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The Artful Teapot

20th Century Expressions from the Kamm Collection

MFA Thesis Exhibition
April 22 – May 20
Opening reception Friday, April 21, 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm
Painting, sculpture and ceramics by Master of Fine Art candidates Mary Lundberg, Jeff Micky, Arnell K. Hinnekemps and Bobby Spilman.

ArtLab
Michelle D. Ayer, Wounded
April 22 – May 20
Opening reception Friday, April 21, 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm
An installation of hand-carved sculptures examining the female body as fragile and broken.

Caseworks: Five Solo Shows

Exhibition generously sponsored by the Arthur E. and Alice E. Adams Foundation
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The Dixon and Gardens are operated and maintained by the University of Memphis.
First, about Nicosia: It held in your hands the renowned and larger colorful Nicosia with art and life covering an expanded geographic area and smaller population center. For about the last four years, Nicosia, originally focused only on Memphis, has added regular reviews of Nicosia shows and occasional coverage of exhibits and news in other locations. This was a consequence of Nashville writers approaching me with strong ideas and producing extremely good and interesting articles. Nicosia, several writers are an list of favorite contributors, but Nicosia is looking for move writers throughout Tennessee and near areas of adjacent states. If you are a potential writer, please contact me at stevedrummers@memphis.com. I would appreciate writing samples. Whether you are a writer or not, we would appreciate art news. Send it the same address. And, if you know of events that should be covered, let us know that, too. Nicosia is also seeking new distribution sites. We sell 50 to 100 copies via UPS directly from the printer at no charge to the distribution artists. Nicosia is, of course, free to the reader. We ask only that the distributor be able to put the magazine in appointement site. Our highest volume distribution are bookstores, galleries and places where people congregate for educational and cultural activities. We are also seeking adventurers in addition to our Faithful and appreciated Nicosia fans of museums, art schools and departments, art galleries and art stores. Since Nicosia is a quarterly, we are active potential subscribers to promote a product (art degrees, art education, book, etc.) or a long running program, like an exhibition or a series of events. The Full issue, which will be distributed September 1., and the Spring issue, which will be distributed February 1., are ideal for seasonal lists of gallery museum exhibitions and bank to school presentations. The Winter issue (November 1.) is good for advertising holiday gift sales, and the Summer issue (June 1.) is perfect for summer weekend programs. And, finally, while promoting Nicosia, we always appreciate sponsorships, and sponsors receive each issue by mail. No need to hunt.

Now, about other things that come to mind: Be Ho.

In response to Susan Knowles’ article in Nicosia #56 about the public art Façade in Be Ho, we received a song interesting letter with a detailed inventory of other situations in which Cheekful Rajeh has allegedly ramped decisions about art at the campus. Unfortunately, the letter was anonymous, so Nicosia cannot point it out or follow it without comprehension. We can understand the need for anonymity, but if the writer will help us with some leads, we may be able to follow the story.

Memphis Artnet.

Memphis has a new website for artists and art events, Artnet.net. Local artists Dwayne Butcher and Bryan Blankenship devised the concept and in March introduced the site, which includes move updates of shows and art-related events, a monthly calendar, artist opportunities and, of best, all individual pages for artists who reside within an 8-mile radius of Nicosia.

It’s got to be the best deal on the planet for eligible artists. A one-time fee of $50 (FIVE DOLLARS!) buys a signed permanent page for contact information, resume and up to six images that are viewed sequentially in generous scale. All of this can be changed more or less at will, by expanding the web manager (Dwayne). From my standpoint as an organizer of exhibitions, it’s one stop shopping. Trust me, these are the days when you may be interested in being considered for exhibits, this is a brilliant device for basic curatorial research. The DeKalb/NASH collaborative biennial, MAX, which comes around again in 2007, will certainly benefit from Artnet.net. Meanwhile, the site provides easy access to info about what is going on every week. Artnet sends an email of upcoming shows every Wednesday to those who join the email list. Go to the “join” page at artmemphis.net for all the how-to’s.

Medicine Factory

A new venue for exhibition and retail studio space at 42 W. Anismon is presenting an art-on-the-ballroom-of every month with charming or alarming (depending on the time of day and or the visitor’s anxious threshold) back-up band, and piano bar. The Medicine Factory, founded by MCA graduate, Philip Andrew Lewis, and Luke Tomblin Lewis and Jason Tomblin in the former McConnon & Co. Medicine Mfg. building, has its mission to present “exhibitions of international-minded work.” The soon-to-be-nursey organization launched itself on March 31, with an exhibition designed to emphasize its objective. Music St. was a new event that gathered 50 area artists to create site-specific works throughout the three-story building (surrounding the basement). The presence, intimate to cavernous, well-lit and spacious, supported an ensemble of projects, and installation photos of basic art will give an idea about what is possible. The Medicine Factory celebrates the splendid diversity of projects from a sound installation to interactive sculpture installations to those that used the ambient chiaroscuro as principle medium.

The website, musicfactorying.com, is in minimal style and information. It includes a call to artists for submissions of projects, and installation photos of basic art will give an idea about what is possible.

Enmarket and Memphis Medical Center

From July 2004 through the 2004, the Enmarket Commission and the Memphis Medical Center will conduct the 2004 Knight Foundation Challenge with a goal of bringing together 12 national experts in community redevelopment, planning, housing, real estate, arts management, transportation and architecture with local citizens to develop potential designs for the Winchester Park community, the area that links in Better Children’s Medical Center and St. John’s Children’s Hospital.

The Knight Foundation Challenge will award each year to the American city that presents the most ambitious project with the greatest potential for positive community impact. Elizabeth Planken-Zygel, a founder of the Campus for New Urbanism and chair of the Miami University of School of Architecture, will lead the challenge with Charles C. Bohl, director of the American Program in Community Building in Coral Gables and author of the Urban Land Institute’s Flavestream, Developing Town Center Streets: Whole Streets and Urban Villages.

The challenge will offer an unequalled opportunity for Memphis citizens to be engaged with world-class urban experts in a vital community redevelopment project. Volunteers are needed to help with meetings and public discussions. Interested individuals should contact Melissa W. Gregory, 1-800-545-5020.

Tennessee

Tennessee Arts Commission Gallery

Artists were selected for the 2007-2008 exhibition for the TAC Gallery. The selected artists will be announced on Thursday, August 17. Professional artists working in visual art, craft, media and design disciplines from across the state are eligible for the 6-8 week solo shows. The application information is on the website at www.tnarts.state.tn.us.
Artists See Gods and Ends
In the exhibition 100 Artists See God, organized by Independent Curators International, New York, and shown at Cheekwood Estate and Gardens, Nashville, February 4–April 16, 2006, artists from around the world were invited to create works that explore the relationship between art and the divine.

The idea for 100 Artists See God, by curators Rhona Hoffman and Nolan, was inspired by the book 7 by William Blake, which is an exploration of the seven deadly sins and their corresponding virtues. The exhibition aims to provoke thought and reflection on the role of religion in contemporary art and to encourage dialogue across different cultures and belief systems.

Each artist was given the freedom to interpret the theme in their own unique way, resulting in a diverse range of works that showcase the complexity of the human experience and the multifaceted nature of spirituality.

In the words of Nolan, "This exhibition is about the art of believing. It is about the power of the imagination to transcend limitations and to bring the invisible into the visible. It is about the power of art to bridge the gap between the sacred and the profane, the divine and the mundane. It is about the power of art to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary, the commonplace into the exceptional, the everyday into the miraculous."

In conclusion, 100 Artists See God is an exploration of the ways in which art can serve as a vehicle for spiritual expression and a means of connecting with the divine. Through their diverse and thought-provoking works, the artists in this exhibition invite us to contemplate the mysteries of the human experience and to consider our own relationship with the divine.
Nashville

Ruby Green

Ruby Green’s gallery show of dendrochronology presented a

tracing of experience. outside was the logo, utilization floor

front of the space, inside were walls, dramatic attraction.
The site, entitled Good Housing, included work by artists

Fiona Kendrick and Marja Hageman. The interior space

viewed upon entering the gallery was as order and chaos, an

effect achieved by Kendrick’s wedding cakes and Johnson’s

bending twists of red and white sheets against the floor.

The celebration flows into chairs and onto pedestals holding the cakes. This
collaboration (whether the room is an ad

foreground and the back, the top sheet lightly draped over

neatly into its chair seat, the top sheet lightly draped over

neatly folded white and lightly-patterned sheets fitting

associated with slightness and girth. “Fat” is a teeming

terms “The Thin One” and “The Fat One” (both 2005/2006)

Simultaneously silly and human-like, the two sheet sculp-

material subjected to Mariah Johnson’s hands.

mood marked of intimacy and nostalgia.

show, entitled "Nashville

February 11-March 18

Ruby Green

Good Housekeeping

Fiona Kinsella’s suites of intricate cracked eggs draws

Ruby Green’s gallery south of downtown provided a con-

centrated and should remain so.

measurably thicker, we are prevented from be

and cakes, and we reach the inner sanctum with the eggs,

Holidays” speak to Americans’ obsession with safety (safety

emphasizes caution with repressive, Puritanical undertones.

is a kind of long, thin instrument (a whip?). It feels as

suits, relaxing outdoors, one with a derby hat and one hold-

Flanking him are images of older, rotund white men in white

and vital social clashes into the consumer-culture wrappings

and getting what you really want.

See how to make the films that you own!

I do a list of research to find the films. I had tried getting people to submit, but it’s hard to convince people just to

give you easy. I used to have a dream about making a film about

Franco and Celine in the world. Nothing but bright skies ahead. I invite anyone and every-

Some favorite full length features?

How do you find the films that you own?

I have noticed that there are few, if any, films shown made

What are your favorite full length features?

What is it about the short film, the micro media, that is so

What do you do after watching the short films?

I prefer the films to be under 15 minutes. I’ll look at longer

television commercials sometimes. Something for everyone.

how long have you been doing the screenings?

I suppose the IMMCC is a kind of natural progression of

How did you come up with the idea of the Indie Memphis

Micro Cinema Club, a free monthly screening event

The Indie Memphis Film Festival and the founder and director of

Mariah Johnson, "Drink" (version 1), sheets and pillowcases with metal stool, dimensions variable. 2005.

drawings and napkins. These objects are invitingly displayed

and cakes, and we reach the inner sanctum with the eggs,

drawings and napkins. These objects are intriguingly displayed

It's a young white couple (center) and images sandwiching them

a young white couple (center) and images sandwiching them

Sketches/Sketching

March 6, 2006

ultimately). I really like to mix it

it fills a void and lots of positive things come out of it. If

something at a film festival than just accepting the latest

It wasn’t an accident. A lot of people have been working

Brewer, didn’t fall from the sky. He lived it each and every

and getting what you really want.

Other than the ones at Indie Memphis, why do you think Memphis has become such a hot bed

for indie films lately?

It’s accidental. A lot of people have been working

on their films as they start to make it. They have a

What kind of films do you make, and are you currently working

on what?

What is it about the short film, the micro media, that is so

appealing?

Short films are fast and quick. If you see one that you don’t

like, you can just go to another one.

I prefer the films to be under 15 minutes. I’ll look at longer

television commercials sometimes. Something for everyone.

How do you find the films that you own?

I have noticed that there are few, if any, films shown made

What are your favorite full length features?

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Pistols at Dawn an interview with Joel Hilgenberg by Tad Lauritzen Wright

I believe in reading a painting like a book. In my work (I hope) paint/draw to express yourself?

Do you think more about your subject matter or simply of way.

Freud takes really “normal” people and makes really interesting

work with them. I like the reality of that and find a great deal

During college I began tattooing professionally also, so I

first year, but I became comfortable and found my place.

MCA. When I started, I thought that I would only stay the

high school, I received a scholarship to go to art school at

an “artist.” Throughout high school it was the only thing I

always drew. I guess I felt a natural progression into being

I’ve been asking myself that question for a long time. I

Why are you an artist?

baby, holidays, and bad attitudes put it on the back burner

This conversation had been planned since the beginning of

Joel’s interest in art, fishing and hand made cowboy boots.

Pistols at Dawn an interview with Joel Hilgenberg by Tad Lauritzen Wright

I know exactly why I left.

I have had big heads as large as 30-some odd pounds jump in

minute or two.

I was the tattoo artist

for the

I have had big heads as large as 30-some odd pounds jump in

minute or two.

I was the tattoo artist

for the

artists. Even a single tattoo artist can become a big part of the

cultural scene. Joel’s Mail art and tattoo work fits squarely into

this scene, with Joel engaging readers in a dialogue that

exceeds the boundaries of traditional art forms.

The images in the drawings are to me like small still frames,

elements adding to the drawings until they feel complete.

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A Weekend in Memphis

Photography

My weekend visit to Memphis on March 11 and 12 was as much a personal as a professional excursion. Among other things, I was particularly interested in viewing two photographic exhibitions in the same museum that creatively revealed the power of photography in the shaping of communal identity, as well as racial myth. The larger of the two exhibits, entitled Pictures from Home: Six African-American Studio Photographers in the South 1895–1932 (11 February–30 April 2008), was organized by the Tubman African-American Museum and curated by Elise Fleisher and featured a total of 122 portraits. Located downstairs at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, the photographs were placed at eye-level height along pale green walls, with low-level lighting to gently highlight them. Two windows were used to display unusually-formatted photographs as well as actual film, Kodak guides and account books, as the exhibition was both an examination of the studio photographs themselves and a consideration of the phenomenon of studio photography in southern African-American communities.

One of the six photographers represented was Florence Perrault Collins, the first African-American woman to open a successful studio in New Orleans. Living in the 7th Ward, she was forced to make her race a factor in order to work as a developer, printer and clerk for two white photographers, after which she opened her own home-based portrait studio in 1917. In addition to both an examination of the studio photographs themselves and a consideration of the phenomenon of studio photography in southern African-American communities.

Two of the photographers were associated with Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. (Elie Weismann studied at Tuskegee before opening studios in Atlanta and Jacksonville. His images were the most striking, including shots of a beauty parade, dance halls, GIs at a bus station, bronze, griffins and an African-American Masonic. Weismann’s works provide a glimpse into the diversity and richness of such African-American communities often neglected in favor of stereotypes. Prentice Herman Polk worked as official photographer for the Tuskegee Institute from 1877 until his death in 1943. Included within the suite of the exhibition were several examples from his 1932 series entitled “1820 Characters,” which depicted a number of the rural residents of Macon County, Alabama, with titles such as “The Boss” (a robust elderly woman holding on her hips) and “The Pop Smoke” (an elderly woman lighting her pay). In addition, Polk created a sensitive portrait of Henry Barber, an African-American farmer who owned, rather than harvested, its property. Barber’s upturned face emerges from a velvety-black background. Harrell’s Portrait of a Graduate by a Water Pump, 1940s, Photograph ©2006 Center for Southern Folklore

The North American Indian

Working for Henry Lewis’ Fortune magazine in 1929, Bourke-White made a famous trip to the Soviet Union in 1933, resulting in the book Eyes on Russia, which documented the process of industrialization under Joseph Stalin. While curator Phillips was praised on National Public Radio as suggesting that Bourke-White’s work “reflects the importance of industry to the capitalist society of America.” It would seem to follow that industry was equally important to the (communist) Soviet Union, and Bourke-White’s Soviet images, while not as recognizable in terms of product or brand name, are no less stunning in terms of aesthetic approach. While much of the images include people, the focus is always on product and technology, whether chronicling the peeling of onions for factory-made soup packs, rows of plow blades or Wurlitzer pipes, this may in fact be the most compelling work of Bourke-White’s career. As noted in the exhibition brochure, after hearing Henry Louis Gates Jr. of the turn of conversation that such portraiture does not come close to disguising the location inside the studio setting is allowed to emerge, pointing to an acknowledgement of the constructed nature of such portraiture that industry was equally important to the (communist) Soviet Union, and Bourke-White’s Soviet images, while not as recognizable in terms of product or brand name, are no less stunning in terms of aesthetic approach. While much of the images include people, the focus is always on product and technology, whether chronicling the peeling of onions for factory-made soup packs, rows of plow blades or Wurlitzer pipes, this may in fact be the most compelling work of Bourke-White’s career. As noted in the exhibition brochure, after hearing Henry Louis Gates Jr. of the turn of conversation that such portraiture does not come close to disguising the location inside the studio setting is allowed to emerge, pointing to an acknowledgement of the constructed nature of such portraiture...
Contemporary Art

In addition to an exhibition of Rod Grooms’ graphic works that delivered on every level, Memphis kept busy with a number of other smaller contemporary shows. So much has been written about Tennessee favorite Grooms that I hesitate to throw my hat into the ring, but this show at the Art Museum of the University of Memphis (organized by the Tennessee State Museum), Evil Grooms. Selections from the Graphics Index (Black 1-4 April) displayed such excellence, so unrivaled understanding of the show’s possibilities of imagery, that I stopped me in my tracks. Grooms has been in two exhibitions this year and the battle of big art size becoming part of the New York scene in the 1950s, and his pair contended with notions of surface and physicality. The November 20th-4 April) displayed such violent eloquence, especially the unbridled demonstration of the sheer possibilities of showing. “This little print may mark the beginning of the imagination that emerges when disorder is not engaged by the paintings on the level of narrative or visual enjoyment. Such may be the risk when trying to straddle the lines between critical subject matter and the creation of an equally vacuous work of art. “While the employment of a technically challenging approach may seem one area for effort, if little else, the effect below—above (20 February-7 April) displayed how much can be accomplished with a ballpoint pen or a sharp blade. Created by Cynthia Thompson in Rust Hall at the Memphis College of Art, the works included in the exhibition by Carianne Mack and Malinda Theisman entitled “Finding Time” described as a “collaborative large-scale wall drawing” and a wood mapping project (in a room), this work featured piles of shredded colored paper, visually linked to lines on the wall created from shreddedarns with evidence of highlighted words, drawing the eye to a collection of cardboard boxes with crumpled maps pinning over onto the ground. The installation at an even level, worked well alongside the Grooms exhibition, as it played with the transition from two to three dimensions and tangible representations of dialogue and location. Nevertheless, it suffered from a description that for outweighed the actual work, claiming that it showed from the artists as “conceptual subjects intersect” and become the “impetus to create order from disorder, and the space consciousness and freedom that emerges when disorder is eradiated.” Meanwhile, the Cline-Hansen Gallery at Rhodes College featured a collection of works, in two rooms, by one of its esteemed professors at the University. The exhibition, entitled “Artists 13-25 March), included three piece of her multi-layered paintings, composed of transparent pigment suspended in an alkali medium in a manner somewhat reminiscent of silkscreen, as well as four aural on paper drawings. Hansen’s paintings feature a mosaic palette jolted with dichotomous, surfaces that lead well to the text and imagery that includes a Claude Monet female “character” who, while clearly an adult, often adopted postures of girlish innocence trod with a humid sensual awareness. Surrounding the female are layers of decorative foliage, works of symbols, robes, door and doorways, and repeated motifs of bulls-eye and striped spheres. In one painting, a rabbit lumps beside one of the striped “bulls” artfully painted in strings, while white curls emanate, in a room,使之独放，a larger ball all in flour in the center of the piece. Similaty, one of the paintings on paper drawings featured the same female figure, hands up in a gesture of exclamation, with variously pigments emerging from her head. The small rabbit, entwined with a theme object, enhanced the sense of ambiguity in her expression. It is a “tongue at play.” Traditionally, the white frames of the four paintings seemed to function metaphysically like the white trees found on little girl’s bikes, destined to be permanently unshifted with after only one use.

While the methods used to create the paintings were both mysterious and technically impressive, in the end I am not sure whether I was disappointed or not. The text shows the works themself failed or because they succeeded. Perhaps it was the painting acids colors combined with the glass, polychromy-like finish, or the fresh use of the rabbit as symbol of the impossible sexuality of both human and nature/voices, or my briskly, in fact, for the gaunt elements of American ghosthood that seem to enfold the bedrooms of females below the age of twelve, but I was not engaged by the paintings on the level of narrative or visual enjoyment. Such may be the risk when trying to straddle the lines between critical subject matter and the creation of an equally vacuous work of art.

While the employment of a technically challenging approach may seem one area for effort, if little else, the effect below—above (20 February-7 April) displayed how much can be accomplished with a ballpoint pen or a sharp blade. Created by Cynthia Thompson in Rust Hall at the Memphis College of Art, the works included in the exhibition by Carianne Mack and Malinda Theisman entitled “Finding Time” described as a “collaborative large-scale wall drawing” and a wood mapping project (in a room), this work featured piles of shredded colored paper, visually linked to lines on the wall created from shreddedarns with evidence of highlighted words, drawing the eye to a collection of cardboard boxes with crumpled maps pinning over onto the ground. The installation at an even level, worked well alongside the Grooms exhibition, as it played with the transition from two to three dimensions and tangible representations of dialogue and location. Nevertheless, it suffered from a description that for outweighed the actual work, claiming that it showed from the artists as “conceptual subjects intersect” and become the “impetus to create order from disorder, and the spa...
The art world is a laudable obsession for painting began with the development of photography in the mid-19th century and gained new power in the 1960’s when artists like Robert Ryman painted entire canvases and performed installation art like Bruce Nauman, the Fluxus group, Laurie Anderson and Nam June Paik complicated matters. Is painting still relevant when we have all of this technology and tolerance/acceptance for new forms of representation? What media best suit artists’ expressions of our postmodern, frenzied, stale, self-conscious and visually overwhelming environment? Is it possible to make anything as all traditional media when we wonder, with a finely honed sensitivity to and awareness of the flatness of canvas, that painting now encompasses carving, staining, abusing wood panel with childlike, improvised scribbles, York shows an example of what painting can still articulate. Digging into a canvas panel with childhood, improvisedolly, York shows that painting can encompass our living, staining, abusing and otherwise implying third and fourth dimensions. The accumulation of marks has created two skeletal visages. Here, the influence of new genres informs but hardly overpowers the painting, stopping where the two separate pieces melt together. The painting’s columns seem to bleed onto the framing piece, making the finish of its surface rot. These vertical lines unite the two pieces just enough to produce some harmony, however discordant.

Perhaps my view is based mostly on my reflex optimism or my inarticulate nostalgia for an America that no longer exists. And I have always found that simple optimism still looks at our creative contemporaries’ work and is inspired to reflect (unself-consciously) on our existence, painting cannot be seen as an anachronism. What is clear is that painting survives for many into the 21st century, a bit scathed and haggard, yet not completely spent and certainly far from boring.

Hans + Gieves, “Loop Va (Banister),” enamel on wood and archival digital canvas print, 29 x 32 x 3” 2003.

There is evidence that painting is not dead in Nashville. The name of the gallery, Zeitgeist, suggests recent efforts of artists to overcome the crushing sense of historical precedent and otherwise implying third and fourth dimensions. The appearance of the flat framing apparatus around this image brings us into the physical reality of barriers in time and space. It is a continuation of the banister’s scheme and perspective. The sculpture has blank hollow spaces between each banister column, but the black does not carry over into the painting, stopping where the two separate pieces melt together. The painting’s columns seem to bleed onto the framing piece, making the finish of its surface rot. These vertical lines unite the two pieces just enough to produce some harmony, however discordant. Perhaps my view is based mostly on my reflex optimism or my inarticulate nostalgia for an America that no longer exists. And I have always found that simple optimism still looks at our creative contemporaries’ work and is inspired to reflect (unself-consciously) on our existence, painting cannot be seen as an anachronism. What is clear is that painting survives for many into the 21st century, a bit scathed and haggard, yet not completely spent and certainly far from boring.

The artistic team Hans + Gieves melds painting, photography, and sculpture into one depiction. One begins with a painting, and the other reacts with a surrounding construction, both fitting together like a puzzle. “Banister” (2003) compares the lack of clarity nostalgia gives us. The central painting is from a blurred photograph with a viewpoint of a young child peaking through the banister columns toward the corner of a room with wooden panels. One column covers up a mended shelf that is affixed to the wall, upon which something appears to have been set. The rich browns, grays, and greens manage to have a warm mood. The foreground is frustratingly unfocused, the background clear but incomplete as our view is obscured by our position behind the banister. The caustic and rusted appearance of the flat frame apparatus around this image brings us into the physical reality of barriers in time and space. It is a continuation of the banister’s scheme and perspective. The sculpture has blank hollow spaces between each banister column, but the black does not carry over into the painting, stopping where the two separate pieces melt together. The painting’s columns seem to bleed onto the framing piece, making the finish of its surface rot. These vertical lines unite the two pieces just enough to produce some harmony, however discordant.

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covered a wide gamut of hues and feelings. In 2006, the artist's show—"The Red Show"—at Perry Nicole Fine Arts, with 80 works to the gallery's call for art that "interpreted the boundaries of the color red." Here are some of the chords struck in that show's symphonic theme and variation.

The evocative colors and shapes of artworks in The Red Show worked on multiple levels. In Susan Maakestad's pink pentagon, thick smudges of cadmium and clouds of coral were back-dropped by equally nuanced turquoises. This stunning abstraction brought to mind the world above, on top of, and beneath "Parking Lot #2" (oil on canvas). The bottom third of the picture plane looked like the chalky white landmass surrounding the red earth and the roughhewn box, we field a pool of crimson dripped down the painting like split milk, spilt wine, spilt blood. In the soft, thickly impastoed gray-color, the thinning reds and blues were irresistible. As a biographical note, Evert Witte's unsettling use of the color red made perfect sense. In 2005, the artist's works—in-progress, sized paintings, slides (almost everything) were washed away by Katrina. Rather than charging our memories or banishing off the stuff that a phoenix could rise from the ashes, Witte's use of red ("entropy I," oil on canvas) blurred and dissolved the artistic thickness to visible shapes that floated amidst.

In Karen Jacobs' mixed-media painting, "Piecework," a small rough-surfaced rectangle lay just beneath a much larger smoky-red rectangle shadowed with crimson. Red- and burgundy lines etched across its top edge gave it the appearance of a patch of young earth soaked with blood. A pool of white and a pool of crimson-dropped down the painting like split milk, split wine, split blood. In the soft, thickly impastoed gray-field surrounding the red earth and the roughhewn box, we came to terms, as best we could, with passion lost.

"The Red Show" covered a wide gamut of hues and feelings. Its shades of red enticed, inspired, danced, smoldered and yearned.

Knowles is a writer and critic who lives in Memphis.

Carol Knowles

Elizabeth Alley, "Rehearsal," oil, 12 x 12"

As a biographical note, Evert Witte's unsettling use of the color red made perfect sense. In 2005, the artist's works—in-progress, sized paintings, slides (Almost everthing) were washed away by Katrina. Rather than charging our memories or banishing off the stuff that a phoenix could rise from the ashes, Witte's use of red ("entropy I," oil on canvas) blurred and dissolved the artistic thickness to visible shapes that floated amidst.

In Karen Jacobs' mixed-media painting, "Piecework," a small rough-surfaced rectangle lay just beneath a much larger smoky-red rectangle shadowed with crimson. Red- and burgundy lines etched across its top edge gave it the appearance of a patch of young earth soaked with blood. A pool of white and a pool of crimson-dropped down the painting like split milk, split wine, split blood. In the soft, thickly impastoed gray-field surrounding the red earth and the roughhewn box, we came to terms, as best we could, with passion lost.

"The Red Show" covered a wide gamut of hues and feelings. Its shades of red enticed, inspired, danced, smoldered and yearned.

Carol Knowles

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Nashville
Vanderbilt University Fine Arts Gallery

Ai Wei Wei creates aggressive photographs and objects depicting the destruction or reconstruction of Chinese antiques. “Shopping a Han Dynasty Urn” (1995) is a conceptual performance piece comprised of three large black and white photographs in which Ai destroys an urn. In the first photograph the artist holds the urn, balancing it carefully between his fingers and angry. In none of the images does he look at or acknowledge the urn. He does not revere the authority represented by the Han Dynasty urn. Instead, his hands, as they lift the urn, convey utter disregard, as if he is casting off something despised and toxic. There is a thrill, a sharp feeling of liberation, in the way he metabolizes his anger in this elegant dance. Born in 1957, Ai Wei Wei is the eldest of the Chinese artists included in this exhibit. He is the son of Ai Qing, a well-known poet of his generation, who was a victim of the purges of the 1950s and then the Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976. This formative experience gives Ai’s work striking gravitas. He resists for himself, and by extension the Chinese individual, the idea of being subsumed into any collective. His work portrays a rejection of any historical influence, as if he is deliberately stepping away from past and present. The volumes depicted in “Chinese Library No. 14” (1999) and “Chinese Library No. 25” (2002) have a distinctively melancholy aspect. They are helpless things in a state of certain outcome, portrayed as fragile, ephemeral objects. The dangling threads of deteriorating bindings and the faded and blurred galaute of the paintings offer emotional beauty. These volumes have survived, for the time being, and serve as reminders of the destruction of books that occurred during the Cultural Revolution, when Ai’s father was a victim.

Xiaoxi’s newer paintings, such as “December 2001, L.T.” (2002) depict stacks of recent newspapers. Less mysterious, more contemporary and inaccessible than the paintings pull one out of the library and into the city street. No longer mulling over the distant past, the viewer reconstructs moments in time from snippets of visible journalism, reminded of the filtered reality and the universe of maps or globes. This reflects an increasingly global consciousness; it is also a way to critique forces in play. Maps or globes are an obvious critique of the predatory and invasive tendencies to commercial culture. “My Things No. 8” (2003) is a meticulous tableau arrangement of currency, film, paint, and identification, along with myriad other things. “My Things No. 7” (1993) presents an arrangement of books, catalogs, and compact discs—a personal library. This fascinating array of flotsam and jetsam begins to form a portrait of a person or, perhaps, a constructed persona. There is a universal quality to the portraits, those could be the possessions of any artist with the freedom, inclination, and affluence to travel. It is a glamorous and seductive picture, perhaps a bit of glass, an illusion. This is the artist as a contemporary mobile character participating freely in a global market economy.

The American artists produce works containing images of maps or globes. These reflect an increasingly global consciousness and situation. It is also a way to critique forces in play and imagine new scenarios. In Vermeer’s Bonaventura, the artist Lawrence Weschler interprets the presence of maps in Jan Vermeer’s paintings as signifying the turbulence of Europe during his lifetime. Vermeer’s response to violence was to create paintings that reflected serenity, works in which he invented a “zone filled with peace.” In this exhibition, by contrast, artists Dan Mills, Vernon Fisher, and Enrique Chagoya each, in their use of map imagery, cast a critical eye towards America’s military, religious, and capitalist encroachments abroad. Their works also create a particularly American shame, along with a wish to be detached from these practices and policies.

Mills’s works on paper employ advertising imagery and humor to comment on the American desire to exert global dominance. These collage comprising United States Empire (2001). These works play on the Sherwin Williams Cover the Earth logo in which a globe is being coated with paint poured from a paint can tipped above. In Mills’s pieces the paint can is labeled and the paint is a rich, blood red. On each piece is written, respectively, Cover the Earth, Cover the Earth, and Cover the Earth. These and Mills’s related works on display are an obvious critique of the predatory and invasive tendencies of American culture.

Fisher’s lithograph “Mar Cutting Eden” (1995) depicts a retro-styled father carving a model globe as if it were a jack-o-lantern, while a young boy looks on in wicked fascination. Fisher’s other works, such as “Warbird” (1993) explore imperial tendencies more subtly via the strange poetry of distortion definitions. Chagoya, a Mexican-American painter and printmaker, is a visual diarist. His work springs from an authentic melding of cultural influences, resulting in a complex blending of religious, military, and sexual imagery. Chagoya creates satirical maps and comics, such as his final High series, which display the absurdity of superpower’s wish to be at the head of current U.S. foreign policy.

Mischling Tools originated in response to a 2004 exhibit entitled Repression. Contemporary Chinese Art from China and the US is the result of a discussion that began during visits to studios of Beijing artists in 2003. American artists choosing to create political works can rarely claim life experience as a basis that they can use to ease their way into Chinese art. And so it follows there is much to be gained in an encounter with work winning the ability to offer political statements with personal and specific content.

Enrique Chagoya, “Road Map I (World),” 2003, Acrylic on amate paper, 36 x 47” Courtesy of the artist and George Adams Gallery, New York

Don’t be led astray by the title. Misleading Trails failures. It is also a way to critique forces in play and make way for the future. The present is an odd, disconnected place, held within it a foreboding of what is to come. Right’s photographic series entitled Big Things presents self-portraits constructed of cultural commodities that noose with a shift in contemporary Chinese art toward themes related to commercial culture. “My Things No. 8” (2002) is a meticulous tableau arrangement of currency, film, paint, and identification, along with myriad other things. “My Things No. 7” (1993) presents an arrangement of books, catalogs, and compact discs—a personal library. This fascinating array of flotsam and jetsam begins to form a portrait of a person or, perhaps, a constructed persona. There is a universal quality to the portraits, those could be the possessions of any artist with the freedom, inclination, and affluence to travel. It is a glamorous and seductive picture, perhaps a bit of glass, an illusion. This is the artist as a contemporary mobile character participating freely in a global market economy.

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Carré Mckee
McKee is an artist and writer who lives in Nashville.

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of his own site at perambulations.blogspot.com.

The Aesthetic Topography of the Mid-South

Muayd Muhsin, “After the Storm, “ 43” x 32”, 2003

Objects (like headwear and purses) and for sculptures. Her

specializes in making felt, which she uses in functional
gallery showed the work of Lisa Klakulak, a fiber artist formerly

in 2004 was Freed-Hardeman professor

TV production facilities (that fortune went to the creation of the Renaissance Center, a
took the place of old photographs and illustrations of women and children

in the community as well as professionals. The city’s status as a base town in time of war comes

down homes, studios, and galleries in the Lowertown neighborhood,

Billy Renkl, Susan Bryant and Betty Liles, which means visitors can regularly see work by people

shoved-off hair exists exterior to her person, no longer

This piece shows parenthood as an overwhelming event that

rainy season. She describes her work as a stream of drops that

drops shower onto the children and form a cushion underneath them. The gathering of all of these

participated in this project. She points out that_CSVs or spreadsheets can be used to record the data,

and around the world. She herself is a collector of this form, and she has

nurses who are based in Clarksville and nearby towns who make

The oldest of the small places, Clarksville, Tennessee, is home to the Freed-Hardeman University, the basis of the

The largest of the small places, Clarksville, Tennessee, is home to Ft. Campbell, the base of the

The Renaissance Center has a small gallery that shows some solid work. A highlight in 2002 was Fredric Robinson’s

The largest of the small places, Clarksville, Tennessee, is home to Ft. Campbell, the base of the

A headpiece titled “Worn” has a lattice of white shells held together with white felt shaped into a form that fits the back

The meaning of this most of the seemingly obvious things appearing in the object.

The piece extends the natural process of hair generation, hair

it is a way the body itself makes of itself, but immersing

attached to the person we consider it an integral component

Klakulak is not willing to go quite that far in mixing the

woman’s hair, although the piece’s NFS indicator suggests

The piece shows parenthood as an overwhelming event that

The largest of the small places, Clarksville, Tennessee, is home to Ft. Campbell, the base of the

and now has emerged from the context of figural art, within the viewers and evokes her sense of friends in

that represents the lactiferous ducts and exposes glimpses of a map underneath. The map centers

Steve Robinson reveals the extent to which this city remains embedded, geographically and culturally, in a

The largest of the small places, Clarksville, Tennessee, is home to Ft. Campbell, the base of the

Dickson, Paducah, Clarksville

It turns out that the aesthetic topography of the mid-South

From Dickson, Tennessee (pop. 12,623), Paducah, Kentucky (pop. 28,037), and Clarksville, Tennessee (closing in on a comparatively hefty 127,035) vividly conveys good examples of how art finds its place, even “out there.”

Dickson, a small industrial town, is one of the main popu-

It is more complicated. Artistic initiatives pop up all over the place, sitting on shifting opportunies. At Dickson, Tennessee (pop. 12,623), Paducah, Kentucky (pop. 28,037), and Clarksville, Tennessee (closing in on a comparatively hefty 127,035) vividly conveys good examples of how art finds its place, even “out there.”

The exhibition of a group of APSU graduates who decided to stick around town. They mount shows each month on

A smaller and newer non-profit space, Alter Gallery, was started about two years ago by a
group of FPSI graduates who decided to stick around town. They mount shows each month on

According to Monica Herrick, one of Alter’s officers, the Clarksville art community

and Clarksville, Tennessee (clocking in at a comparatively

That means visitors can regularly see work by people

A smaller and newer non-profit space, Alter Gallery, was started about two years ago by a

dow featuring a piece to fulfill its
closing outside by defining the poses with pieces of mirrors and
central breast has been cut out in sections to form a web

It represents the lactiferous ducts and exposes glimpses of a map underneath. The map centers

Downtown Artists Coop (DAC), formerly had space on the second floor over a deli but has moved into

A smaller and newer non-profit space, Alter Gallery, was started about two years ago by a

A smaller and newer non-profit space, Alter Gallery, was started about two years ago by a

Artistic vitality pops up all over the place, the downtown business district and once

and once

represented the lactiferous ducts and exposes glimpses of a map underneath. The map centers

Novel, one of the four APSU graduates who decided to stick around town. They mount shows each month on

malignant cells from protruding to human settlement, this program

works the other way around. Media and housing available to artists around the country is

The Aesthetic Topography of the Mid-South

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Roden’s and Lueth’s craftsmanship reveals their respect and commitment to these old media traditions that articulate well to their expressions of postmodern angst and other collective dilemmas. Together in this congested gallery space, their work teems with life and urgent assertions. Allied with the recent show “19th Artic” Sex Ed” at Cheekwood, artist’s tales on politics have resided in powerful work and much-needed alternative commentary.

Jennifer Hamblin

MUSEUMS are community cornerstones. They are cultural symbols and contributors to community enterprise, stewards of collections, and providers of educational experiences. They are treasured places where memories are created and shared. But museums can also transform the way people view the world. They cultivate curiosity by revealing and interpreting cultures, ideas, and the discoveries of humankind. Museums encourage people to examine what endures and to recognize truths that unify all generations and define our common humanity. They foster research and life-long learning and encourage the expression of differing points of view. These strengths accord museums the opportunity to assume an expanded civic role in society. (American Association of Museums, Museums & Community Resolutions, December 20, 2002)

For more information see Museum Studies on the Art Museum University of Memphis website (amum.org) under Visitor Information.

Hendriksen and Pigtails
Tag Art Gallery
February 6-25

Nashville
Tag Art Gallery’s galleries are part showroom and part laboratory. American paintings hang frame-to-frame, reminiscent of 19th century salon-style. Epitaphs, there are temporary exhibitions, studied paintings and prints, studios and storage. The February show, Hendriksen and Pigtails, featured works by Paul Roden and Valerie Lueth, recent arrivals to Nashville from South Dakota. Both make what Roden calls “socially poignant prints.” This term captures the sarcasm and frustration Roden holds for his environment and the non-elastic complacency with which Lueth views hers.

Roden’s works are variously-sized color woodcuts, all depicting or insinuating political/social issues, arguments or chaos. In one image, he depicts Saddam Hussein as Santa Claus, while another, “The Return of Tricky Dick Prompts a Wave at Kanagawa,” that lap at a house surrounded by street waves resembling the famous ones from Hokusai’s “Great Wave of Kanagawa” that lap at a house surrounded by street lamps, bright spotlights in a dark cavern. The big nonsensical machine looms overhead. “Birds of Fryg: The Fear of God” articulates through fantasy what happened in reality in March 2003. The “idiot and amnesiac” of American weaponry upon Baghdad is represented here by a massive black bird, sweeping down with its sharp talons to prey upon the (we assume) Muslims running for their lives. These woodcuts are vehicles to get the point across, distilling the complexity of an issue in the news to its essence. While the compositions and color are dynamic and cryptic, the pieces convey social or political criticism simply and directly. The strategy is able to advertising working for Roden’s own ends, but it gives us pleasure, especially if we agree with his political axes.

Refreshingly more subtle in their criticism, Lueth’s etchings are gorgeously detailed and shaded to create incredible beasts, human forms, underworlds or other things that defy description. Her “Show of Hands” has a disorderly chorus of hands, faces filled with pathos. With swollen, squinting eyes and pointed noses, one pulls her own hair by the cocoons of their pod-like bodies. Fascinating to look at, all Lueth’s etchings have balance, tight forms and clarity, evidence of her mastery of the caustic and organic etching process. Roden’s and Lueth’s craftsmanship reveals their respect and commitment to these old media traditions that articulate well to their expressions of postmodern angst and other collective dilemmas. Together in this congested gallery space, their work teems with life and urgent assertions. Allied with the recent show “19th Artic” Sex Ed” at Cheekwood, artist’s tales on politics have resided in powerful work and much-needed alternative commentary.

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Delta Axis @ Marshall Arts
Clayworks Studio and Gallery
ArtLab
Communication and Fine Arts Bldg, 901.678.2224 www.amum.org

Gallery hours are 1-5 on Saturdays or by appointment.

Opening reception, Friday, July 14
from the Kamm Collection, May 14-September 24
Indie Memphis Micro Cinema Club
Walker, June 3-July 29
Artist Studio Visits:
Memphis artists, June 2-July 29
Drive Thru, Installation of editions by 15
Pierre, NJ Woods, Wayne Russell
Other gallery artists: David Lynch, Luon St.
Works by Allison Furr-Lawyer, August through mid July.
Opening reception, Friday, August 4
Price Is Right, Aug 2-31
Pinkney Herbert, Mary Bennett, July 6-July 29
Greely Myatt, Lapses to Kill (title), June 1-July 1
Amy Pleasants, September 1-October 11
June 26-Sept 23
In Case of Emergency, Jada Thompson, July 15-
Fluffy:  Helen Farmer , July 15-September 9
Three paths To Abstraction:  Pinkney  Herbert,
30-July 1
...