ARTDESK

CONTEMPORARY ARTS, PERFORMANCE, AND THOUGHT



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START HERE

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3 OUNCES LEMONADE

TOP WITH CLUB SODA

GARNISH WITH LEMON PEEL

AND CUCUMBER

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Equivalent VIII (1966), also known as *The Bricks*, by CARL ANDRE was the center of a controversy in 1976 about what makes great art.

BREAKING BOUNDARIES

Wow. *Awesome*. Cool. These are not words one usually associates with museum observation, but when it comes to Jason Hackenwerth's enormous balloon installations, these descriptions are frequent. This issue's cover shows his vivacious and daring work, recently installed in the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum rotunda in New York. His materials, and how he works with them, challenge the way we view mundane objects in our lives. Give them a little air—and poof—look what can happen!

We also feature in this issue the work of New York–based choreographer Brian Brooks (page 38). Brian is one of the most influential artists in contemporary dance today. His work, while formal and conceptual, is athletic and clever, and in 2013, Brian was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for Creative Arts. Both Brian and Jason have been artists-in-residence in Green Mountain Falls, Colorado, at the Green Box Arts Festival, and this summer Brian will be back in Colorado participating in the Vail International Dance Festival.

Based in two Texas locations that are so totally, diametrically opposed, Jason Willaford could almost be considered bi-coastal. Jason lives and works in Dallas and Marfa. At *ArtDesk*, we are very pleased to introduce him to our audience of contemporary enthusiasts. His work—encaustic paintings, chromed oil barrels, and, more recently, vinyl pieces made from reclaimed billboards—is a reinterpretation of the Pop Art era.

Lastly, on behalf of the Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center board of trustees, I'm pleased to announce that Elliott & Associates has been chosen as the architectural firm to design a new home for Oklahoma Contemporary's education and exhibition programs. The building will be located in the shadow of downtown Oklahoma City, where an urban renaissance is under way. The new space will include exhibition galleries, classrooms, lecture halls, a black box theater, a ballet studio, and an industrial arts wing. Principal architect Rand Elliott's work is bold, functional, and minimalist, and will complement the vision and mission of this twenty-five-year-old arts center.



In keeping with our *ArtDesk* ideals, I'm proud to say that all of these creators are most comfortable when breaking boundaries. I hope you enjoy the fruits of their labors as much as I do.

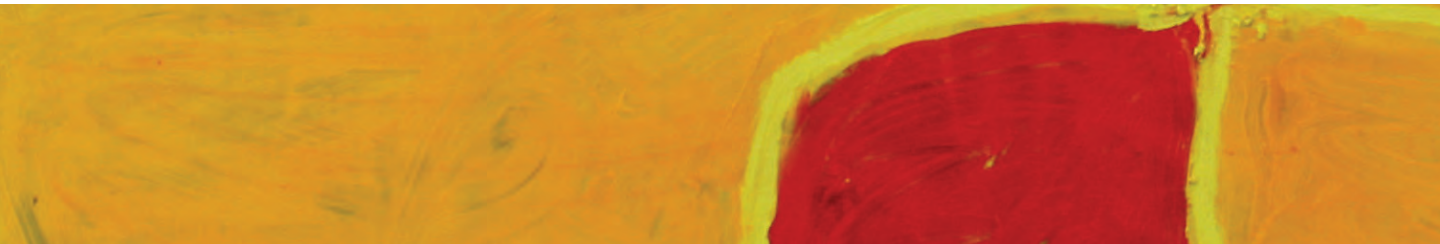
CHRISTIAN KEESEE



MARFA CONTEMPORARY

It Was A Good Day (detail), by Chuck Webster

For exhibits and education, visit marfacontemporary.org





Christa Blackwood

IN THEORY

Christa Blackwood likes to make you think. A resident of Austin, Texas, educated in the classics, film, and art at the University of Oklahoma and New York University, she combines photography, text, and installation in dream-like works that range from landscapes to portraits, sometimes combining the two. Influenced by pop culture and history, a fan of LaToya Ruby Frazier and Carrie Mae Weems, she carefully chooses each theme, never creating anything less than beautiful images while at the same time identifying troubling attitudes in society.

by VALERIE GLADSTONE

A Red Dot **exhibits at Candela Books + Gallery in Richmond, Virginia, September 5 through October 18, 2014. The show moves to Wall Space Gallery in Santa Barbara, California, and exhibits October 28 through December 24, 2014.**





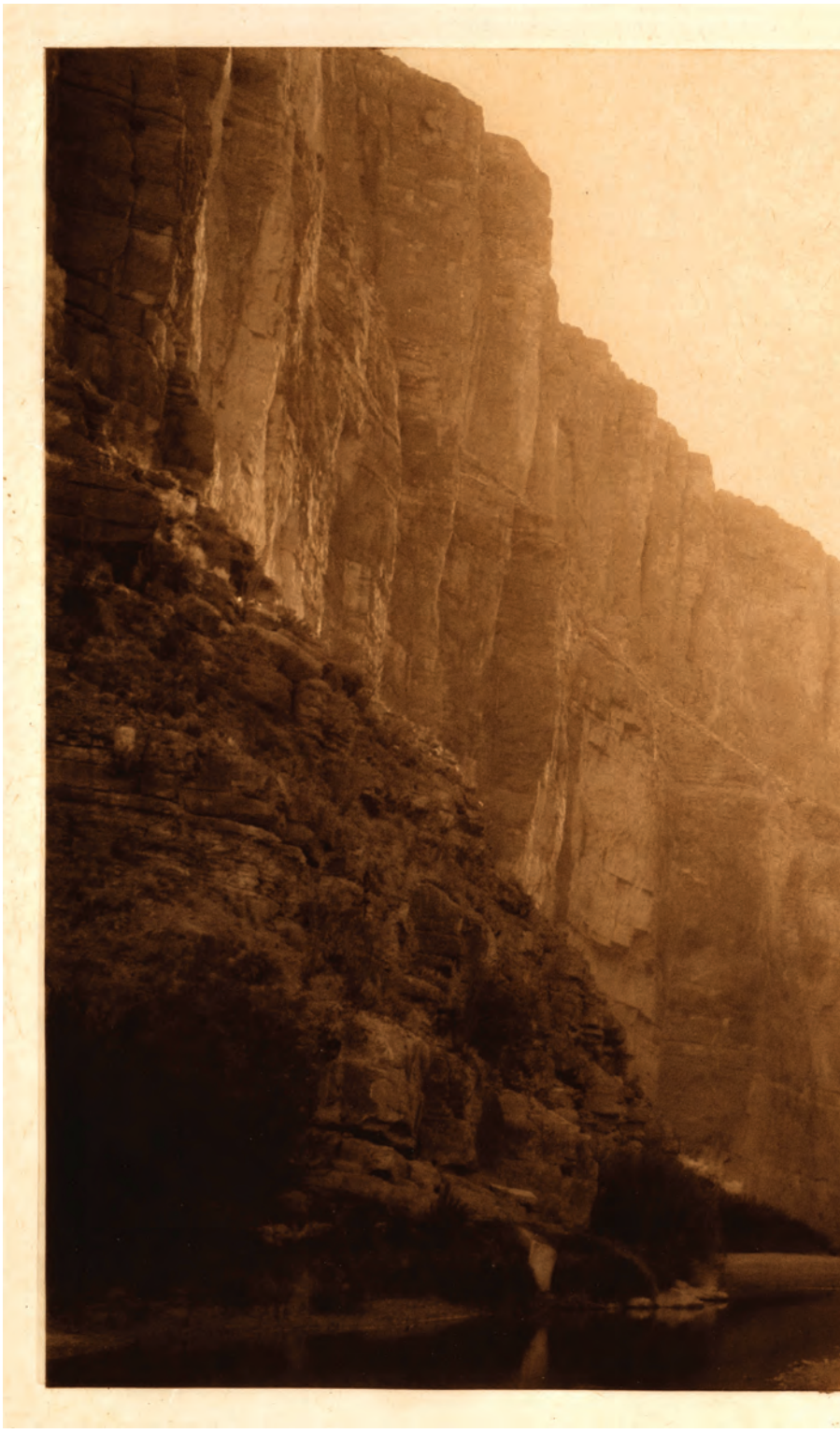
CHRISTA BLACKWOOD, *Solitario* (top) and *Diamante* (bottom)
Tri-monoprint photogravure (2013)

"I'm always idea-driven," she says. "But first, I hope people will be drawn to my work visually."

The widely exhibited *Naked Lady: A Red Dot* perfectly illustrates Blackwood's complex style: grainy, evocative photographs of Southwestern landscapes, each one with a glowing red dot somewhere in its midst. The red dot represents the missing nude female figure, which is so traditional in art, and also the symbol used by galleries to denote a work that has been sold. A photography workshop inspired the series.

"Women have been commodified so frequently and for so long," she says, "that we hardly even notice it anymore. I became particularly aware of it when young female assistants were asked to pose nude. No man would ever be asked." Her empathy suffuses an earlier project, *Pencey Prep* (2011), a series of atmospheric collodion tintypes that were made with her daughter and evoke the discomforts of adolescence as revealed in J. D. Salinger's novel, *The Catcher in the Rye*.

With Blackwood's work, audiences are always treated to personal commentary in the form of enchanting imagery.





CHRISTA BLACKWOOD, *Santa Elena*
Tri-monoprint photogravure (2013)



CHRISTA BLACKWOOD, *Chisos* (top) and *Cholla* (bottom)
Tri-monoprint photogravure (2013)

SUMMER/FALL 2014

THE

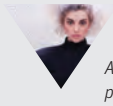
NECESSITIES

WHAT TO WATCH, WHAT TO READ,
AND WHAT'S HAPPENING WHERE.

Follow us @readartdesk for the latest in contemporary arts.

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FILM



IDENTITY CRISIS

The Cherokee Freedmen Chronicles

"IT'S NOT ABOUT THE COLOR," says Theola Cudjoe Jones, a descendant of Seminole freedmen. "It's about the blood that's running through your veins." The freedmen are the freed slaves and their descendants formerly owned by Native American tribes, and their complex story to retain tribal citizenship is told in the new feature documentary *By Blood* (2014), co-directed by investigative journalist Marcos Barbery and filmmaker Sam Russell.

By Blood chronicles the voices of the surviving freedmen, their civil-rights court cases, and the roiling racial complexities of two minorities with generations of intermingled bloodlines and identity. What unfolds are the many sides of an urgent dispute in which racial inequality and government intervention conflicts with the sovereign rights of Native American tribes for self-determination. The film succeeds in documenting this conflict within a larger conversation about race and politics in America today.

As early as the 1980s, the Cherokee Nation made the decision to disenfranchise the freedmen by denying their voting rights in tribal elections, requiring members be listed as "Cherokee by Blood." In 2006, the issue resurrected when the Cherokee Supreme Court ruled in favor of the freedmen, saying they were unconstitutionally removed from the tribe; however, an emergency election amended the constitution and effectively kicked the freedman out a second time.

"We're not kicking them out because of their color," says Jay Daniel, a Cherokee citizen in the film. "We're kicking them out because they don't have Cherokee blood. And that's the way it should be." David Cornsilk, a Cherokee citizen and legal advocate for the freedmen, takes an opposing view: "We are one of the five slave-holding nations, and we have a responsibility to repair that and to do what is right by those people we held as slaves, whether they have our blood or not."

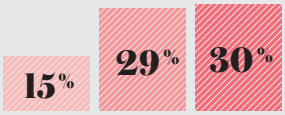
By Blood takes a bold step in unraveling the painful stories that might eventually lead to reconciliation.

BY BLOOD
Directed by Marcos Barbery and Sam Russell
Green Box Arts Festival, July 2014
A still from the film

THE CELLULOID CEILING

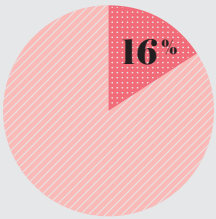
A revealing study of women in on-screen roles and behind-the-scenes employment on the top domestic grossing films of 2013

ON-SCREEN



Women and girls comprised 15% of protagonists, 29% of major characters, and 30% of all speaking characters.

OFF-SCREEN



Overall, women accounted for 16% of all directors, executive producers, producers, writers, cinematographers, and editors. This represents a decrease of two percentage points since 2012 and a decrease of one percentage point from 1998.

The Celluloid Ceiling is the longest-running and most comprehensive study available of women's behind-the-scenes employment in film. This annual study is sponsored and conducted by the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film at San Diego State University. *http://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu*

THE NECESSITIES **MUST-WATCH** LIST

FRANK
Magnolia Pictures (May)

An inexperienced musician unexpectedly joins an experimental rock band led by the charismatic singer Frank and his oversized papier-mâché head.

WHY? > A mysterious, tender, hilarious indie darling of a film.

BELLE
Fox Searchlight (May)

Inspired by a 1779 painting, this historical drama tells the true story of Dido Elizabeth Belle, the illegitimate, mixed-race daughter of a Royal Navy captain who leverages her social standing to end slavery in England.

WHY? > It continues the cinematic conversation about slavery renewed by *12 Years a Slave*.

GET ON UP
Universal Pictures (August)

From the director of *The Help* (2011) comes this musical biopic about the Godfather of Soul, James Brown.

WHY? > Why? Because it's James Brown!

INSTELLAR
Paramount Pictures (November)

This highly anticipated science-fiction epic about the future of human space travel stars Matthew McConaughey, who cryptically says in the trailer, "Our destiny lies above us."

WHY? > Christopher Nolan is one of the most visionary directors working in Hollywood.

THE FRONT MAN

Grad School of Rock

TO BREED OR NOT TO BREED: That is one of the burning questions facing New Jersey rock vocalist Jim and his wife, Christie, in Paul Devlin's latest film, *The Front Man* (2014), premiering (and selling out) at film festivals this year. For Devlin, his fifth feature documentary brings him back full circle to his first film, *Rockin' Brunswick* (1984). Shot on loaned video cameras during summer break while Devlin was still an undergraduate at the University of Michigan, it chronicled the burgeoning 1980s independent music scene in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

Home of Rutgers University, college radio station WRSU, and still-thriving music venues like the Court Tavern, New Brunswick spawned dozens of underground rock bands with a DIY attitude. Among them was the Deal, later called Loaded Poets, led by charismatic singer Jim Wood, Devlin's best friend since childhood. "Rock 'n' roll is an art," says an early-1980s Wood, a fresh-faced front man with a killer permed mullet and black-and-white wingtip shoes. The music produces an "aesthetic response" in the audience which, Wood explains to Devlin's camera, keeps him coming back for more.

But in the same interview, Wood also refers to his art form as "a lost cause." In *The Front Man*, Devlin documents his friend's struggle with the very same cause over the ensuing three decades, as he works to keep his rock 'n' roll dream of fame and fortune alive in the face of adulthood, marriage, and middle-class socio-economic pressures. Through the very personal lens of Jim Wood, we sample the slippery nature of celebrity and shifting definitions of artistic success.

THE FRONT MAN
Directed by Paul Devlin
Film festivals nationwide

FILM
by BRIAN HEARN

SMALL TOWNS BIG FILMS

MARFA FILM FESTIVAL
July 2-6, 2014

In its remote corner of far West Texas, the small town of Marfa has become an unlikely mecca for visual artists, writers, musicians, filmmakers, and culture vultures. Founded in 2007, the Marfa Film Festival has carved out a laid-back, non-competitive event balancing both emerging and established filmmakers along with an eclectic roster of bohemian talent.

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL
August 29-September 1, 2014

For forty years, serious cinephiles have flocked to the historic mountain town of Telluride, Colorado, each Labor Day weekend for an exceptional feast of North American film premieres. The only catch is that no one ever knows what will screen until the week of the festival. That is by design, and it keeps this event near the top for new cinematic discoveries.



RIVER OF FUNDAMENT

Matthew Barney's Magnum Opus

Clocking in at just under six hours, artist Matthew Barney's *River of Fundament* is a multi-part filmed opera loosely adapted from the reviled 1983 Norman Mailer novel, *Ancient Evenings*. As with Barney's previous films, coherent narrative takes a back seat to eye-popping scenes activated by bizarre celebrity cameos, live-performance set pieces, sculptural objects, and searing soundscapes by composer Jonathan Bepler. The film morphs wildly disparate themes from Mailer's twisted take on the *Egyptian Book of the Dead* and the travails of the American automobile industry into an extreme spectacle of death and rebirth played out in New York, Los Angeles, and Detroit.

MUSIC

2° of Annie Clark

The Creative Infield and Aspirations of St. Vincent

ANNIE-B PARSON, choreographer and Guggenheim Fellowship recipient, created dance for St. Vincent's current Digital Witness tour.

Clark recently fronted **NIRVANA** for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

WILLO PERRON, creative director for the *St. Vincent* album art, has worked with numerous artists—**BECK**, **COLDPLAY**, and **FLORENCE + THE MACHINE**—and companies like **NIKE** and **APPLE** to create innovative branding and artistic direction.

HOUSING WORKS, a non-profit in New York City, approached Clark and **DAVID BYRNE** about collaborating on a few songs, but the work grew into an album complete with a full horn section.

The "Digital Witness" music video, directed by **CHINO MOYA**, serves as a colorized update on **FRITZ LANG**'s *Metropolis*, complete with lock-step marching and a dead-eyed leading lady.

Clark's albums each center on an archetype of her creation: St. Vincent, *near-future cult leader;* Love This Giant, *a story of Beauty and the Beast, with David Byrne as the Beauty and Annie as the Beast;* Strange Mercy, *a repressed housewife on white wine and barbiturates;* Actor, *inspired by Disney film scores.*



ART [*ROCK*] STAR

Annie Clark's St. Vincent

ST. VINCENT IS NO ORDINARY INDIE ROCK STAR. The Tulsa-born, Dallas-raised multi-instrumentalist is merging contemporary art with rock, and the result is captivating and jarring. Annie Clark, better known by her moniker, St. Vincent, has created a style of music that embodies rock and avant-garde sensibilities. But St. Vincent's sphere of influence can't be contained within the niche of indie rock: in 2013, Clark received the Smithsonian American Ingenuity Award for Performing Arts.

With the 2014 release of her fourth album, *St. Vincent*, Annie Clark has truly come into her own. Citing the Memphis Design Movement, Nick Cave, and Alejandro Jodorowsky as inspirations, Clark's St. Vincent parallels her muses' reactionary and subversive qualities. Her awareness of the current digital obsession coupled with a need for deeper personal connection drives the album and her performances.

"We are inundated with technology that makes us perpetual spectators," Clark has said. "It's not enough to just experience life, we have to document it and show it to other people in order to validate our existence."

With her newest record, Annie Clark and performance alter ego, St. Vincent, have risen from indie darling to contemporary art force. Clark's experimentation in sound and rhythm is reflected in her performances, an enchanting combination of control and frenzied outbursts of energy, not unlike David Byrne, with whom she has collaborated. St. Vincent concerts, too, are not just a show but rather a forum for creative expression to merge the many facets of her music, herself, and her persona.

ST. VINCENT
www.ilovestvincent.com
photograph by Renata Raksha

In Transit

PEOPLE'S CHOICE

A large-scale collaboration brings art to the nation's mass transit and highway thoroughfares.

Some are calling it the world's largest art show ever mounted.

THIS SUMMER, five important american museums: the Dallas Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the National Gallery of Art are partnering with the Outdoor Advertising Association of America to create an art show behemoth: Art Everywhere US.

Relying on the public, the museums asked America to take to the Internet to vote for their favorites from a list of one hundred American masterworks selected by the museums. The selected art ranged in date and medium and represented an enormous variation of form and content. Fifty of these works, chosen by online popular vote, and curated with the assistance of the American public, will plaster some of the nation's most iconic and artistically inspiring locations.



Maxwell L. Anderson, the Eugene McDermott Director of the Dallas Museum of Art, speaking for the collective museums said, "The works you'll see in Art Everywhere US tell the story of America, express our creativity and reflect who we are—and this is our chance to make them a part of the American landscape, and everybody's life. We hope Art Everywhere US will inspire all of us to learn more about America's artistic treasures, past and present, and discover many more of the great works in our nation's museums."

Beginning August 4, masterpieces—including those by Mark Rothko, Ed Ruscha, Edward Hopper, and Roy Lichtenstein—will appear on digital and static billboards, buses and bus stops, even subway and train platforms. Once the displays are installed, Blippar app users can access augmented reality features for each work via smartphones. Popping up in as many as 50,000 locations nation wide, this "show" seeks to remind Americans of the importance of art and also helps to create new relationships with significant pieces.

IN TRANSIT *by* LAUREN DOW
photograph by ROBERT MAPPLETHORPE



ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH CULTURE

The Vail International Dance Festival

FOR TWO WEEKS EVERY SUMMER, the ski-resort town of Vail, Colorado, becomes the vacation home for the New York City ballet world, when the Vail International Dance Festival—spearheaded by Damian Woetzel, former principal dancer for the New York City Ballet—comes to town. Woetzel's position in the dance world allows him to bring a dazzling mix of the hottest young choreographers to the Rockies for the festival's annual highlight: the evening of NOW Premieres (August 4).

This year's NOW Premieres will feature pieces from Matthew Neenan and his BalletX troupe; Fang-Yi Sheu, the former principal dancer with the Martha Graham company, in collaboration with Indian Kuchipudi dancer Shantala Shivalingappa; choreographer Brian Brooks (see page 38); and the indescribable Lil Buck. A longtime protégé of Woetzel's, Lil Buck purveys a style of dance known as jookin', which suggests what ballet might have been had it been invented by the '70s pop-and-lock dance troupe the Lockers.

The Vail festival also includes performances by the Pennsylvania Ballet, Wendy Whelan, and the Martha Graham Dance Company. "The NOW performance gives choreographers a chance to collaborate in new ways, whether with unfamiliar dancers or new music or ideas," Woetzel says. That eclecticism—Woetzel once staged a piece with Lil Buck jookin' to cellist Yo-Yo Ma—is what makes Vail the summer camp for dancers.

PERFORMANCE
by TOM NAWROCKI

THE

Book Report

From art valuations to Carl Jung, these recent art books are our front-shelf favorites.

THE GLOBAL ART COMPASS: NEW DIRECTIONS IN 21ST-CENTURY ART
Alistair Hicks, Thames & Hudson, $29.95

Hicks, curator for Deutsche Bank, takes us on a world tour of contemporary art, offering lively confessions and insider's counsel along the way.

WHAT IS THE WAY UP? *Naveen Kishore, Sylph Editions, $15*

In this slim but elegant "literary exploration of Anish Kapoor's sculpture *Mountain*," theatrical words add meaning to the "bravura" of the Indian-born British artist, best known to American audiences for *Cloud Gate* (the "bean") at Millennium Park in Chicago.

AMERICAN COOL
Joel Dinerstein and Frank H. Goodyear III, Smithsonian Institution and DelMonico Books, $39

The National Portrait Gallery gets it right in *American Cool* by placing "visual biography at the heart of understanding America." Portraits in this collection include Patti Smith, Billie Holiday, Tom Waits, John Travolta, Susan Sontag, and, of course, James Dean and Steve McQueen.

THE VALUE OF ART
Michael Findlay, Prestel, $19.95

In this newly reissued paperback, Scottish curator Michael Findlay explains with wit and wisdom the social and power structures in today's art market.

JAMES TURRELL: A RETROSPECTIVE
Michael Govan and Christine Y. Kim Los Angeles County Museum of Art and DelMonico Books, $75

James Turrell—the most-talked-about artist of 2013 thanks to a global retrospective kicking off at LACMA and concurrent shows in New York and Houston—examines ideas of space, reality, and light. Turrell, a pilot at sixteen and the son of Quakers, is as original as they come, and *James Turrell: A Retrospective* reflects all of this.



by LOUISA McCUNE-ELMORE



ANIMAL EARTH: THE AMAZING DIVERSITY OF LIVING CREATURES
Ross Piper, Thames & Hudson, $45

Of the 540 color illustrations in this biospecific tome, most could be confused for selections of modern art photography or graphic design, so visually arresting are the creatures here. After all, animals have long been a first muse of artists from every generation, the motif serving also to introduce art to the masses.

THE PEDESTRIANS
Rachel Zucker Wave Books, $18

"Woke up to find the primary markets not so solid and my oldest son knows almost everything." In her sixth book of poetry, Rachel Zucker wields refreshing perspective on the beautiful banality and everyday drama of motherhood and marriage. A Yale University and Iowa Writers' Workshop graduate, Zucker teaches at New York University.

CREATURES' PARADISE
Meiko Nagashima and Hidefusa Sakamoto, Hong Kong University Press, $35

Twenty beautiful chapters, most ordered by taxonomy, give proper credit to the role of animals in museum collections—in this case, the Kyoto National Museum in Japan. The Kano Motonobu masterpiece, *Birds and Flowers of the Four Seasons*, featuring birds and a waterfall, is a particular joy.

ART STUDIO AMERICA: CONTEMPORARY ARTIST SPACES
Edited by Hossein Amirsadeghi, Thames & Hudson, $95

Prepare to be dazzled by the workspaces of America's most gifted artists. This hefty survey shows the milieu in which these creators thrive, including Richard Prince, Kiki Smith, and Alex Katz. Smart essays by Robert Storr, Ben Genocchio, and Mark Godfrey provide context.

FEDERICO FELLINI: PAINTING IN FILM, PAINTING ON FILM
Hava Aldouby, University of Toronto, $29.95

All film is art, even if each frame doesn't reach the promise of its medium. In the case of Federico Fellini, a "deep engagement with the visual arts" and passionate study into Jungian psychology informed the latter half of his film career. Academician Aldouby gives readers a scholarly take on the role of art in this master filmmaker's work.

photography by JOHN JERNIGAN

NOTABLE

Excerpt

"Scott," said my mother, "please let these men take you to the VA."

"I'm not going to a hospital. There's nothing wrong with me." He considered the matter further and added, "It's Christmas!" And there was real dudgeon in his voice. Christmas was sacred to Scott: it meant family and good food and booze and carols and Christ and an overall serenity that was otherwise missing from his life.

"Christmas is canceled this year," said my mother. "Well," said Scott, "Christmas is on as far as I'm concerned." I sighed again, a definitive sigh, a sigh that called for an end to the whole charade. With reticent dignity I approached the older cop and asked where Scott would be taken if not to a hospital. The man replied at length. He said that Scott would be taken to the end of the long gravel driveway leading to the main road, where he'd have to wait for a cab. And yes, the cops would keep Scott company and make sure he got into the cab. In a kindly reminiscent way, the man went on about various contingencies that sometimes arose in this sort of dispute. He took no account of Scott's presence as he spoke, though I could feel Scott's stare on the back of my neck. At one point I turned slightly and Scott managed to lock eyes with me (the cop was still talking) in a way that was, I think, meant to intimidate and yet also appeal to my finer feelings. His eyes were brimming with hatred, with love, with sadness that it had come, at last, to this.

"I bet you're enjoying yourself," he said. "It's one of the worst experiences of my life," I replied. This sounded maudlin and a little craven, but I was mostly in earnest. It was a bad time, all right. But then, too, such a remark was precisely the sort of thing you say if you're posing as the Good Son, the mature one who only wants what's best for his long-suffering mother and so on. Which is to say, I was enjoying myself rather.

"Well, it's almost over," said Scott. "For now."

"You hear that?" I asked the older cop, who closed his eyes and nodded. He was a decent man who found such matters regrettable. The cops took over from there. The younger one followed Scott to his room and stood in the doorway while he packed his things. Now and then the man chuckled a little nervously, and I knew Scott was trying to charm him, to win him over with jokey bravado: "Well, this is a hell of a note! Frankly, I hope those two get coal in their stockings…" Drawers opened and shut with judicious restraint, wire hangers tinkled lightly. Finally Scott emerged with his duffel bag flung over his back; he looked as though he'd decided to find the whole thing amusing, though I could tell he wasn't amused. He dropped his bag in the living room and turned to the cops. "I want you guys to know," he said, "that I find your professionalism commendable. You couldn't have been more courteous and kind, and I want you to know I'll never forget it."

On the simplest level, Scott was being sincere—the policemen were nice blokes. On another level, he meant to contrast their niceness with his family's vicious duplicity (at Christmas no less), suggesting that someday, perhaps, he'd be in a position to repay both kindness and cruelty. On a final, murkier level, he was casting ahead to some future court hearing: No, the defendant was perfectly polite. He seemed genuinely perplexed and saddened by the whole….

"Scott—your presents—" said Marlies, gathering them out from under the tree. When Scott seemed hesitant to accept them, she dropped to her knees and began packing them expertly in his duffel bag. Two things occurred to me: one, that only my mother would dare take such a liberty, and two, that Scott was traveling light under the circumstances (he hadn't packed the rest of his liquor—this for the sake of appearances, no doubt, though I found it ominous).

Finally he stood at the kitchen bar consulting the Yellow Pages for a motel. "That place is good," the younger cop suggested, tapping his finger on a particular listing. "Clean and cheap and kinda in-between here and the city." Scott nodded and phoned for a reservation; then he called a cab and gave the dispatcher patient directions to our remote location. Hanging up, he stood there shaking his head, as if the whole business were simply too bizarre for words.

"Ma, you're not really serious about this," he said. "C'mon. I'm your son, for crying out loud. It's Christmas."

"You brought this on yourself!" said my mother, with her stolid Germanic fondness for platitudes.

"Oh yeah, and life's been so good to me," he said.

I could restrain myself no longer. Sneeringly I pointed out—not for the first time—that it was always life's fault as opposed to Scott's own. He took a step in my direction. The older cop saw me brace myself and grabbed Scott by the arm. The younger cop, a little hesitantly, took the other arm, and Scott went comically limp in their grasp. As they led him toward the door, he leaned back and bugged his eyes at me: "See you soo-oon!" he called, with loony menace, and then he was gone.

THE FIRST ORDER of business was buying a gun. My mother had nothing but an old varmint rifle that looked as if it hadn't been fired since the Alamo, and besides there were no bullets.

After checking the Yellow Pages (still open to the motel listings), we drove to a sporting goods emporium on the interstate, where I explained our needs to a bearded fellow in the gun department. He wore a camouflage jacket and squinted intently with one eye.

"What you need it for?" he asked, when I mentioned that I hadn't fired a gun since childhood and didn't want anything fancy.

"Self-defense," I said. "To shoot, you know—people." "Nuh!" my mother protested. The man nodded and ducked under the counter, coming up with a snub-nose pistol in a chamois cloth. "This here's what you want," he said. "Smith and Wesson . 38, just point and fire."



THE SPLENDID THINGS WE PLANNED: A FAMILY PORTRAIT

Memoir by Blake Bailey, Hardcover, 272 pages, W.W. Norton & Co.

ACCLAIMED BIOGRAPHER Blake Bailey won the 2009 National Book Critics Circle Award for *Cheever: A Life*, and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. Now the Oklahoma native offers his own past for public consumption with his new memoir, *The Splendid Things We Planned*.

Known for spending thousands of hours of intense research on his subjects—he is currently at work on a life of Philip Roth, which he estimates will take eight years to complete—Bailey spares no effort investigating his own story. His tumultuous childhood and battle with alcoholism are captured with the same honest, sharp clarity he applies to his literary subjects.

"You've spent a lifetime constructing a myth about your family, mostly in defense of your own ego, and writing a memoir that is both fair and truthful involves (for me anyway) breaking down that myth and seeing things afresh," he says. "That's not easy."

***The Splendid Things We Planned* chronicles Bailey's formative years in Oklahoma City and gives readers a picture of a life that seems strikingly similar to the author's literary subjects, complete with alcoholics and crashing Porsches. With the integrity his admirers have come to expect, Bailey brilliantly communicates both the conflicts and accomplishments of life.**

As Janet Maslin, Cheever's daughter-in-law, wrote in The New York Times, "The takeaway from this vivid, tender book is that it can be as valuable for a reader to know a biographer as it is for a biographer to know his or her subject."

from THE SPLENDID THINGS WE PLANNED, by BLAKE BAILEY

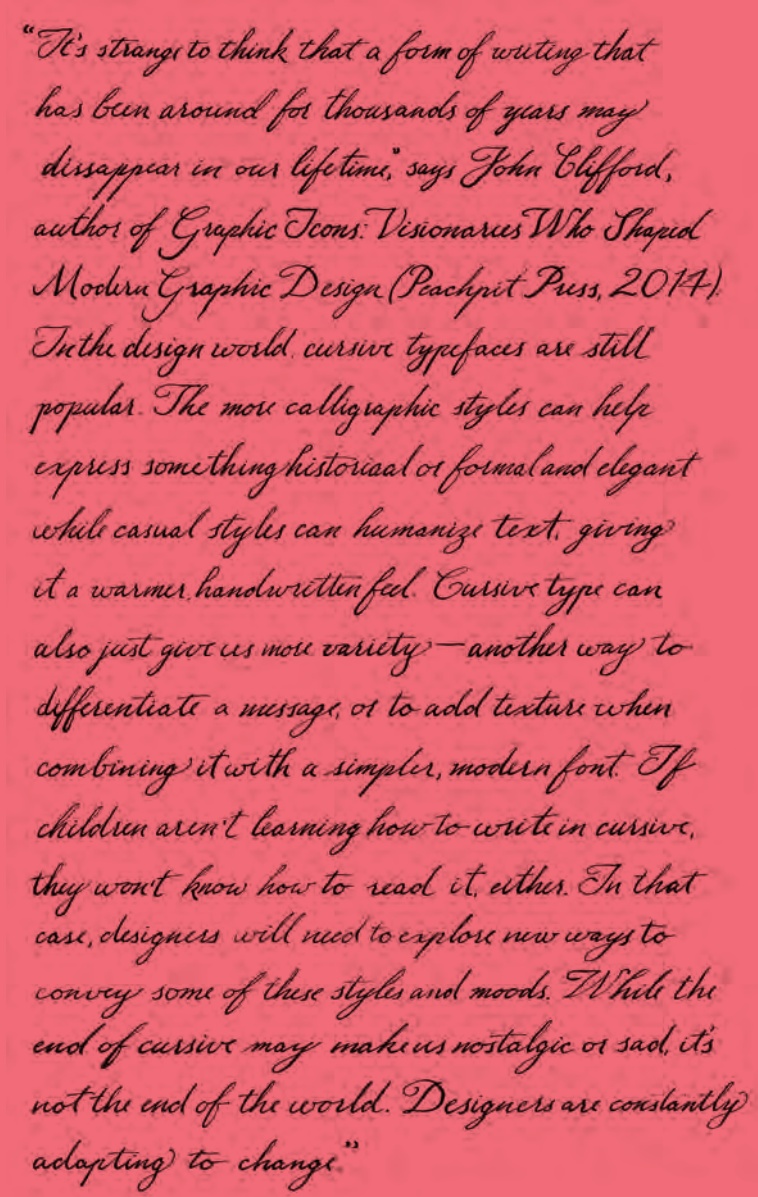
LITERATURE *by* LAUREN DOW

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On cursive writing no longer being taught in America's elementary schools.



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MIMICKING THE HUMAN HAND

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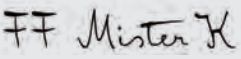
Recent innovations in digital-font formatting have enabled typefaces to expand in complexity and variability, giving script fonts, in particular, a more authentic feel. Today's best fonts have several versions for each letterform, providing alternates that can be placed automatically when a letter appears multiple times in a particular word. You're welcome, Mississippi!

HANDWRITING *by* SPENCE NELSON

NOTEWORTHY SCRIPTS



A retro-style brush script inspired by the hand lettered titling of a 1940's era *Superman* cartoon series. ***–marksimonson.com***



Based on the handwriting of Franz Kafka, the 1,500 glyph character set includes a wealth of ligatures, stylistic alternates, underlines, and even authentic looking scribbles. ***–myfonts.com***



In an effort to mimic genuine hand writing, this robust font uses an open-type architecture of more than 4,000 characters, automatically selecting letter alternates to create optimal pairings as you type. ***–underware.nl***



An energetic monoline script that's more transitional in nature, meaning it's more easily read by those who may be(come) less familiar with traditional cursive. ***–myfonts.com***



Another transitional font, it's based on German typographer Hubert Jocham's own logomark and is a 2013 Type Directors Club winner. ***–hubertjocham.de***

Art House

AT HOME *with*

TIM CROWLEY
MARFA, TEXAS

TIM CROWLEY'S MARFA HOUSE, his primary residence, mirrors its owner's place in the community. Crowley is widely thought to be the architect of the late-'90s renaissance that molded the West Texas enclave into a future art capital for truth seekers and those averse to the touristic flash of Santa Fe. He is, perhaps not surprisingly, also the architect of his 3,000-square-foot contemporary adobe, which features touches of the posh and the unadorned, its polished marble floors setting up a paradox with the grain of the longleaf-pine ceiling.

"I designed the house with a lot of help from my friend Joey Benton," he says. The handsome, but not overdone, one-story structure was completed two years ago and represents a collaboration between Crowley and Benton, a furniture-maker with the Marfa company Silla. Benton contributed steel framing and woodwork in the kitchen, bedroom, and dressing room as well as signature furnishings, including an imposing console that holds its own below a Donald Judd diptych in the open-plan dining room. If Gary Cooper were alive and well and living in Marfa, he would inhabit a space resembling Crowley's.

Our subject, a crusading attorney specializing in plaintiffs litigation, is interwoven into the cultural dialogue of Marfa, including its nonprofit sector. Crowley ticks off a list of current projects that occupy the time not spent at his



LIFE IN AN ADOBE

Where Fate Hangs on the Wall

photography by SUSAN SIMMONS





firm or serving as assistant district attorney for Presidio County, a position he assumed in spring 2013. The former Big Bend Feed Store, now Crowley Theater, he says, "is working on a major upgrade to its existing facility. Also, I'm helping the Reading Room find a permanent home. And I am the VP of Marfa Public Radio."

As for art, "I don't actually consider myself to be a collector," he says modestly. Crowley's home is nonetheless a testament to an investigation into art at the doorsteps of Judd. You won't find Crowley combing international art fairs or shopping at Houston's elite galleries: "At present I am busy with work projects so the main shows I go to, and therefore where I buy, are at the Marfa Book Company gallery and the shows of Chinati visiting artists."

But don't be fooled by his home's focus. Crowley's adobe, where a Fate text work by Jack Pierson reigns in the kitchen, features a nod to top art makers, all of whom have touched down in Marfa. Featuring a range of artists working in figuration, minimalism, text work, and more, the house includes pieces by Jeff Elrod, Nick Terry, Craig Rember, Maryam Amiryani, Valerie Arber, and Mark Flood, the latter, a chameleon-like figure in Houston's underground scene who has now achieved international acclaim and who—like his collector-patron Crowley—is still keeping it real and rooted in Texas.



If Gary Cooper were alive and well and living in Marfa, he would inhabit a space resembling Crowley's.

TIM CROWLEY'S MARFA HOUSE IS EARTH—AND USER—FRIENDLY.

All of the wooden boxes—from trash bins to sock storage—were made from recycled timber from the old pergola in the garden. No paint in the house means no need to ever repaint.

ART HOUSE
by CATHERINE D. ANSPON

Happenings

SUMMER/FALL 2014

One Wet Bough: Contemporary Tintype Portraits

Houston Center for Photography / Houston, TX

PHOTOGRAPHY

To expose the photograph's place in art history, Keliy Anderson-Staley captured thousands of portraits using nineteenth-century tintype cameras and developing techniques.
Through July 6, 2014.
HCPonline.org

Sound Speed Marker

Ballroom Marfa / Marfa, TX

VIDEO

Three video installations by Teresa Hubbard and Alexander Birchler explore film's poignant relationship to place. *Giant* stars as the three-sided façade of the Reata Mansion, built outside of Marfa as a set for the 1956 Warner Bros. epic and left behind to decay in the landscape.
Through July 31, 2014.
BallroomMarfa.org



Now / June 14, 2014-March 8, 2015

ART EXPANDED 1958-78

WALKER ART CENTER
Minneapolis, MN



Take a trip to the "expanded arts" scene of the 1960s and '70s with this happening (literally!) show of artworks, films, and ephemera drawn from the Walker's collection. This comprehensive exhibition charts how experimental and avant-garde artists profoundly influenced and challenged traditional media and conceptions of art.

WalkerArt.org

VALOCHE/A FLUX TRAVEL AID, 1975: Wood, paper, objects. By George Brecht (American, 1926-2008)

Trenton Doyle Hancock: Skin & Bones, 20 Years of Drawing

Contemporary Arts Museum Houston / Houston, TX

WORKS ON PAPER

Proof that the cartoon-colorful figures and landscapes of this popular artist's paintings are born in the black-and-white medium of drawing. This show features more than seventy works on paper and is the first in-depth look at his work.
Through Aug. 3, 2014.
CAMH.org

Art 365

Hardesty Arts Center / Tulsa, OK

EMERGING

The Oklahoma Visual Arts Coalition gives five Oklahoma artists the opportunity to display fresh, inventive work in Oklahoma City and Tulsa—and the rest of us a chance to catch the state's rising art stars.
Through Aug. 9, 2014.
AHCT.org

Brains, Brains, and Braaaains

Dallas Museum of Art / Dallas, TX

ART CAMP

Teens create their own horror at this frightening one-week camp exploring the macabre of art and science. Participants *zombify* art characters and work with special effects artists and scientists to debunk zombie myth. The camp even includes a large-scale photoshoot with each camper in costume.
Aug. 4–8, 2014.
DallasMuseumofArt.org

Great Rivers Biennial 2014
Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis / St. Louis, MO

EXHIBITION

For the sixth exhibition of this biennial, three St. Louis–based artists—Brandon Anschultz, Carlie Trosclair, and Cayce Zavaglia—were chosen by a distinguished jury to exhibit dynamic and innovative new work. Each embodies different styles and concepts, but all embrace a contemporary aesthetic. Through Aug. 10, 2014. *CAMSTL.org*

Olaf Breuning: Clouds
Central Park, Doris C. Freedman Plaza / New York, NY

OUTDOOR

Charmingly rendered clouds of brushed aluminum rising thirty-five feet on steel beams—the vision of Swiss-born artist Olaf Breuning—encourage park visitors of all ages to embrace a sense of wonder. Through Aug. 24, 2014. *CentralParkNYC.org*

Christian Marclay: The Clock
Walker Art Center / Minneapolis, MN

FILM INSTALLATION

Punctuality is imperative in this twenty-four-hour, real-time film montage. Marclay's masterpiece compiles timely excerpts from popular and obscure films, taking viewers through time and celluloid space—and creating a new-media timepiece that turns us into captive clock-watchers. June 14–Aug. 24, 2014. *WalkerArt.org*

Now / **Through December 7, 2014**

EARLY AMERICAN GUITARS: THE INSTRUMENTS OF C. F. MARTIN

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART
New York, NY



In a show that will strike a chord with guitar enthusiasts, the Met offers thirty-five examples of acoustic stringed instruments—including Eric Clapton's—made by the Pennsylvania-based company C. F. Martin, founded in 1833 by German immigrant Christian Frederick Martin.

Christian Frederick Martin (1796-1873). *Made of spruce, maple, ebony, ivory, and mother-of-pearl. Photograph by John Sterling Ruth*

Vincent Valdez
Artpace / San Antonio, TX

EXHIBITION

Urban experiences and issues are Valdez's focus, and they come alive with outstanding realism in emotionally charged pencil renderings of celebrities and the people in his life.
Through Aug. 31, 2014.
Artpace.org

Chicago in L.A.: Judy Chicago's Early Work 1963-74
Brooklyn Museum / New York, NY

EXHIBITION

Seamlessly blending minimalism and glossy, bold color choices, the early work of this iconic feminist presents a lively critique of California's rapid industrialization. Chicago's stint in L.A. fostered a brilliant exploration of innovative techniques, including paintings and sculptures created with auto-body paint.
Through Sept. 28, 2014.
BrooklynMuseum.org

Unbound: Contemporary Art After Frida Kahlo
Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago / Chicago, IL

EXHIBITION

More than six decades ago, Kahlo boldly presented issues of gender, identity, and the absent or traumatized body. Following her lead, this exhibition features two works by Kahlo, plus works by her kindred spirits and artistic heirs, Ana Mendieta among them.
Through Oct. 5, 2014.
MCAChicago.org

Happenings

SUMMER/FALL 2014

Nicole Miller: Believing Is Seeing

Los Angeles County Museum of Art / Los Angeles, CA

VIDEO

Video portraits of select residents along the LACMA9 route tell, in Miller's words, "stories that residents feel deserve to be told" about their lives and communities. Using oral histories as her lens, Miller's project creates intimate portraits.
Through Oct. 19, 2014.
LACMA.org



From the Village to Vogue: The Modernist Jewelry of Art Smith

Dallas Museum of Art / Dallas, TX

EXHIBITION

Artistry and style, the conceptual and the physical, collide in the jewelry of Art Smith, whose sketches, tools, and model photographs are displayed alongside twenty-four of his exquisite pieces in gold and silver. Admission is free.
June 15 – Dec. 7, 2014.
DallasMuseumofArt.org



In the Company of Cats and Dogs

Blanton Museum / Austin, TX

EXHIBITION

Works spanning several centuries and genres explore the relationship between our pets and us—a bond that has inspired artists from Albrecht Dürer to William Wegman. Animal lovers will delight at the variety of specimens on offer.
June 22 – Sept. 21, 2014.
BlantonMuseum.org

Hans Op de Beeck: Staging Silence (2)

Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland / Cleveland, OH

FILM

With this black-and-white film installation, the Belgian artist blends surrealism and realism to show the product and the process of creating miniature dioramas — and toys with perceptions of reality and wonder. The film is a captivating form of creation: builders construct everything from barren forests to skylines.
June 27 – Sept. 7, 2014.
MOCACleveland.org

FLAME & ANVIL: JEWELRY-MAKING with Shawn Meyers

GREEN BOX ARTS FESTIVAL
Green Mountain Falls, Colorado / *July 4-11*

AS AN ARTIST, WHY JEWELRY?

It's a very personal art. In this media-driven culture, we are besieged by talking heads and "yakking." I believe that the most true and profound experiences of being human are unspeakable, and by that I mean there is a lot of authentic experience that cannot be put into words. Art can transcend this unspoken experience, and wearable art—jewelry—can "speak" more deeply than words. Practically, the smaller scale of this work makes it easier to explore and experiment with concept and material. It is a lot easier to pack, ship, and install jewelry than large-scale sculpture. That engenders self-reliance, and I like that.

Ms. Meyers is an Oklahoma City-based artist. Check www.greenboxarts.org for class times.



Jeff Koons: A Retrospective

Whitney Museum of American Art / New York, NY

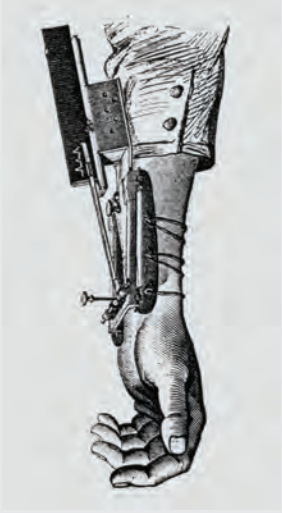
EXHIBITION

The artist's inaugural retrospective at the Whitney will be his first major museum exhibition in New York. Comprising more than a hundred objects dating from 1979 to the present, the show presents a comprehensive and chronological catalogue of Koons's prominent and provocative career.
June 27 – Oct. 19, 2014.
Whitney.org



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEDIUM TO WORK WITH?

With regard to jewelry, I favor silver. I am attracted to the understated color; it's the color of the moon or water. Hand-worked silver has a "live" surface that reflects the light in a stunning yet subtle way, a "wink across the room," to quote Gary Trudeau. The techniques I teach in the Green Box workshops have been unchanged for thousands of years. There is a gratifying directness in weaving and forging that translates a raw material into tangible grace and beauty. The techniques are at opposite extremes, one quiet, meditative, Zen-like, the other loud and dynamic, a nice contrast. And, simply put, I love the tools, the flame, the hammer, and the anvil.



Dario Robleto: The Boundary of Life is Quietly Crossed

The Menil Collection / Houston, TX

INSTALLATION

Sculptor Dario Robleto's site-specific installation (complete with a series of public talks by the artist) gets to the heart of love and loss by examining the history of the human heartbeat through art and science, understanding what it truly means to be human.
Aug. 16 – Nov. 30, 2014.
Menil.org



The Plains Indians: Artists of Earth & Sky

Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art / Kansas City, MO

CULTURE

One hundred and forty masterworks spanning two thousand years, two continents, and more than thirteen different nations make up this exhibition. Vibrant, intricate, and ephemeral forms of media range from painting and sculpture to costume, including beaded adaptations of designer shoes.
Sept. 19, 2014 – Jan. 11, 2015.
Nelson-Atkins.org

Kansas City Dance in the Park

Roanoke Park / Kansas City, KS

PERFORMANCE

Bring your dancing shoes: City in Motion's annual dance concert will definitely inspire you to get moving.
Sept. 6, 2014, 6.30 PM
facebook.com/danceinthepark

@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz

Alcatraz Island / Near San Francisco, CA

EXHIBITION

Organized by the FOR-SITE Foundation, this installation by multimedia Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei offers a new perspective on an iconic venue, exploring the public and previously restricted areas of Alcatraz to challenge issues of individual and creative freedoms.
Sept. 27, 2014 – Apr. 26, 2015.
For-Site.org



Summoning Ghosts: The Art of Hung Liu

Kemper Museum Kansas City, MO

RETROSPECTIVE

Born in China one year before the 1949 creation of the People's Republic, Hung Liu is now based in California. This survey of her career summons ghosts of the Cultural Revolution, exploring the dynamics of history and memory.
Oct. 14, 2014 – Jan. 11, 2015.
KemperArt.org

LONG & WINDING

From the Holy Land to T-Town

by KEN BUSBY

TWISTS & TURNS features two Israelis, Zemer Peled and Aleksandra "Sasha" Stoyanov, who specialize in the detailed work of ceramics and fiber. Twisting and turning are techniques the artists use, a metaphor for the experiences of each woman. The exhibition is sponsored by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation of Tulsa.

Peled, a recent master's graduate of the Royal College of Art in London, was born and raised on a kibbutz in northern Israel. Her recent work is an interpretation of nature, using hundreds of ceramic shards per piece. Her patterns are "nostalgic for, and reminiscent of, landscapes…both real and imagined," and the forms she creates present her vision of these "shattered, dense landscapes." Her evolving, figure-like creatures are "hybrid visions of land, physical matter, and her intuitive process-led approach to making."

Process is also extremely important for Ukrainian-born Stoyanov, whose work was included in the permanent collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2012. From carding and dyeing the thread to working the loom, she uses rich materials such as linen and silk and intricate methods to give rise to her vision. "When I keep threads in my hands," says Stoyanov, who immigrated to Israel in 1990, "I feel that they are the ground and the grass and that there is life in them. The tactile sense of the thread is the first appeal for me to begin a new work."

TWIST & TURNS
Sept. 5 – Oct. 26, 2014
at 108 Contemporary in Tulsa, Oklahoma
108Contemporary.org



ZEMER PELED, *Large peony and peeping Tom (detail)*
Ceramic shards, clay, metal, wood (2014)

YOU KNOW IT'S ART WHEN
THE CHECK CLEARS

Andy Warhol

AT OKLAHOMA CONTEMPORARY

ON VINYL

by MICHAEL DUTY

SITTING IN HIS STUDIO in the Design District of Dallas, once a neighborhood of warehouses that has been transformed, or evolved, into galleries and designer showrooms, artist Jason Willaford is talking about his career, his past work, and his current projects. He is particularly focused on the completion of a new piece that will be part of his first solo exhibition, *Vinyl Exposed*, at Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center in Oklahoma City.

Recently he has been exploring new media and new techniques: quilted assemblages fashioned from bits and pieces of vinyl once used for billboards. He is literally sitting on top of his new works, which are presently scattered about and stacked on the floor of the studio, still in their incarnation as billboards. This new project is labor-intensive and physically challenging: each vinyl sheet can weigh up to 150 pounds and is cut into various shapes that are then sewn together and quilted.

The process of quilting was one element that attracted the attention of Lilia Kudelia, adjunct curator for Dallas Contemporary, who selected Willaford's *Acceleration* for a recent exhibition. "I was fascinated with Jason's incredible ability to concentrate on mastering the skill of quilt-making, which is such an 'obsolete' craft in our technologized world," says Kudelia. "In a way, Jason's technique is a gesture that subverts widespread ideas about artists who are dealing with technology as the only ones capable to effectively interact with data."

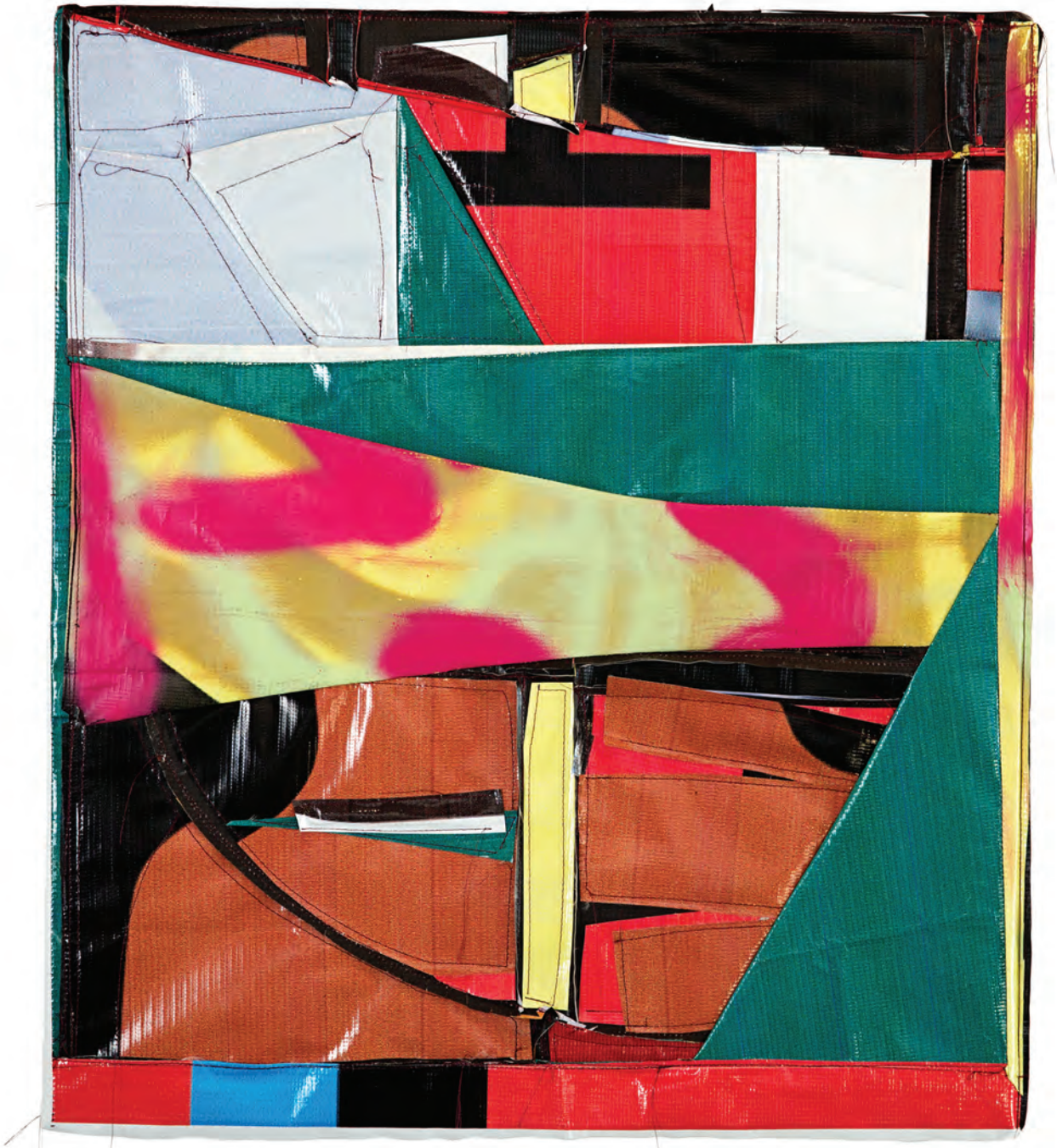
Adaptation to new methods and new ideas has been a hallmark of Willaford's career. "I am very interested in the process of evolution," he says. Intellectually, he is curious about how information is transmitted and processed in an increasingly electronic age. The sort of information transmitted by the ubiquitous billboards is being converted into digital bits that bombard passersby with a speed and volume that can be hard to process. As Willaford says, "Today and more so in the future, if information cannot be packaged to fit on a screen within eighteen inches of someone's eyesight, it is likely to be ignored." Even in such a small format, information comes at us so quickly that we are in a constant state of information overload, hence the name of his current series, Info-Nation Over/Load.

Willaford's work also reflects physical evolution. The vinyl that was once used to transmit information about such diverse topics as grocery stores, diamond jewelry, and even an adult website is literally transformed into new artworks. Importantly, those works retain vestiges of the original message, and we can actually see the evolution: a billboard about a jeweler becomes a statement about the cruel reality of the diamond trade.

photography by SHEVAUN WILLIAMS

JASON WILLAFORD in his Dallas studio with *Eves Gift* (2014)





JASON WILLAFORD, *Atom Ant*
Vinyl, nylon, wood (2013)



JASON WILLAFORD, *The Old King*
Vinyl, nylon, wood (2013)



JASON WILLAFORD with ADRIAN ZUNIGA holding *Almost Larb*
Vinyl, nylon, wood (2014)


BERLIN







JASON WILLAFORD, *HA* (top) and *clamp down* (bottom)
Nylon thread, polyester batting, spray paint (2013)

Willaford is a native of Tampa, Florida, and graduated from Florida State University. Twenty years ago, he married Ree ("my soul mate"), with whom he has a daughter, Camille, now seventeen. Ree and Jason met in Los Angeles, and after owning a coffee-shop gallery in Ybor City, Florida, and a juice bar in Silver City, New Mexico, they moved to Marfa, Texas, for six years, where they opened Galleri Urbane (which also has a Dallas location, managed by Ree).

Willaford looks at his experience in remote New Mexico as a chance to evolve without being overly influenced by other artists. His Marfa years were an inspiration, "surreal" period, he says, "like living in the Old West or a spaghetti western with modern conveniences."

Now, having adjusted to the fast pace of city life after more than fifteen years in small towns, Willaford—who regularly escapes the concrete jungle with hunting trips alongside his Boykin spaniel, Finn—is able to channel his observations about consumerist society (in which Dallas reigns supreme) onto his sewn vinyl quilts. The work is commentary in equal parts on consumption and journey.

"Beginning a new project," says Willaford, "is like setting out on a drive from New York to California—you have an idea of where you are going, but you don't know every road that you'll take to get there."

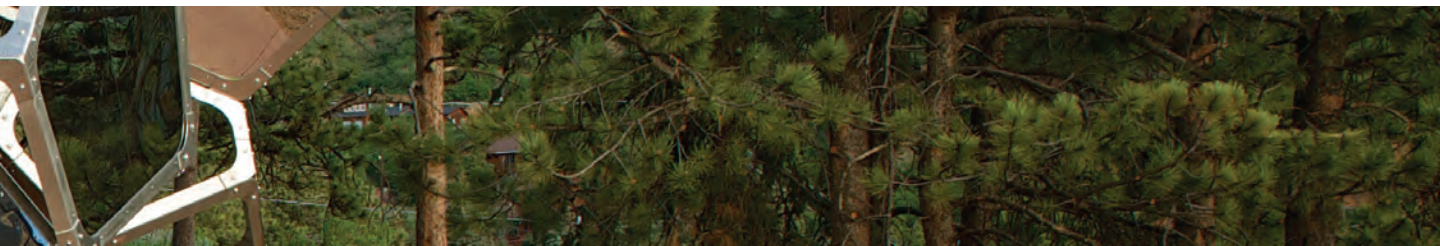
***Vinyl Exposed* exhibits at Oklahoma Contemporary from May 27, 2014 to August 22, 2014.**





green
box
arts

Cloud City, by Tomás Saraceno
For the 2014 festival events, visit www.greenboxarts.org



UP IN THE AIR *with* BRIAN BROOKS



interview by LARRY KEIGWIN
photography by ERIN BAIANO

Brian Brooks is suddenly the busiest man in the dance world, with his Moving Company and his collaborations with some of the world's leading choreographers. Sitting down with editor-at-large Larry Keigwin, Brooks shares notes on his work schedule, how to inspire dancers, staying in shape, and what he hopes life will look like in five years.





Brian Brooks is a 2013 recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and a Jerome Robbins New Essential Work grant. He is currently at work on commissions for the Juilliard School and the Vail International Dance Festival.

LARRY KEIGWIN What rehearsal are you coming from?

BRIAN BROOKS I was rehearsing with my company at Dance Art New York. I was awarded an artist residency this year from the Joyce Theater Foundation—it's really awesome. My first piece I'm making with six dancers, trying to scale down a little bit.

LK Are you dancing in it?

BB I am not in this one. I've been making so much work that it's been a challenge. This year I made seven pieces between commissions and company, so I didn't put myself in my company piece because I didn't have time to plié.

LK Smart. What were the commissions?

BB Well, the most recent, A *Midsummer Night's Dream*, was Julie Taymor's show. We did an Off Broadway production, and I choreographed that, which was a thrill. It ran for a few months and then we made it into a film, so it should broadcast at some point. It has that really large-scale side, that visual side of her work, but it is also a very intimate space, and the way it was designed felt very handheld and simple.

LK Were there a lot of puppets and props?

BB No puppets, but lots of props. It was basically silk and bamboo sticks. I had twenty young dancers age seven to seventeen, and they came out with these twelve-foot bamboo sticks on a big, blank stage, and I choreographed this moving bamboo forest around the actors. So it was very kinesthetic. I also just made my third big commission, a new work at Juilliard called *Torrent*. And I made a piece for Brooklyn Academy of Music's (BAM) Next Wave festival, *Run Don't Run*. That was my company work.

LK Describe your schedule. Do you know what you're going to do tomorrow off the top of your head?

BB I'll get up; I'll have breakfast; do probably thirty to forty-five minutes of email. This year I've been getting up at usually between 7:30 and 8 a.m., which seems really late because I spent several years teaching. For ten years I got up at 6 a.m. Right now, I'm not teaching regularly, so I'm shifting out of having to commute down to Rutgers or Princeton in the morning to teach. I sleep in sometimes till 8 a.m., and it feels so luxurious. I'll go to the gym for an hour, come back, have more food and a protein shake, and then head straight to rehearsal. I think tomorrow we work 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The dancers take class usually from 10 a.m. to noon and then go to the studio. We do four hours a day, usually Monday through Friday. Then I have two meetings afterward. This month, we're doing one-on-ones, so I meet with all the dancers at different times. Do you do this? It's important. I have to check in with each of them just to make sure we're all on the same page. And the second meeting might be over dinner.

LK That's nice. And then do you go home? Where do you live now?

BB I live in Hell's Kitchen, in a studio on West Fifty-fourth Street. I moved there five years ago. It's a small studio. I keep a very minimal lifestyle. I use a nice dining table that doubles as my desk. I have to be very efficient with how I use a very small space. It forces me to be more organized and clean.

LK Is the company six dancers right now?

BB It's always between six and eight. I went up to eight last year for the first time, and some people left after the BAM project, so I'm starting my year with making a piece for six. I probably will be adding two more dancers later in the year.

LK Do you have a board of directors?

BB I've developed a board of advisers, the first step toward a board of directors. I resisted as much as I could because the company infrastructure isn't built. I still manage a lot, and the last couple of years I've succeeded with hiring people on a part-time basis, where they're doing bookkeeping, or they're doing all the tickets for a show, something that's manageable and isn't going to stress anyone out. As far as sustaining and building the company so that I can work—and my dancers can work—I feel like I can't do anymore than I've done.

LK We were students at the American Dance Festival one summer in 1992. I sensed that you already had inklings to have a dance company.

BB Oh, that's so funny you knew that! I did, yeah. I started choreographing in high school before I started training, so when I went to ADF I had just started to train in dance that year. I started taking class not even a full year before that and then went to ADF, and it was mind-blowing for me. Shortly after, I moved to New York for a dance job.

LK That's amazing. So you've been choreographing for twenty years-ish?

BB Really, my company's first tour was in 2002, so it's just been like eleven or twelve years, as far as other people have supported it and presented it.

LK Is it safe to say the Pink Show is what put your career on the map?

BB That was it, in 2002. *Dance-o-Matic* is the name, but everyone calls it the Pink Show. The show was all pink. It was a big, pink square floor, covered with pink vinyl, surrounded with fluorescent tube lighting. Spatially, I was playing with a grid, really simple, utilitarian. It was all in unison, and everything was uniform and really dry. Visually, it was very military-style choreography, but everything was pink. Pink feathers, pink balloons, so it was kind of the extreme contrast that became slightly funny.

LK How old were you when you started dancing?

BB I started choreographing at age fourteen before I began my dance training, which began in Boston at age seventeen. I had done visual arts all through my childhood and in high school had a few friends who were dancers. We formed a student-run dance group at our high school and began choreographing and presenting performances.

LK Do you still take dance class?

BB I do when I can. I love to stay in ballet, and I think I visit the two extremes of training when I take dance. I find it quite calming to take ballet. On the other side, I'll go take contemporary classes and hip-hop classes with people I haven't taken with before. I love to try out something that I think I probably can't achieve.

LK Sounds like me. And how else do you stay in shape?

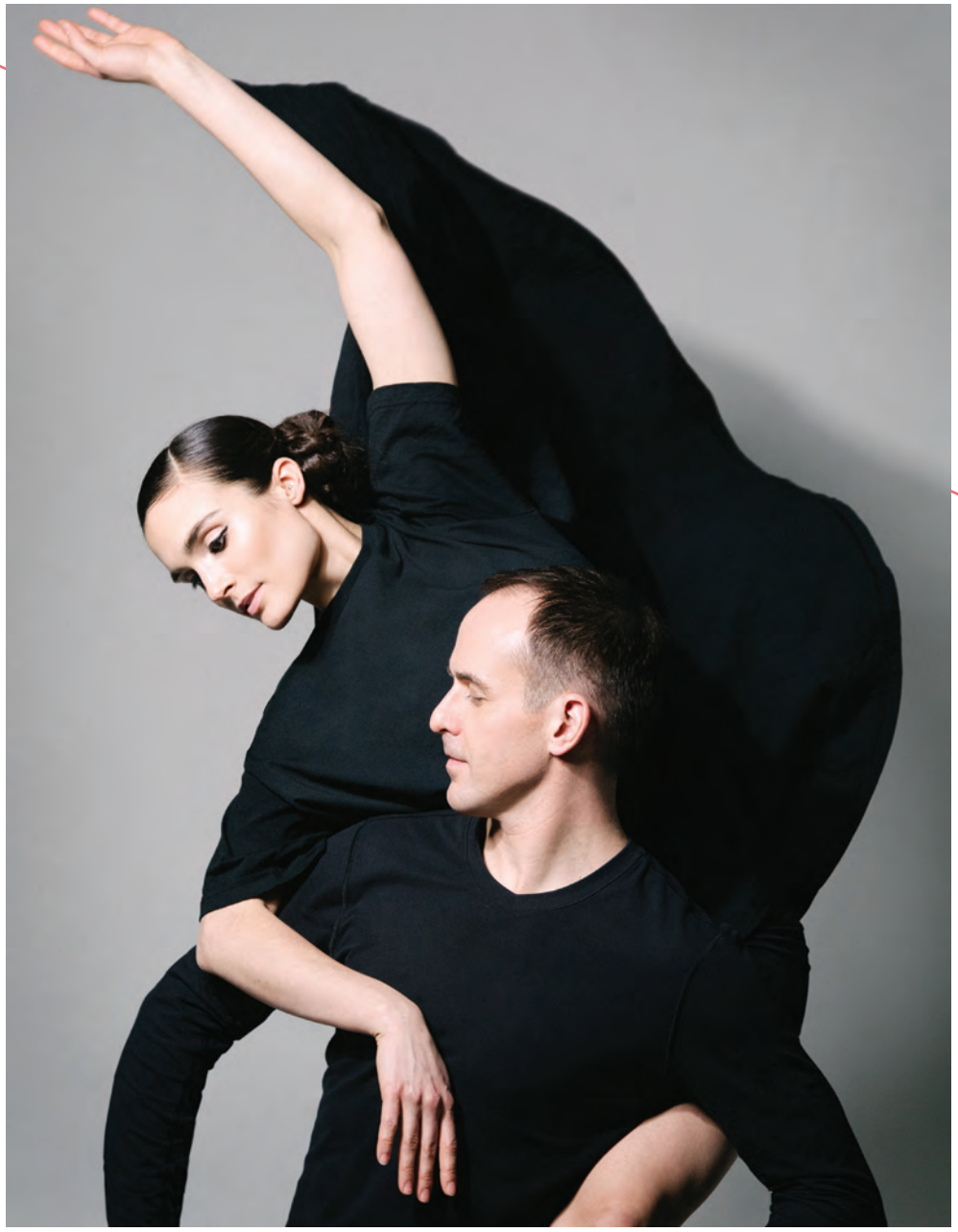
BB I work out at the gym. I'm a runner. I don't run as much as I used to because my dance schedule is much heavier these days, but I do love running and I've competed in a lot of races.

LK Are you conscious of how you eat?

BB Oh my gosh, yes, and I'm terrible at it. My trainer says I eat too many carbs. I love pasta.

LK Speaking of carbs, I think one of the signatures of your work, correct me if I'm wrong, is endurance. Is that true?

BB (laughing) I love the segue. Definitely. Physical endurance can also evoke emotional endurance or mental endurance. And I think about physical activity—much like actually when I run, if I run, it's a durational exercise. For me, it's about meditative and durational activities that we do in our life and the kinds of things we experience





over a period of time, like thirty or forty minutes, and how our train of thought shifts during that time and how our physiology shifts during that time, too. I feel like it's a really valuable human experience that I try to put into the work, with an idea about duration and how we endure situations over time.

LK How do you describe your work?

BB That's a good question. The idea of investigation into physics is interesting to me. It's not as boring as it sounds. But I love real action and falling. I like to make dances that I consider to be demonstrations of force like fall, run, push, hit. You know, seemingly simple forces, but if they're refined enough and clear enough in the piece I find them exhilarating. So there's a bit of an infusion for me sometimes from sports events and gymnastics—this kind of physicality that has a resting quality when you see it.

I also like space. Space is very important to me. Space between dancers becomes a frequent interest of mine and the space surrounding the dance, so I'll make a lot of visual designs for my work. That's become a kind of signature for me, too—the visual environment and the constraints around the performance space.

LK What project or performance are you most looking forward to in 2014?

BB Oh, there's so many. I can't choose! I am excited for my company work. We're creating three short new works this year, and then they'll go on tour. I'm also making my third commission with Vail International Dance Festival in Colorado, and I'll be creating a new work for several dancers from New York City Ballet in August 2014. I'll also be touring this piece with Wendy Whelan. My piece "First Fall" is in her *Restless Creature* concert, and it will also be performed this summer at the Vail festival. So the same week in August I'll premiere a new work, and then Wendy's concert will be performed. Her tour, I believe, will be going to Oklahoma next season. I love the project and I love her.

LK Where do you see yourself in five years? Very Barbara Walters.

BB I love that! I want to be still living in New York, still touring, still creating new dance. Hopefully I'll be working with some, if not all, the dancers I'm working with now. I adore this group. I would like—and I'm working toward—a stronger infrastructure and a bigger budget in my company. We're in the middle of a five-year plan, dramatically. We're right in the middle of it, like two and a half years, changing the infrastructure and the budget so that my dancers work on salary, and I have a small but efficient staff.

LK When you started dancing, did you feel that there was ever a stigma to being a male dancer?

BB You mean like when I was younger? Yeah, sure, sure. I had some fear of asserting myself as a male dancer. I remember there were boys in junior high and high school—friends of mine who were taking ballet classes—and it was a rare thing, and I know that they got trouble for it. They were made fun of in school. So I had a little bit of fear for being called out for expressing that side of myself. But I also loved it so much that those feelings quickly faded away. The work was so meaningful to me that when I began training and dancing and choreographing, all of that fear really went away because it's too fun. I'm very proud to be a dancer.

Larry Keigwin is founder of Keigwin + Company, a New York–based contemporary dance group currently celebrating its tenth anniversary. Keigwin is also the choreographer of If/Then, *a Broadway musical which opened at the Richard Rodgers Theater in March 2014.*

Brooks was photographed with dancer and choreographer Haylee Nichele. Born and raised in Port Alberni, British Columbia, she now lives in New York.





CONNIE SEABOURN and her students at Harding Fine Arts Academy
photography by SHEVAUN WILLIAMS

THEY ART

WHERE STUDENTS THRIVE WITH FIRST-CLASS ARTS EDUCATION

RECENTLY, IN THE HALLWAYS of Harding Fine Arts Academy in Oklahoma City, you could view a display of student-drawn political cartoons about American history. An anime FDR explains the New Deal. Daytime drama queens dish on the Zimmermann Note, a World War I diplomatic episode. The work is creative and knowledgeable.

It's also an example of arts integration. A charter school offering an alternative to the academically low-performing Oklahoma City school district, Harding Fine Arts helps students, through art, to connect emotionally with course material, explains principal Dr. Sherry Rowan, who will retire later this year. To her it's really quite simple: "The arts are a really important learning tool." In Oklahoma and Texas, states known more for prairie landscapes and grazing cattle than urban blight, art educators are helping young people reach their full creative potential, in and out of the classroom.

Harding Fine Arts offers eighty-five individual courses ranging from guitar to stagecraft and features one of the nation's few high-school martial-arts courses. The school also has a ceramics and pottery partnership with Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center. Using Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, teachers can reach students who might not fit neatly into a traditional school's lecture-and-test structure, says history teacher Kathy Crismyre, who organized the political-cartoon exercise. "You have to engage students if you want them to perform. The twenty-first-century student isn't going to sit and have a bunch of facts crammed down their throat."

At Say Sí, a year-round, long-term nonprofit multidisciplinary arts program in San Antonio, Texas, students go beyond learning mere artistic skill. "If you learned to play an instrument, it is really important," says artistic and executive director Jon Hinojosa. "But if you learned to compose music, that is more profoundly important." Since 1994, Say Sí has helped students develop artistic and social skills in preparation for college and professional careers. About 70 percent of students come from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

The school occupies a 26,000-square-foot warehouse in the heart of the San Antonio arts district, a two-phase, $5.5 million project completed in December 2013. Students work in many disciplines using industry-standard equipment; the Media Arts Studio, for instance, produces professional-quality films which have won awards at prestigious film festivals. "We don't dumb down the process," Hinojosa says.

That approach is winning nationwide acclaim. Say Sí was recently cited by the Wallace Foundation, a

by BRENDAN HOOVER
illustrations by CAROLYN SEWELL











New York–based national philanthropic organization, as a model of success for after-school arts programs.

Meanwhile, Creative Kids, a nonprofit community-based art agency in El Paso, Texas, got an A from Michelle Obama. In November, the First Lady presented it with the 2013 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award for its Project AIM (Arts in Motion), a visual-arts program benefiting pediatric cancer patients. Through various programs, Creative Kids also teaches art to youth with special needs, to at-risk youth residing in public housing, and to children whose parents are migrant farmers.

"We've used art in all of these environments and have been successful with kids because we're creating a bridge for them to communicate," says creative director Stephen Ingle, who founded Creative Kids with his wife, Andrea Gates-Ingle. The couple discovered art therapy fifteen years ago when Gates-Ingle, who was teaching special education at a local school, invited her husband, then an art student at the University of Texas–El Paso, to give an art lesson to her class. "We saw a huge transformation in my students, just with a simple art project," Gates-Ingle recalls.

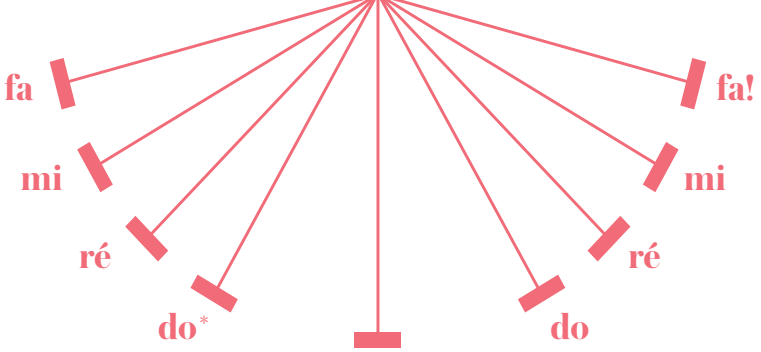
The Tulsa Girls Art School, located in the historic Kendall-Whittier district in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is an after-school program that empowers underserved girls through the arts. In its seventh year, the program boasts forty-two students—ranging from third grade to high school—who attend poorer public schools on Tulsa's north and west side. The girls attend for free, and the school encourages them to create and sell their art, instilling an entrepreneurial spirit in the young women.

This spring, Adalid Ciriaco, an eighteen-year-old high-school senior who moved with her family from Mexico to Tulsa twelve years ago, will be the program's second graduate. Ciriaco loves to paint flowers, especially lilies. "I just think they're beautiful," she says. Executive director and co-founder Matt Moffett began the Tulsa Girls Art School in 2007 after a friend, Mona Pittenger, offered to donate the first $350,000 with the provision that the school be girls-only. "Girls can have a more challenging experience," he says.

Back at Harding Fine Arts, English teacher Anna Kinder is planning an outside activity to help students empathize with a Kurt Vonnegut character. "I wish I could have gone here," she says. "In a lot of public schools, teachers are handed a packet of curricula and told 'teach this.' But we have a lot of autonomy in our classroom, so we're able to do projects that are more stimulating."

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sweet chariot

SWING HIGH WITH THE SOUND OF MUSIC

AT FIRST, THIS ART INSTALLATION, *21 Balançoires*, may resemble a regular swing set, but it really is a community orchestra providing locals with the rare chance to make music together. The interactive audio piece was originally installed as a twenty-one-seat swing in Montreal, hometown of design firm Daily Tous les Jours. Founded by Mouna Andraos and Melissa Mongiat, the company was asked by the City of Montreal to add visual interest and an unusual experience in the downtown district of Quartier des Spectacles.

"Our objective was to re-enchant the space in ways that would encourage exploration and conversation and a feeling of shared ownership," says Mongiat, who worked with animal behaviorist Luc-Alain Giraldeau on the notion of cooperation. "If we could spark conversations between strangers, that would be the ultimate achievement."—*Abby Kurin*

A petite, ten-swing version of the installation will be presented at Green Box Arts Festival, July 4–13, 2014, in Green Mountain Falls, Colorado.

* *Each swing represents an instrument: piano, guitar, vibraphone, and harp. As individuals swing back and forth, different notes are triggered and corresponding sounds produced. As in life, melodies are created when people collaborate and swing together.*

photography by OLIVIER BLOUIN







21 Balançoires
Montreal, Quebec (2011, 2012, 2013)



High Inflation

by CAROL KINO

Meticulous, mysterious, and temporary, Jason Hackenwerth's balloon sculptures draw us closer to the promise of the everyday.

JASON HACKENWERTH, *Firefly*
New York City (2007), *photograph by* SEAN GILLIGAN



HACKENWERTH

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA—
The sculptor Jason Hackenwerth was standing in his home office here, talking excitedly about his latest piece, soon to be installed in the Guggenheim Museum in New York. "Artists dream of putting something in the Guggenheim rotunda," he said, referring to the famous spiral ramp at the heart of Frank Lloyd Wright's 1959 masterpiece. "It's one of the most remarkable spaces for art on the planet."

In 1989, he reminded me, Jenny Holzer sent her *Truisms* circulating around the museum's whorled interior on a long LED display board. In 2002, Matthew Barney, wearing a hot-pink wig, scaled its eight levels to film *Cremaster 3*.

And now Hackenwerth, forty-four, known for creating fantastical installations with thousands of tubular latex balloons, would have his own shot at the rotunda, too, with a thirty-five-foot-high birdcage-shaped piece called *Aviary*. Made from a latticework of nearly six thousand balloons, woven into broad stripes whose colors would modulate from red at the bottom to orange to yellow to clear, the piece was designed to rotate slowly overhead, so that viewers could see other small balloons, inside and outside the cage, waving gently like cilia.

"It should look like a huge inverted sea anemone," Hackenwerth said, adding that it might also be "dizzying for people as they're looking up into it."

But as with all of Hackenwerth's projects, realizing that fantastical and vertiginous sight would take plenty of hard work. Months of careful planning with the Guggenheim's installation team had already taken place. Soon Hackenwerth and seven assistants (their eyes shielded by goggles and their fingers by tape) would spend over a week holed up in a Brooklyn loft inflating the balloons and twisting them together into segments small enough to squeak through the museum's doors. On the appointed day, they'd be hustled inside as soon as the museum closed. Then, aided by a team of thirty, Hackenwerth would link the segments together and suspend them from rigging near the skylight, all in the space of about half an hour.

"That's a guesstimate, of course," Hackenwerth said of his figures. "But I wouldn't be surprised if it were exactly that. I've been doing this a long time. It's a bank job."

Yet like a performance, a fragrance, or anything else whose best expression is fleeting and transitory, *Aviary* existed for only one night—April 2, 2014—undulating gently as guests gathered beneath it for a gala honoring

JASON HACKENWERTH, *Bang Bang Boom*
Camden, Maine (2012)



JASON HACKENWERTH, Installation of *Aviary*
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (2014), *photograph by* SEAN GILLIGAN



JASON HACKENWERTH, *Emerald Sunrise*
Abu Dhabi, UAE (2013)

the thirtieth anniversary of the Guggenheim's Works & Process series. As things turns out, it wasn't the end after all: *Aviary* was swiftly hustled out in pieces to Catskill, a small town in the Hudson River Valley, where it went on view in a different form for another month. But barring that reprieve, which came at the eleventh hour, *Aviary* would have met its fate that night, popped into six thousand or so tiny pieces by Hackenwerth himself, wielding a box cutter. "I'm just as happy either way," he said.

This blend of whimsy, ephemerality, and technical prowess seems typical of the projects Works & Process has always showcased. Founded by the philanthropist Mary Sharp Cronson in 1984, with a preview of Philip Glass's opera *Akhnaten*, it's thought to be the first performing-arts program offered by an American museum. In a recent conversation, Cronson said that her original idea had been to have the series function as "a stage, which gave people an opportunity to show new work, and to explain what they had in mind." Many museums now host performance series of their own, but before hers came along, "no-one had thought of doing it that way," Cronson said. "We created a formula of performance and discussion, performance and discussion. It was new then, and I think it is still new."

Over the years, the series has given a platform to choreographers like Trisha Brown and Edward Villella, directors like Peter Brook, composers like Robert Wilson, and playwrights like Sarah Ruhl. Sometimes the event explores a particular work; other times it tackles performance issues, such as the subtleties of dance partnering or setting poetry to music.

Cronson frequently commissions new work, too, and that's how Hackenwerth came her way, when he devised the sets for Larry Keigwin's 2011 *Balloon Dance*, in which dancers echoed the movements of long balloons that swayed like reeds around the edges of the stage. Later that year, Works & Process invited Hackenwerth to collaborate on its annual

performance of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. He concocted several biomorphic sculptures inspired by characters in the tale; suspended from rigging and counterbalanced against each other, they hovered over the audience's heads each night like a mammoth Alexander Calder mobile.

According to Caroline Cronson, Mary Sharp's daughter-in-law and the special-events producer for the series, the show was a hit. So when she and her mother-in-law began planning the gala—the first in the program's history—they turned to Hackenwerth again.

"We're talking an iconic space in the middle of one of the most famous buildings in the world, so you don't want flowers," Caroline Cronson said. "You want something that speaks to the building and to the space." And Hackenwerth specializes in "work that is serious, but doesn't look serious," she added. "For a celebration, it's perfect."

Hackenwerth's mastery of this unusual medium is rooted in his childhood. He grew up outside St. Louis, Missouri, an only child in a single-parent home who spent hours making drawings. His mother often supplemented their income by trawling the St. Louis Union Station Mall on weekends, dressed as a clown and making balloon animals for tips. Once he started art school, he sometimes worked alongside her. "We made ends meet that way," he said. But by then, balloons had become "my dark secret that I didn't want anyone to know because I felt it was horribly embarrassing and cheesy. I wanted to be a serious artist."

For several years, first as an undergraduate at Webster University in St. Louis, and then as an MFA student at Savannah College of Art and Design, Hackenwerth stuck to traditional media, like drawing, painting, and printmaking. In 2003, for his last semester at SCAD, he won the school's coveted residency in New York. There, he began making forays into more sculptural work, with pieces that combined printing plates and lush pours of beeswax into rectangular compositions that could be read as reliefs, assemblages, or paintings.

"One curator thought that they looked almost like fetish objects," Hackenwerth said, "because they were so meticulously made."

Although he had twisted balloons to supplement his income at school, Hackenwerth vowed never to do it in New York. Instead, he worked in galleries, doing everything from assisting with sales to handling art. Along the way he worked for the Scope Art Fair, whose executive producer, Michael Sellinger, became one of a privileged few to learn Hackenwerth's secret: to make some much-needed cash, he sometimes broke down and hit Central Park, selling balloon creatures. Not just dogs and giraffes, but swords, belts, even elaborate hats.

"In the years I'd had to do it, I'd become very skillful," Hackenwerth said. "I could make anything, and I was very funny"—talents that eventually won him a birthday-party clientele and a lucrative yearlong contract with the toy store F.A.O. Schwartz.

"What he was developing for people was so artistic," Sellinger said. "At some point, I said, 'Why don't you try to do something with balloons?'"

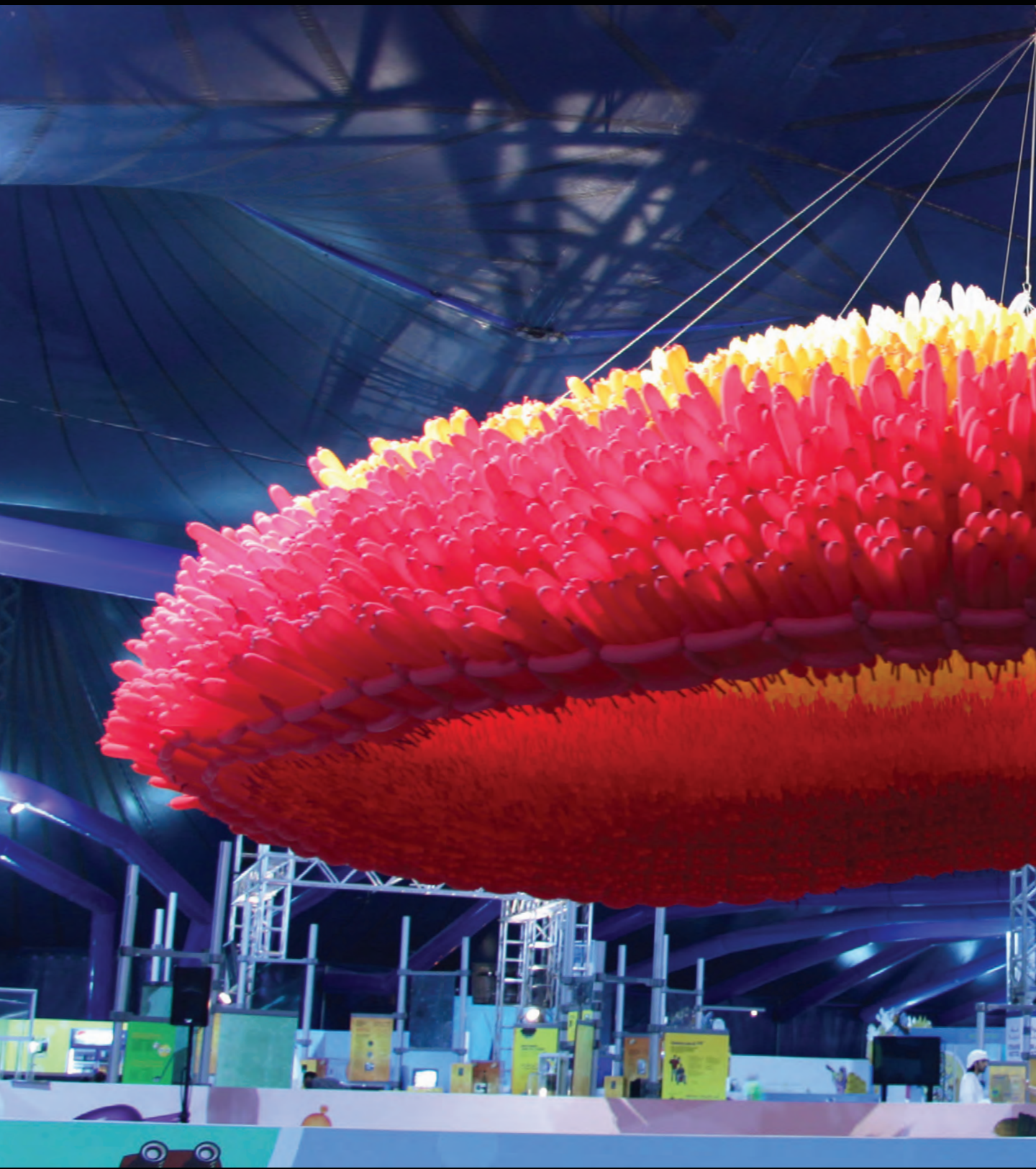
After all, they have an art pedigree of their own: think of Andy Warhol's *Silver Clouds* sculptures, made from helium-filled Mylar pillows, or Jeff Koons's balloon dog sculptures, or Turner Prize–winner Martin Creed, who has often used them to fill entire rooms.

Taking Sellinger's cue, Hackenwerth experimented in subway stations, making stalagmite- and stalactite-like shapes that he'd glue to the walls or floor when transit cops weren't looking. His girlfriend at the time, Anna Ortt, who went on to become a partner at New York's Lyons Wier Ortt Gallery, likened them to graffiti. "The train would come and these little things would wave back and forth," she said. "They seemed alive."



JASON HACKENWERTH, *Dance of the Honey Bee*
Manchester, UK (2013)

But the real breakthrough came in 2004, when Sellinger sent Hackenwerth to make an installation at the first SCOPE fair in London. His first try, which took three sleepless days, covered the hotel-lobby walls with flame-shaped clusters of balloons, intended to evoke the Great Fire of London in 1666. A cleaning





JASON HACKENWERTH, *Corona*
Abu Dhabi, UAE (2013)

crew, interpreting it as a prank ("the Brits thought they were little willies," Ortt explained), removed it as soon as he took a nap. Hackenwerth, despairing, suddenly found himself making a sculpture: a translucent container bursting with odd biomorphic forms that suggested long grasses, blossoming buds, stamens, pistils, or Duchampian breasts.

"It was a revelation that it was really his new medium," Ortt said.

That same year, SCOPE sent him to its Miami fair; the next, to the Venice Biennale. There, because children kept stealing the work, Hackenwerth said, he devised insect-like shells, bristling with phallic-looking quills, and wore them around the city, hurling the projectiles at passersby. Called *Megamites*, these new works were inspired by New York's bedbug epidemic. "The art world was ramping up again, and New York was a hot place to be," Hackenwerth said. "I wanted to bring something that was about New York to that international audience."

The *Megamites* evolved into a series of wearable sculptures, which soon turned up at places like Jeffrey Deitch's 2005 Art Star Parade and the 2007 Coachella Music Festival. Meanwhile, Hackenwerth was also showing balloon installations in New York galleries like the Proposition and museums like the Jang Heung Art Park in Seoul, where his work appeared in 2006 alongside that of Takashi Murakami. In another 2006 show, *Revenge of the Megadon*, for Yale's Peabody Museum of Natural History, he hung giant-sized microbial forms over the skeletons in the dinosaur hall, where they cast kaleidoscopic shadows and seemed to emit primal groans. (The soundtrack was sampled from the sounds of balloons squeaking and popping as Hackenwerth twisted them into place.)

In 2009, Hackenwerth entered the first year of ArtPrize, an annual art competition in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where contestants are judged by popular vote. His submission, a crustacean-like creation that hung in the lobby of the Urban Institute for Contemporary Art, proved so popular that he took seventh place out of more than 1,200 contestants. Kevin Buist, ArtPrize's director of exhibitions, recalled the piece as "really memorable."

"People love labor-intensive, large-scale transformations of mundane materials," Buist said, and they understand balloons because just about everyone has blown one up. But the way Hackenwerth transforms them is "surprising and alluring," he added, because "it's never quite clear what they're supposed to be," even though they suggest crustaceans and insects (and even though their prongs and hollows and bulges can be quite sexually suggestive, too).

David Hoey, creative director for Bergdorf Goodman in New York, who commissioned Hackenwerth to make five window vignettes in early 2011, noted that the work's surprise and allure intensifies as it changes over time. (Bergdorf's has a long history of involving contemporary artists—from Warhol to Damien Hirst and Rob Pruitt—in its window displays.) At first, the balloons had a lush, waxy bloom, but "toward the very end of their life span," Hoey said, "when they started sputtering out and deflating, that's when they got interesting. It's like the way a rose starts to turn—it speaks volumes about time passing."

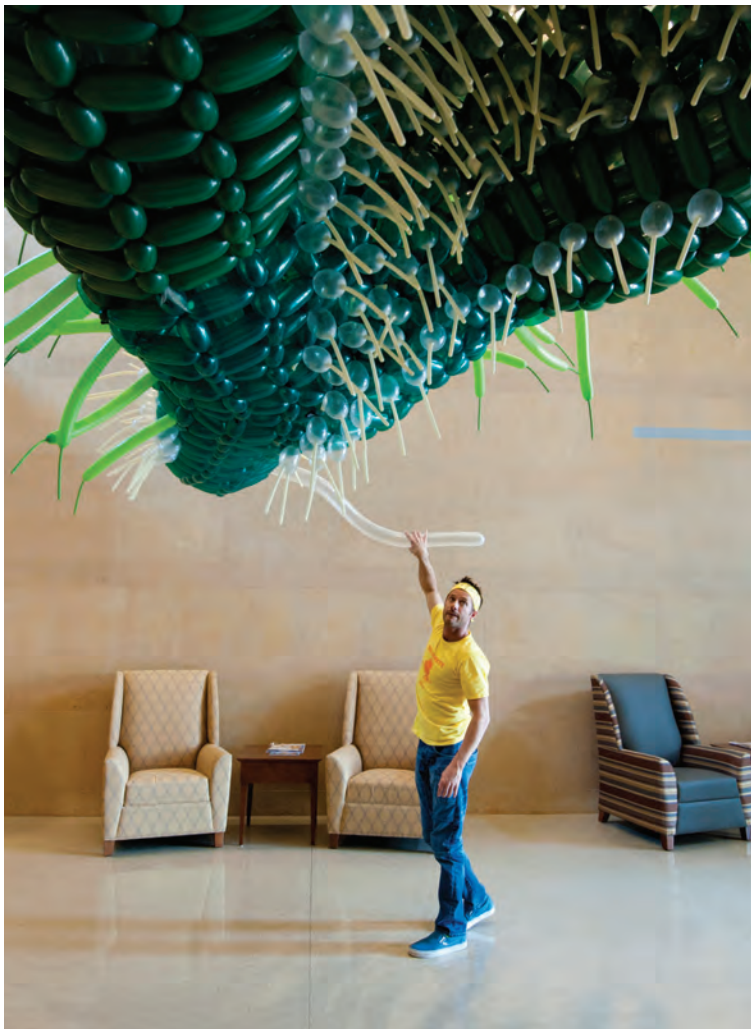
> ***"People love labor-intensive, large-scale transformations of mundane materials."***

Hoey also recalled being fascinated by the ingenious techniques that Hackenwerth used to build his work: weaving and twisting the balloons together, or inflating them to different levels to change the way they float, intertwine, or droop, and to modulate the way light glows through them. Hackenwerth calls it "a kind of architecture," and says, "There's no limit to the strength that I can get."

Yet balloons are only one of many media he is working with today. Since 2012 he has been making what he calls "cloud caves" from the translucent polypropylene plastic he uses to wrap balloons. Carefully shaped and gently inflated with fans, the material is transformed into misty-looking mazes and caverns, creating an effect that, Hackenwerth said, is "like holding fog." Since 2012 they've been shown at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the Garage in Moscow, and the Skybox in Philadelphia, where Hackenwerth constructed his most elaborate cloud cave yet last year. The curator, Eileen Tognini, described it as "a tunneling and cut-and-tailored form that created this otherworldly space."



JASON HACKENWERTH, *Alien Rainforest*
(2008), *photograph by* SEAN GILLIGAN



Hackenwerth also works with plywood and Styrofoam, creating mobiles that suggest the skeleton of a sea creature or a boat, or a long scribbled line. Fit together without nails or glue, they waft gently as people walk past them. "The real goal," Hackenwerth said, "was to see if I could use only gravity to hold these things together. I wanted them to be permanent, but they have to have a buoyancy and a cadence and rhythm. It's my tribute to Calder."

At Hackenwerth's home in Florida, where he and his wife moved last year, the walls are covered with drawings for other inventive works, like a ten-foot-diameter bubble-making machine, which he plans to show at the Museum of Oaxacan Painters in Oaxaca, Mexico, in 2017, and a highway off-ramp called *Leap of Faith*. "It goes way up into the air and then just stops," he said, the idea being to "point to our potential to go beyond the automobile."

In fact, Hackenwerth added, creating a sense of potential is what his work is really all about. The trait that balloons, plywood, and plastic all share is that "they're very accessible, they're inexpensive, and they're common," he said. "And if you surprise people by using those materials in a transformational way, perhaps you can point to their own potential for transcendence." ⧗

JASON HACKENWERTH with *The Trinity Project*
Webster University, St. Louis, MO (2012), *photograph by* INOCENCIO BOC



WILD \\\ CAT

Researching and Protecting the Mountain Lion of West Texas

by PAULETTE BLACK

SOLITARY, ALMOST SECRETIVE, sleek, and beautiful, the mountain lion—also known as the cougar, panther, and puma—is the only "big cat" living wild in the Western part of the United States. In the same family as the common house cat, the mountain lion can grow to nine feet in length and weigh as much as two hundred pounds. These elegant animals purr rather than roar and are important to the biodiversity of West Texas, where both mountain and desert habitats are found. In an area not far from Marfa, a research study documenting these impressive creatures is currently under way.

Conducted by the Borderlands Research Institute of Sul Ross State University, the Ecology of Mountain Lions in the Davis Mountains study is in the first year of a five-year effort to examine the relationship between the mountain lion and its prey in the desert montane ecosystem. The study—which uses GPS-satellite collars, camera traps, and mapping software—is a response to conversations with landowners and aims to fully understand patterns and processes of mountain lions in the Davis Mountains. The 500,000-acre area is considered one of the most picturesque and biologically diverse regions of Texas, with elevations exceeding eight thousand feet.

"There are myriad reasons why cougars matter, not least of which is their enormous and critically important contribution to the health of our ecosystem and the integrity of its biodiversity," says Melanie Anderson of the Summerlee Foundation, a sponsor of the study. "Wild apex carnivores keep our planet alive. Cougars exist largely and grandly on the continents of the Americas, and yet they do so quietly and, for the most part, virtually unseen. The more we learn about them, the more we realize how little we know. Co-existence should be our mandate for the future. Knowledge, understanding, respect, and tolerance will help us achieve that."

Mountain lions are strict carnivores, preferring deer, though they will also prey on feral hogs and small mammals to supplement their diet. They have no real natural predators. Often hunted for trophy or as a nuisance, mountain lions have a crucial regulatory role, maintaining the balance of the ecosystem. Property owners have understandable concerns about the safety of livestock, domestic animals, and humans, but attacks on people are rare and methods for protecting livestock are becoming more readily implemented.

It has also been well documented that predators play such an important role in the ecosystem's balance—that when numbers so decline, a domino effect results. Consequences can mean overpopulation of other species, which in turn may lead to the disappearance of still others.

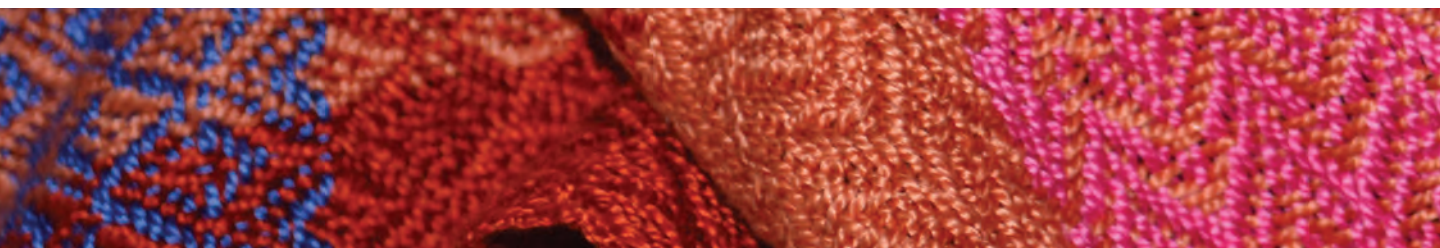
"Mountain lions have huge ranges, so even with our best efforts, we can't anticipate where the animals might wander," says Dr. Patricia Moody Harveson, an associate professor at Sul Ross State who is leading the study. "Cooperating landowners are essential to the research, graciously allowing us access to private lands. The Borderlands Research Institute conducts research on wildlife, rangelands, and other components of the Chihuahuan Desert to advance our understanding and our ability to make management decisions."

◀ BRAD WILSON, *Mountain Lion #1*
Los Angeles, California (2011)



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THIS IS NOT ART

Dressing Down: The Dignity of Art and the Naked Truth

EVERY WORK OF ART EXISTS on a "horizon of expectations," the German aesthetician Hans Robert Jauss argues. For him, this means that its reception is as important as its production in determining its worth, for without the receiver's "stamp of approval" it has no social credibility, human value, and enduring significance—however valuable and important the artist who produced it thinks it is at the moment he or she made it.

The people who vandalized *Prada Marfa*, installed by Elmgreen and Dragset near a highway in 2005, and who disparaged Carl Andre's *Equivalent* VIII in 1976 as merely a pile of bricks that had been passed off as an expensive sculpture, didn't get what they had been expecting—that is, "objects worthy of being promoted to the dignity of works of art through the choice of the artist," which is what André Breton said of Marcel Duchamp when he signed his name to "nondescript… manufactured objects" or "readymades." For Allan Kaprow, an artist and "happenings" impresario, this meant that "there is no clear difference between an artist and a junkyard dealer."

All of this suggests that at least since Duchamp's "assisted readymades"—ordinary objects regarded as extraordinary "art" by the "assistance" of his dictatorial say-so—art has suffered from what might be called the Emperor's New Clothes Syndrome. In Hans Christian Andersen's famous fairy tale, "two impostors weave the Emperor a costly garment which, they say, will be visible only to persons of virtue and loyalty. The Emperor walks out in this invisible garment, and all the spectators, intimidated by the fabric's power to act as a touchstone, pretend not to notice the Emperor's nakedness."

It was a child who saw through the Emperor's new clothes—the naked truth—and who was not intimidated by his power and authority, as suggested by the invisibility of the clothes. The child didn't fear the Emperor; he saw that the Emperor was a deluded impostor, like the con artists who convinced him that his clothes were real and worth the large sum of money he paid for them—a swindle if ever there was one.

The vandals of *Prada Marfa* and those contemptuous of *Equivalent* VIII as pseudo-sculpture are like the child who saw through the Emperor's unfamiliar new clothes to his familiar old body: They saw that they were ordinary objects elevated to the status of extraordinary art only because the artist said they had been. They were works of art in name—objects labeled as art—but they did not have the "dignity" (dare one say inherent superiority and intrinsic value?) that even Breton thought works of art had to have.

Similarly, the individuals who made them call themselves artists because the artist, like the Emperor, is supposedly a superior being. The power of the artist—the power invested in the idea of art—is the power to welcome or intimidate people. Correspondingly, the power of the Emperor—the power invested in the idea of the monarch (God's representative on earth, as has been said, and as such an absolute ruler)—is the power to rule and intimidate people. Both have spiritual power. Like the pope, they can excommunicate disbelievers.

The crowd obeyed the Emperor, pretending not to see his nakedness—that is, his material body. Likewise, the crowd who goes along with *Prada Marfa* and *Equivalent* VIII betrays the truth they see with their eyes: going along with the Emperor's Big Lie, they humiliate themselves. The Emperor was, in effect, testing the loyalty of his subjects and their belief in him; otherwise, he was either completely stupid or the incurable victim of a delusion of grandeur.

The spectators, like Andersen's child, did not betray what they saw. They refused to go along with the idea that *Marfa Prada* and *Equivalent* VIII are works of art (let alone "valuable" ones), simply by virtue of their existence out of context (in a gallery, on a desert highway) while embodying the soi-disant artists' God-given superior "understanding" of art and creativity. Perhaps they have kept faith with true art, wherever it might be.

The Emperor's New Clothes Syndrome—more broadly the cult of the new—has poisoned the perception, understanding, and enjoyment of art since Duchamp, and continues to do so. *Prada Marfa* and *Equivalent* VIII are peculiarly joyless works, sitting alone and deserted in a desert of their own making.

by
DONALD KUSPIT

Art Society

—

Oklahoma City

EARLY SUPPORTERS OF *ARTDESK* GATHER IN MIDTOWN TO CELEBRATE NEW ENDEAVORS.







Art supporters celebrated the Oklahoma City debut of *ArtDesk* at the Mercedes Benz of Oklahoma City dealership showroom, located across the street from the future home of **Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center**. With the crisp, cool air settling in for its winter stay, the room was filled with warmth as friends and associates gathered for old-fashioneds, music by **Daniel Walcher**, and remarks about the new magazine from publisher **Christian Keesee** and editor **Louisa McCune-Elmore**. (Photography by Zach Nash)















OPPOSITE PAGE: *ArtDesk* editor-at-large Larry Keigwin, Kim Bruno, Steve Bruno, Gina Ellis, and Christy Sanford; musician Daniel Walcher

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE: Miki Kawamura and Mischa Gorkuscha; George and Margaret Back; Michelle Martin; Leonard Benton; Rex Urice, Rebecca McCubbin, and Konrad Keesee; Ray von Schlageter

ArtSociety — Washington, DC







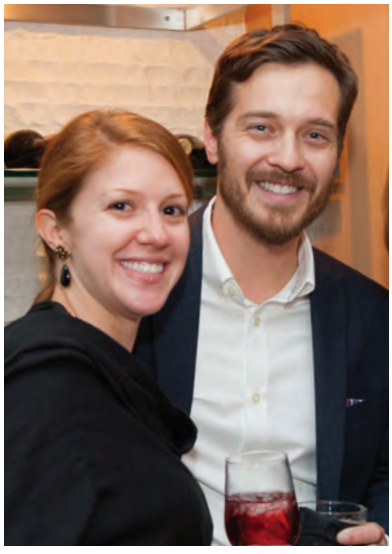




THIS PAGE: Lindsay Mannix and Jason Mannix of Polygraph and Kelly Eldringhoff; Alissa Faden and photographer Jeff Elkins; Warren Randolph and hosts Sid Stolz and David Hatfield

OPPOSITE PAGE: Kimberly Casey; Pam Wade with Gavin Wade of Polygraph; Ed Kelley, *ArtDesk* editor Louisa McCune-Elmore, and host Kevin Anderson







At the second of three debut events, **Kevin Anderson**, **David Hatfield**, and **Sid Stolz** hosted several dozen contemporary art supporters in Washington, D.C., to celebrate the launch of *ArtDesk*. The intimate cocktail party was a festive mix of Washington locals near our nation's Capitol in the Logan Circle neighborhood. **Stephanie Meeks** of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and **Conrad Cafritz**, real estate developer and renowned D.C. art collector, attended the party. **Maureen Dwyer**, executive director of Sitar Arts Center, and **Ed Kelley**, former editor of *The Oklahoman* newspaper, were also on hand to celebrate the new endeavor. (Photography by Julie McCarter)

ArtSociety — A Marfa-lous Night



















COLUMN ONE: Alec Friedman and Ryann Bosetti; Barbara and Chip Love; Arthur Owens; Katherine Michael and Christian Keesee; COLUMN TWO: Ally Hilfiger; an art tourist in Marfa; vodka, soda, ice, and a twist of lime; Liz Lea; COLUMN THREE: Mary Ann Prior and Nicholas Cullinan; Natalie Roncone; Ty Mitchell; Jeannette and Rand Elliott; COLUMN FOUR: Hanuk Hanuk; Joy Reed Belt and Amy Young; American bison; and K. Yoland

GIANT



Marfa residents and art enthusiasts gathered under the tremendous West Texas sky to celebrate the premiere issue of ***ArtDesk***. Held at the historic El Paisano Hotel—the legendary accommodations for the cast of Marfa-filmed *Giant*—the fall event was an out-and-out party with locals and visitors alike. Old-fashioned cocktails fueled the night of revelry and reminded guests of the importance of the past as they celebrated *ArtDesk*'s future. Attendees embodied the spirit of the magazine and celebrated what we love: contemporary art, performance, and thought. (Photography by Jose Grajeda and Hanuk Hanuk)

ARTDESK

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—

Thank you for supporting local art and arts education and for being kind to animals.

This issue is dedicated to Campbell Knox Wade, born April 27, 2014.

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Catherine D. Anspon

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"My favorite artist in the Crowley collection is Mark Flood. We go way back," says Catherine D. Anspon, executive editor of Visual Arts & Features for *PaperCity*, a Texas monthly. "Mark is one of the first artists I covered in the 1990s, when he and Mark Allen collaborated on an edgy little show at Lawndale Art Center. I remember Mark tossing wrappers from his fastfood lunch into the installation and declaring it completed. He's always been the wild child of the Houston scene." Anspon is currently at work on volume two of her popular series, *Texas Artists Today*. ("Art House," page 20)



Donald Kuspit

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Donald Kuspit, one of America's most distinguished art critics, has dedicated his career to excellence in the arts. His accolades outnumber his books (he's published more than twenty) and include fellowships with the Fulbright Commission, Guggenheim Foundation, and National Endowment for the Arts, just to name a few. His numerous articles, reviews, catalogue essays, lectures, monographs, and editorial work have illuminated the art world for more than thirty years. His newest book, *Two Crowns of the Egg*, about the work of photographer Michael Somoroff, was released in April. ("This Is [Not] Art," page 70)



Brendan Hoover

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"Everyone's story is important, at least to them. And if you listen and absorb those stories, you can learn to see the world through other people's eyes. That's what makes journalism so rewarding for me. Every story is a new adventure." Journalist Brendan Hoover has provided award-winning coverage of central Oklahoma's education, art, and sports for almost eight years. Hoover is a contributor to the *Oklahoma Gazette* and, during regular hours, a manager at the legendary Cattlemen's Steakhouse in Oklahoma City. ("They Heart Art," page 48)



Erin Baiano

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Ballerina-turned-photographer Erin Baiano is a true crossover artist. After studying at the School of American Ballet and then performing as a member of American Ballet Theater for six years, Baiano retired and turned her focus toward photography. Mentored by photographer Paul Kolnik and studying at the International Center of Photography, she has published her work in *Vanity Fair*, *InStyle*, *New York*, and the *New York Times* Styles and Culture sections. ("Up in the Air with Brian Brooks," page 38)



Brad Wilson

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

"I have always been interested in the exact instant when mood, stillness, and composition align to make something common suddenly uncommon, something expected suddenly unexpected," says photographer Brad Wilson. Achieving commercial and artistic success, his photographs have been published and shown around the world. After more than a decade in New York City, Wilson opted for the Southwestern deserts of Santa Fe, New Mexico, where he currently lives and works. His new book, *Wild Life* (Prestel), will be published this fall. ("Wild Cat," page 66)



Claes Oldenburg

CONTRIBUTING ARTIST

Born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1929, Claes Oldenburg grew up in Chicago and graduated from Yale University in 1950. After studying at the Art Institute of Chicago, he settled permanently in New York City in 1956. Oldenburg established himself in the early 1960s with a series of installations and performances, among them *The Street* (1960), *The Store* (1961), and *Ray Gun Theater* (1962). He is considered one of the most important artists working today. ("At Work" page 80)



IDEA TABLE

photograph and text by
CLAES OLDENBURG

The table is made of maple and was designed by the artist Donald Judd, who was a close friend. It is 9 x 4.5 feet and was commissioned as a dining table in the studio of Coosje van Bruggen—my late wife—and myself. Judd passed away in 1994, Coosje in 2009. The table was constructed by Jim Cooper and Ichiro Kato. I now use the table for correspondence and writing and, in one corner, for eating breakfast, lunch, and dinner. If I have guests, we usually eat at restaurants in the neighborhood. The desk is a focus of much of my daily activity. A telephone is located on another table near shelves of historical material that I may wish to consult, including notebooks, diaries, scripts, and publications.

As for what is on the desk: There are two movable lamps and stacks of different topics labeled "file," "current," or "now," and numerous "to-do" lists, all written in graphite pencil. Cardboard boxes in the center contain tools and materials freely tossed in after their use. My two assistants — Carey and Alex—manage a more efficient and complicated office on the floor below, in the realm of the computer, which is absent on my floor. A magnifying glass is essential given my aging eyesight and the gray and miniscule type of current books and newspapers. The glass is lying on my diary, which is divided into books of three months' content and handwritten in ink. Next to it is a spiral notebook I carry around with me for notes and sketches. As an artist grows older, I find he is more often at his desk than in his studio. Emails pour in, and the art world enlarges and intensifies.

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Oldenburg.
Ruscha.
Brooks.
Bailey.
Blackwood.

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as we meet and learn about these and other leaders in the dynamic world of the contemporary arts.

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ARTDESK

In *ArtDesk,* we cover two kinds of art receptions: the theoretical kind and the party kind. We create an open forum for thinkers who explore ideas about how art is made, understood, and received, and we highlight the social events that celebrate the hard work of these artists.

In *ArtDesk,* we also encourage educators to challenge students, we praise artists for thinking differently, and we look for the beauty and awareness in the animal kingdom. We are committed to a showcase of wonderment in our time.

That showcase is ArtDesk.

We hope you'll become part of the experience and join the *ArtDesk* culture. Visit us online or in bookstores nationwide.

—
LOUISA McCUNE-ELMORE, *Editor*

JASON HACKENWERTH, *Pisces* ▸
National Museum of Scotland (2013)