novaspivack.com>

3 BBC News: Cambridge Analytica parent firm SCL Elections fined over data refusal, 10 January 2019. / *The Guardian*, Carole Cadwalladr: *Themes of 2016: is democracy itself threatened by tech disruption?* Sat 17 Dec 2016 19.05 EST Last modified on Wed 14 Feb 2018 10.50 EST.

Eros as the Unifying Force of a New Modernism • Streitfeld (pages 22-26)

Eliade, Mircea, Trans. Willard R. Trask, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harvest, Harcourt Brave and World, 1959).

Brackett, Donald, “Living With Limits: The Continuum of Consciousness” in *Journal of Consciousness Exploration & Research*, December 2016, Vol. 7, Issue 11, pp. 1064-1077.

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—“History of the Hieros Gamos,” *Hieros Gamos Journal* <https://hierosgamosjournal.wordpress.com/history-of-the-hieros-gamos/>
— “Hieros Gamos: Icon of the 21st Century,” *Hieros Gamos Journal*, <https://hierosgamosjournal.wordpress.com/hieros-gamos-icon-of-the-21st-century/>
—“Hieros Gamos: The Yod,” *Hieros Gamos Journal* <https://hierosgamosjournal.wordpress.com/the-hieros-gamos-the-yod/>

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Fighting for our Senses • Barson (pages 34-35)

1 Marx, Karl. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*.

2 Rancière, J. 2004b. *The Politics of Aesthetics*, G. Rockhill (trans.). London: Continuum, 95.

Real Dolls Never Say No • Musso (38-39)

1 In a letter dated January 23, 1919, Kokoschka writes to Frau Moss: "Please do the nape of the neck and the back of the neck with the same soft cloth as the trunk. The face gives me the greatest concern, since the embroidery must be done in such a way that I do not perceive the stitches and that the expression becomes similar to the portrait [of Alma]! Reflect on the best method to achieve this! If I should notice that it is artificially made, if I saw a thread, etc., I would be tormented all my life. I must specify them again, although I am ashamed (but that will remains a secret between us: you are my confidante), that even the honteuses parties must be fully realized, and they must be voluptuous, covered with hair, otherwise it will not be a woman, but a monster. And I can be inspired for works of art only by a woman, even if she lives only in my imagination. I count the days until she is ready to greet me and I remain with the most cordial greetings. Yours devotee and grateful (see O. Kokoschka, Lettere, in the Appendix to A. Castoldi, Clérambault. Stoffe e manichini, Bergamo, Moretti e Vitali, 1994, p. 193).

2 T. Landolfi, *La moglie di Gogol*, in T. Landolfi, *Ombre*, Milano, Adelphi, 1994.

3 *Real Doll* is also the Californian brand created by a sculptor (still!), Matt McMullen, who produces and sells life-size female sculptures, very realistic. The term *Real Doll*, unlike other terms, such as *Sex Doll* (with a decidedly sexual imprint) and *Love Doll* (more used in Japan and focused on affective qualities) tends to emphasize the realistic aspiration of the doll and its capacity to satisfy real needs.

4 Coating very similar to human skin, composed of latex and silicone.

5 Increasingly often with Artificial Intelligence, some *Sex Dolls* also have an artificial heart and other systems that simulate heartbeat and breathing (see D. Levy, *Love and Sex with Robots*, Duckworth Overlook, London 2008).

6 A. Giard, Un désir d’humain. Les “love doll” au Japon, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 2016.

Words of Reflection

“If you're treated a certain way, you become a certain kind of person. If certain things are described to you as being real, they’re real for you whether they’re real or not.”
— James Baldwin

“We see things not as they are, but as we are.” — Anaïs Nin

“Once upon a time, I dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither. I was conscious only of my happiness as a butterfly. Soon I awoke, and there I was, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly, dreaming I am a man.”
—Zhuangzi, *Meditations on the First Three Chapters of the Chuang-Tzu*

“Life and death are nothing but the mind. Years, months, days, and hours are nothing but the mind.” —Dogen (Japanese monk)

“...your memories consist of a sequence of patterns. Because these patterns are not labeled with words or sounds or pictures or videos, when you try to recall a significant event, you will essentially be reconstructing the images in your mind, because the actual images do not exist.” — Ray Kurzweil

“It's not what you look at that matters, it’s what you see.”
— Henry David Thoreau

"What we experience is not what we sense. Rather, experience is what happens when sensations are interpreted by the subjective brain, which brings to the moment its entire library of personal memories and idiosyncratic desires."
—Marcel Proust

“The camera makes everyone a tourist in other people’s reality, and eventually in our own.” —Susan Sontag

"How can we hope to fix an identity, let alone one informed by ethical principles, on a mutating digital stage that is subject to the whims of marketing algorithms and bots on a mission? Given present conditions, it’s no wonder that our instinct to ascertain ‘what’s real’ has devolved into an addicting stalk for pleasure hits that never quite satiate an appetite weaned on spectacle.”
—Artist’s Equity (Call for proposal)

“Life is full of ... absurdities which, strangely enough, do not even have to appear plausible since they are true.” —Luigi Pirandello

“Reality is not always probable, or likely.” — Jorge Luis Borges

“A test of what is real is that it is hard and rough. Joys are found in it, not pleasure. What is pleasant belongs to dreams.”
—Simone Weil

“Truth is such a rare thing, it is delightful to tell it.”
— Emily Dickinson

Contributors



Elysabeth
Alfano
USA



Jayson
Amster
USA



Benjamin
Barson
USA



Marnie
Benney
USA



Alberto
Bisin
USA, Italy



José Luis
Corella
Spain



Antoine
Desjonquères
France

Elysabeth Alfano is a plant-based news and lifestyle expert, and a veteran broadcast journalist of nine years. While living in Chicago, she created and hosted two local TV talk shows, *Fear No ART* and *The Celebrity Dinner Party*. Now in LA, she currently hosts a podcast on WGN Radio called *Awesome Vegans* in which she interviews the leading CEOs, scientists, athletes, celebs, environmentalists, politicians, etc., who are making the world a better place for people, the planet and animals. Alfano speaks at summits and food festivals nationwide on the mental and physical health benefits of a plant-based lifestyle and has been featured several times on NPR member station KCRW, iHeart Radio's KFI, WGN-TV, WGN Radio and WCIU-TV as a plant-based expert on breaking news and a plant-based chef with recipe tips. For more information, visit elysabethalfano.com

Jayson Amster was born and educated in the South. He is recovering from 45 years of practicing law. His poems have appeared in *Bear Creek Haiku & Poetica* magazine. And he has recently published *Haikuish*, a collection of poems about cats. He lives with his wife and a grey Maine coon in the Maryland suburbs of D.C.

Benjamin Barson is a composer, educator, baritone saxophonist, historian, and political activist. Recipient of the 2018 Johnny Mandel Prize from the ASCAP Foundation, the top prize for jazz composers under 30, Barson uses his art to emphasize democratic and eco-centric alternatives to capitalism.

With Mexican-Yaqui vocalist Gizelxanath Rodriguez, Barson helped organize the Afro Yaqui Music Collective, a majority PoC ensemble that connects the legacies of resistance between Indigenous, African diasporic, and East Asian peoples. Barson and the collective play at both performing arts and activist spaces and most recently, Barson composed the music for a revolutionary jazz opera *"Mirror Butterfly: The Migrant Liberation Movement Suite."* afroyaquimusiccollective.com

Marnie Benney is an Independent Curator working at the intersection of contemporary art and technology. Over the last decade, she has produced 27 exhibitions in city centers, public spaces, galleries and festivals around the world including the New York Hall of Science, University of Cambridge London, the National Aquarium in Maryland, and The Nook Gallery in Los Angeles.

Benney's work investigates the societal, cultural and future implications of technology through the lens of contemporary art. In 2019 Benney launched AIArtists.org, the world's largest community of artists using Artificial Intelligence, where she serves as Curator and provides a platform for artists to explore the future implications of AI on society. marniebenney.com

Alberto Bisin is Professor of Economics at New York University. He is an Elected Fellow of the Econometric Society. He is also a fellow of the NBER, the Center for Experimental Social Sciences at NYU, IGIER at Bocconi University, CIREQ at the University of Montreal, IZA at the University of Bonn. He is also a member of the Human Capital and Economic Opportunity Global Working Group at the Center for the Economics of Human Development of the University of Chicago. He is Associate Editor of the *Journal of Economic Theory*, of *Economic Theory*, and of *Research in Economics*.

Bisin holds a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, obtained in 1994. He is founding Editor of Noisefromamerika.org and Op-ed contributor for *La Repubblica* (Italian daily). His main contributions are in the fields of General Equilibrium Theory, Financial Economics and Macroeconomics, Behavioral Economics, and Social Economics. He is a co-editor of the *Handbook of Social Economics*. econ.nyu.edu/user/bisina/

Born in Spain in 1959, **José Luis Corella** studied at the Facultad de Bellas Artes de San Carlos in Valencia. Since 1980 Jose Luis Corella's work has been widely exhibited in numerous group and solo exhibitions in Spain and the US. Jose Luis Corella is a prominent representative of contemporary classical Spanish realism. The subtlety of the realism in his portraits embraces the deep complexity of the human being, with simple everyday images developed into marvelous works of art. Jose Luis Corella was elected as the Visitors Choice Winner at the National Portrait Gallery in London BP Portrait Award Exhibition in 2008, 2009 and 2015. *"It wins top marks for flawless execution, but also illustrates that prettiness alone does not make a picture."*—excerpt from the *Daily Telegraph* article on the National Gallery BP Portrait Exhibition in London in 2008. joseluiscorella.com

Antoine Desjonquères describes himself as a perpetual student, entrepreneur and artist. His studies have included a background in Political Philosophy and Environmental Governance. He is an avid enthusiast of Biomimicry, Permaculture and Vipassaña. Despite his youth (26), he has set in motion his passion for answering fundamental human needs with the vegetal world by co-creating a responsible start-up. Nutu is a regenerative enterprise focused on building sustainable food systems and value chains around Moringa Oleifera Lamarck —the world's most nutrient-dense plant. This underutilized tropical tree is the best multipurpose asset he found to improve nutritional resilience and smallholder farmers' livelihood while nurturing the environment.

For years he has journaled, with content rich in personal queries, quotations and references from his voracious reading habit ("I eat books!"), as well as vivid paintings and eclectic collaborations and contributions from people he has met on his many forays around the world. [@nutumoringa](https://twitter.com/nutumoringa), antoine.desjonqueres@nutu.net



Lisa
Di Donato
USA



Magdalena
Gómez
USA



Mafe
Izaguirre
Venezuela,
USA



Salem
Krieger
USA



Dr.Chun
Wan Li
China



Wei Ligang
China

Working primarily with and through photography as a medium, tool, and language, **Lisa Di Donato's** explorations of cultural, natural, and perceptual spaces practice frequently combine disparate processes, including drawing and sculpture. Most recently, she began incorporating obsolete and antiquarian photographic processes with sophisticated imaging technologies such as Google Earth and hi-tech printing on unorthodox materials as a means to investigate the material nature of the image and the image as material.

Di Donato received her BFA in Painting from the Rhode Island School of Design. She has exhibited in the US and Europe and has independently curated numerous exhibitions. In 2019, she received recognition in the Julia Margaret Cameron Women in Photography Award in the category of Abstraction. She has been an artist in residence at Fusion Gallery AIR Inaudita, Turin, Italy. Di Donato lives and works in New York. Indidonato.com

Magdalena Gómez, Poet Laureate (2019-2021) of Springfield, MA, began as a performance poet at age17, and by age 24 was named "Our American Oracle" by Michael Devlin, editor of the original *Poet's Magazine*. Her poems, plays, songs, and monologues have been performed Off-Broadway and in Los Angeles, Montreal and Paris Jazz Festivals,Wisconsin's Union Theater, and most recently in Washington, D.C. at the Gala Theater. Her autobiographical poetry collection, *Shameless Woman*, (Red Sugarcane Press, NYC) is included in academic syllabi across the U.S. In 2010 she was the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Master Artist award by Pregones Theater; was a 2018 recipient of the New England Public Radio Arts and Humanities Award; the Springfield Cultural Council Award for Excellence in the Arts; and in 2019 received the Latina 50 Plus Literature Award at Fordham University. Ms. Gomez's archives have their home at the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center at the University of Connecticut @ Storrs. Her writings have been published widely, including: *The Progressive*; *Berkshire Review*; *The L.A. Times*; *upstreet Journal*; *PALABRA: A Magazine of Chicano and Latino Literary Art*; *The Massachusetts Review*; among many others. magdalenagomez.com

Mafe Izaguirre (Venezuela, 1978) is a New York-based artist, graphic designer, and educator. Her work explores the artificial mind framed by the ideas of the philosophical post-humanism: a movement that poses the human as a plural, fluid and decentered being living in multiple spaces of interaction with machines, software, other species, and spiritual hybrid systems. Fragments of The Mind Project have been exhibited in Queens, Manhattan, and Brooklyn. Izaguirre graduated from PROdiseño School of Visual Communication, specializing in Digital Media (2002). She studied digital fabrication at Cooper Union (2016). She currently works as an artist member of the Long Island City Artist Association, as a tech mentor at Mouse Inc and DreamYard Project (Bronx). She is the co-founder and Creative Director of *ROOM: A Sketchbook for Analytic Action*, an online psychoanalytic magazine created by IPTAR members, as well as a Board Member of the humanitarian Foundation Cuatro Por Venezuela. mafeizaguirre.com

New York based photographer **Salem Krieger** attended the Chicago Academy of Fine Art, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Santa Fe workshops with portrait photographer Dan Winters. As a professional architectural and portrait photographer, his prestigious client list includes *Forbes Magazine*, the *Financial Times*, NIKE, Whole Foods, etc. Founder and Director of *Art is Helping*, Krieger applies the medium of photography to raise awareness and funds for at-risk and underprivileged groups and individuals in the areas of housing, climate change and homelessness. He has collaborated with many well-known artists including Andres Serrano and Krzysztof Wodiczko and sculptor Richard Newton. His series *\$2500 A Square Foot* focuses on the artifices of photography in selling luxury housing. His ongoing series entitled *Common* is in collaboration with sculptor Richard Newman. salemnyc.com

Considered one of China's singular emerging critical voices in a context of rapidly evolving East-West discourse, **Dr. Chun Wan Li** has provided critical commentary on landmark exhibitions in both the US and China. Doctor of Curatorial and Historical Evaluation at the prestigious University of Luxeforsan (Nanchang), Dr.Li has been guest speaker at the Biennale of Female Sculptors (Beijing), the Emerging China Exhibition (United Asian Conference) and "China Now" at the Forfang Museum of Contemporary Art (Luesing). His bi-cultural foundation has distinguished his work specifically. Dr. Li was extemporaneous critic at "Oriental Legends", Huispace, Beijing featuring the works of Leah Poller and Lu Mei.

Wei Ligang was born in Datong Shanxi, China in 1964, and graduated from Nankai University where he majored in mathematics. In 1995, he established his studio in Beijing and began his career in fine arts. His artwork, "Chinese Wisteria," was collected by the British Museum in 1999.

As author of the first Western literature document encompassing ancient to modern Chinese calligraphy development, (Mao Zedong, Guo Moruo, and Qi Gong) Wei caused a sensation throughout the art realm. He received the Academic Contribution award as curator of the ground-breaking exhibition-"BASHU PARADE-'99 Chengdu, a Retrospective of Chinese Modern Calligraphy at the end of the 20th Century.

In 2004, Wei was recipient of the Rockefeller Foundation's ACC Art Awards and spent time in America. He is currently Vice President of the Chinese Modern Calligraphy Art Association, President of the International Shu Xiang Society, Founder of the international artist communication center Wei Guan and Curator and Director of "Eastern Abstractionism," an international association.

Contributors continued



Lu Mei
China

Lu Mei was born in Henan, China in 1969. She is a graduate of the Fine Arts Academy at the Central Academy of Arts and Design in 1996 and did further studies at the International ShuXiang Society and The Art Student League of NY. Lu Mei also serves as a Guest Professor at the prestigious Zhoukou Normal University of Academy of Fine Arts in China.

Mei’s paintings are based on a deep knowledge of Chinese culture and personal experience: In her “Pyramid” series, she overlays squares to form the “Pyramid” structure of our sub-consciousness. “Reaching to the sky” illustrates the pathway that connects humans with the universe. "Pyramid” pushes through the earth’s gravity in the pursuit of dreams, spirits and the unknown. It is a metaphorical ladder ultimately returning to the source. According to Lu Mei: Life is a Journey, to return home.

Lu Mei’s works are in the collection of museums and private collectors in China, the US and Europe. She currently lives in New York City and divides her time between her studios in New York and Beijing.



“Vik”
Muniz
Brazil

Vicente José de Oliveira “Vik” Muniz was born in 1961 in São Paulo, Brazil, and lives and works in New York and Rio de Janeiro. He is a photographer and artist internationally known for the creation of mixed-media art-works that re-use everyday objects to represent the world around him.

Inspired by subjects that are specifically unoriginal—such as landscapes, portraits, masterpieces of art history, Muniz gives a new light through the combination of unconventional materials. The materials he uses frequently offer an opportunity for reflection and social criticism, as in the *Sugar Children* series (1996) which condemns the exploitation of children in which he includes various types and colors of sugar itself.

His artworks are found in many collections such as Centro Cultural Reina Sofia, Madrid; the Centre Luigi Pecci, Prato; the Cartier Foundation, Paris; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. He exhibited at the Galeria Fortes Vilaça (2010), São Paulo; in Glasstress (2011), Venice; the Museu Coleção Berardo (2011), Lisbon; Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2014); The Centro de Arte Contemporâneo de Quito (2015); High Museum of Art (2016), Atlanta; and in the exhibition Glassfever (2016), Dordrecht. He won the Villa de Madrid de Fotografia Kaulak Award (2005); the National Artist Award (2005), Aspen; the Society for News Design Annual Creative Competition Award of Excellence for Magazine Cover Design category (2007) for the cover of *The New York Times Magazine*; and the Prêmio Cidadão Carioca (2009), Rio de Janeiro.



Mario
Murua
Chile

Mario Murua was born in Valparaíso, Chile, in 1952. For the first 11 years of his life he never spoke. Expelled by Pinochet for creating the world’s largest government protest poster (6 stories tall, hung from the city’s highest building) he exiled to Paris. Considered one of the major Latino-American artists of his generation, he was supported by Roberto Matta who considered him as a spiritual son. His oeuvre is rich in surrealist magic and sensualist visions. He co-founded the group ‘Magie-Image’ in 1982, comprising of the artists Cogollo, Aresti, Kaminer, Zarate and Cuevas; the group’s aim was to rebel against European formal art and to develop what Wifredo Lam and Roberto Matta had started. Mario Murua’s artistic world lies within a mystical ambiance, inhabited by fantastic creatures and by symbols drawn from archaic South American cultures, creating a world that dreams of a primary humanity and an untouched, magical beauty.



Maria
Giovanna
Musso
Italy

Maria Giovanna Musso is an Italian sociologist and epistemologist. After studies in Palermo, Rome and Paris (Sorbonne), she became Professor of Social Change, Creativity and Art at the "Sapienza" University of Rome. Her studies on complex systems and globalization, on the relationship between science, art and technology, on the imaginary and on the relationship between women, art and politics, have been widely published. Currently, she is engaged in an analysis of violence against women and the role of new technologies.

Musso is co-curator of the Biennale ArteScienza, member of the Editorial Board of "Scuola Democratica" and Im@go Books; She is Honorary Member of AIEMS (Associazione Italiana di Epistemologia e Metodologia Sistemica) and member of the PCA (Association pour la pensée complexe), founded by Edgar Morin).



Pang
Yongjie
China

Pang Yongjie born in 1968, Shandong, China, Pang graduated from Shandong Normal University where he majored in fine arts. After graduation, he continued his studies at Beijing Central Academy of Fine Arts since 1991, with his studio in Song Zhuang, Beijing since 2004.

Pang’s artwork has been exhibited in many art museums and institutions world over, including Hamburg, Germany, the PROVOOSTJ Art Gallery in Rotterdam, Netherlands, and “Enjoy Neng Zhi” at Beijing’s prestigious 798 Time-Space Salon. In 2018, a solo exhibition was held in The Lalu Great Hotel in Taiwan, China as well as a major solo exhibition in Riverside Art Museum in Beijing. In 2018, Yongjie was voted China's “most prized potential contemporary artist worth of collecting.”



Leah
Poller
USA, France

Leah Poller In addition to her career as an internationally acclaimed sculptor, in her 40 years in the arts, Poller has been a multi-talented arts activist. She has curated more than 140 exhibitions in the US and abroad. As Director of the Art Alliance, she was instrumental in bringing many mid- and-late-career artists to the US for the first time (Ipousteguy-France, Attardi-Italy, Murua-Chile, Macias-Mexico, etc.) Poller is well known for her salon events dealing with cultural-social-artistic subjects (“Yin Yang – a social laboratory”), as well as the innovative program “Frame it—It’s Yours!”, a research program examining the art acquisition process. In 2003, Poller was named Director of Intercambio de Arte y Cultura, a Mexican/American not-for-profit responsible for promoting interest in a major fresco done by Philip Guston and Ruben Kadish in 1934 and only recently brought to light through her efforts.

Trained at the Ecole National Supérieure de Beaux Arts of Paris where she resided for 20 years, Poller is best known for her series of bronze BEDS, a 3 dimensional lexicon of words containing “bed”, “Bed Unmade” —a social media project in which people download images of their unmade beds, and her outstanding series of real-life portraits in which the subjects’ internal thoughts are surrealistically rendered visible externally.

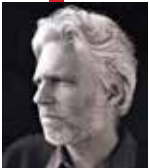
leahpoller.com



Nidra
Poller
USA, France

Nidra Poller (B.A. University of Wisconsin, MA Johns Hopkins University) is a novelist, translator, and journalist, born in 1935 in Jessup, Pennsylvania, living in Paris since 1972. Her literary career began with the publication of a short story, *Wedding Party in Piazza Navona*, (Perspectives 1966.) She has translated Caribbean and African authors including Amadou Kourouma, and texts by philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. Her prizewinning books for young readers of all ages, illustrated by renowned artists—Cogollo, Jacques Soisson, Devis Grebu—are collectors’ items.

Author of novels in English (*So Courage & Gypsy Motion*) and in French (*madonna madonna*), Poller turned to journalism in 2000. She has published widely in English and French media, including the *Wall Street Journal Europe*, *New English Review*, *Family Security Matters*, *infoéquitable*, *Valeurs Actuelles*, *Tablet*, *Times of Israel*, *Midah*, *Israel Affairs*, *Makor Rishon*, *Middle East Quarterly*, *American Thinker*, *Commentary*, *Jerusalem Post*, *New York Sun*, *National Post-Canada*, *National Review Online*, etc. nidrapoller.com



Lyle
Rexer
USA

Lyle Rexer is an internationally recognized critic, writer and curator. Educated at Columbia University and Merton College, Oxford University where he was a Rhodes Scholar, he is the author of several books on art and photography, including *The Critical Eye: Fifteen Pictures to Understand Photography* (2019); *The Edge of Vision: The Rise of Abstraction in Photography* (2009) and *Photography’s Antiquarian Avant Garde: the New Wave in Old Processes* (2002). In addition, Lyle Rexer has published hundreds of catalogue essays and articles on art, architecture, and photography and contributed to such publications as the *New York Times*, *Harper’s*, *Art in America*, *Aperture*, *Parkett*, *BOMB*, and *DAMn*.

Rexer has lectured at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Yale University, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Institut Valencia d’Art Modern in Valencia, Spain, and others. As a curator, he has organized exhibitions in the United States and internationally. He teaches in both the graduate and undergraduate programs at the School of Visual Arts and is a columnist for *Photograph* magazine.



Judy &
Naomi
Rosenblatt
USA

Judy Rosenblatt is a nature photographer, and chair of the Sierra Club photography group in New York City. She has found compelling subject matter in the food and plant scraps that New York City collects for its composting program: material that is in flux between one ‘reality’ (food) and another (compost). Surprising, and sometimes beautiful, juxtapositions occur in those bins: dead roses and banana peels, corn husks and fruit cores. Turning them into images gives them yet another kind of ‘reality’ and is a way of celebrating life’s continuous cycles.

Naomi Rosenblatt, an “all-purpose publishing professional," earned her BFA at The Cooper Union, and her MA from New York University. She has worked in book and magazine publishing in New York City for over thirty years, and taught at NYU’s Center for Publishing, including the Summer Publishing Institute. Writer, editor, designer, illustrator, and fine artist, Naomi is the president and publisher of Heliotrope Books in Manhattan.

heliotropebooks.com



Federico
Salvitti
USA, Italy

Federico Salvitti was born in Italy, lived in London, Tokyo and now resides in NYC. He is the Founder of Europe’s largest university publishing portal—Universita.it, and other technology companies. Salvitti performs as a Sales Innovation consultant at companies such as Gartner and GE Healthcare, where he developed new technology to support 11,000 sales people globally. He is also Professor of Integrated Marketing and Business Management at NYU where he is passionate about behavioral science and studies customer value drivers to help create great businesses and better products.



Steve
Schapiro
USA

Steve Schapiro American photojournalist Steve Schapiro has documented six decades of American culture, from the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and the presidential campaign of Robert F Kennedy to Andy Warhol’s *Factory* and the filming of the *Godfather Trilogy*. He has published a dozen books of his photographs, has exhibited his work in shows from Los Angeles to Moscow, and is represented in the permanent collections of the Smithsonian Institution, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the J. Paul Getty Museum, among others. His most recent publication is the Taschen Edition of James Baldwin’s *The Fire Down Under*, with more than 100 never published photographs of the period.



Dr. Lisa Paul Streitfeld
USA

As the Aquarian daughter of the Human Potential Movement, **Dr. Lisa Paul Streitfeld** has been on the quest of a new modernist dialectic sourced in authentic gender balance since her first encounter group in 1970. Her early writing experiments with alchemy led to her launch of a 21st century dialectic *Eros as a Unifying Force of a New Modernism* in her role as Southern Connecticut critic for *Tribune Newspapers* (1997-2005), subsequently developed as critic/curator in the New York avant-garde (2005-2011) and a global cross-disciplinary (R)EVOLUTION critical series for *Huffington Post Arts* (2010-2017). Culminating in her codifying a new philosophy born in the media lab at European Graduate School (*Hermeneutics of New Modernism*, Atropos 2014), her invention of “astrology as hermeneutics apparatus” in the academy (EGS, 2016) culminates this year with her investigation of “Paul is Dead” on the 50-year anniversary of this urban legend for a new MIT online journal, *The Unreal*. hermeneuticsofnewmodernism.com



Dorathea Thompson
USA

Dorathea Thompson is a nationally licensed integrative psychoanalyst based in New York City. In her practice, Thompson employs a broad spectrum of modalities addressing personal, interpersonal and transpersonal issues. She fuses the best of Western and Eastern thought, born from curiosity, passion and deep explorations. Some have described her work as uniquely skillful, creating personalized therapeutic models that guide through the challenges and mysteries of life with grace and effectiveness. She began her professional career in the business world, working in top corporate positions for nearly a decade. A vision and an opportunity to start her own firm coalesced and she subsequently created a successful business entity serving the NYC community for over 15 years. Behind the impact of September 11th, 2001, the decision emerged to reduce and reshape her business involvement giving rise to the current chapter. While Thompson’s pre-dominant focus remains on her psychoanalytical practice, it is interwoven with writing, workshops, cultural travels and various creative undertakings. doratheathompson.com



Silvio Wolf
USA, Italy

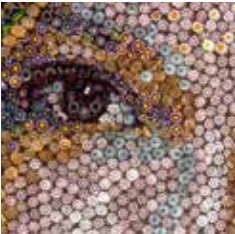
Silvio Wolf was born in Milan in 1952 and lives and works in Milan and New York. He studied philosophy and psychology in Italy and photography and visual arts in London, where he received the Higher Diploma in Advanced Photography from the London College of Printing. Wolf currently teaches at the European Institute of Design in Milan, and is a visiting professor at the School of Visual Arts in New York. Wolf has shown in galleries, museums and public spaces in Belgium, Canada, England, France, Germany, Italy, Korea, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland and the United States. silviowolf.com

PATRIZIA COMUZZI

Mina Murrine (cover)

A gust of wind, refreshed by the shadow of a possible cloister, appears to move the candid portrait of a young girl; the composed curve of the locks of her hair evokes a beauty akin to that theorized by Botticelli at the end of the Fifteenth Century. Her confident, lively gaze attracts a normal observer, leading them to place her image in one of the places of their affective memory, but only those who know Mina will be able to intimately read the fragmented architecture of the grate behind the girl’s back and transform the exuberance of youth into the memory of a single city and specific time. Mina Murrine (murine-coloured patterns made in glass) belongs to a mosaic project in murrine born from the extreme expertise and desire to explore communication, signification, and artistic techniques by Adriano Berengo, Vik Muniz and Andrea Salvador. The murrine are an almost ancestral symbol of Venice which, in this project, are manipulated to facilitate an experimentation which has never been used before. It’s a demonstration which confirms it is possible to work with tradition while transforming it for the contemporary world. A hyper-realistic mosaic image created with intact murrine in their

decorative section must resolve the problem of simply reading lines and physical clusters. The micro-decorations of the murrine are added to the typical fragmentation of the mosaic, a difficult process. In ancient times mosaics were often featured in poorly lit spaces. The mosaicists, then, challenged the natural hues of the flesh-colored faces by creating unexpected mixes of lemon yellow, sky blue, and blackbird-beak orange, in order to achieve the right shades even in those parts where light never physically reached the surfaces. Starting from this tradition, Andrea Salvador studied a range of ten shades and thirty different types of murrine able to overcome these limitations of perception in order to create precious portraits, perfectly visible and appreciable at a normal museum distance. From an idea, Vik Muniz, Adriano Berengo, and Andrea Salvador have shown, once again, how glass and mosaic can push the boundaries of a limiting, dormant tradition too often devoid of inspiration, to occupy the highest levels of technical and expressive experimentation in contemporary art.



MINA MURRINE
Vik Muniz

NEW OBSERVATIONS REAL ≠ REALITY

Residing on a patch of land the size of the state of Connecticut in the southwest corner of South Dakota, the Lakota Sioux tribe has dealt with the issues of colonization for 150 years. Their life is extraordinarily hard and has been made even more so from the flooding that took place in March of this year. Along with Haiti, the Pine Ridge Reservation has been recognized for decades as the poorest place in our hemisphere. The average resident of Pine Ridge lives on between \$3,500 and \$5,000 per year. Many live without heat or running water. The rate of teen suicide, alcoholism, drug abuse and the reduced life span for both men and women has become a daily occurrence on the reservation, creating a sense of hopelessness that permeates the lives of everyone there. No family remains untouched by the constant threats created by poverty so extreme, it is difficult to find the energy to move throughout the day with a positive outlook or any sense of possibility for the future.

As a country, we have done our best to ignore the fact that third world conditions exist right here at home in America. These conditions have been exacerbated by the recent flooding, and residences and facilities that were substandard have been reduced to rot and mold. Personal belongings are ruined, floating in three feet of water, as families try to make do without the basic means to survive.

Publications such as the *New York Times* have covered this devastation, yet the type of support that needs to take place is simply not happening. Read their article here: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/24/us/midwest-flooding-pine-ridge.html> I have witnessed these problems first-hand, and for anyone who has seen this type of poverty in America, it is impossible to look away. Here is a recent video available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQz_G-EoZRI

Gerhard Richter has provided the inspiration for us to consider a way to problem solve for the people of Pine Ridge, and for others throughout the world. Last year Richter donated 18 works of art, totaling more than one millions pounds, to build permanent housing for some members of Germany’s homeless population. The contemporary art market has never been stronger with auction results sky-high for individual works by living artists. An opportunity exists here and now for artists to yet again come to the aid of those in need by donating one, two, three or more works of art to be sold to specifically help the people of the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Rather than spend precious funds to hold a benefit event in Manhattan, an online exhibition and sale will be created and updated on a regular basis as additional works of art are donated and sold to provide the funds needed to rebuild and establish new workable ways for families to create sustainable businesses on Pine Ridge. Each participating artist will be asked to spread the word to their colleagues and collectors as well as promote this effort through social media and in the press when the opportunity presents itself.

At a time when our existence is at an all-time low in terms of government leadership and civic engagement, we have an opportunity to create grassroots support for each other and cross the lines of subtle racism and prejudice while we build community. Please help us to create something of beauty that can alleviate tremendous suffering even if it appears to be in some small way. How things appear is not necessarily how things are. Cumulatively, we can make a difference.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. I can be reached by email at mia.feroleto@gmail.com or by phone at 802 952 6217. I hope you will join us in this worthwhile effort.

Mia Feroletto
Publisher
New Observations Magazine

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opening June 15, 2020

**For information please contact Mia Feroletto
at 802 952 6217 or at mia.feroletto@gmail.com**