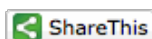


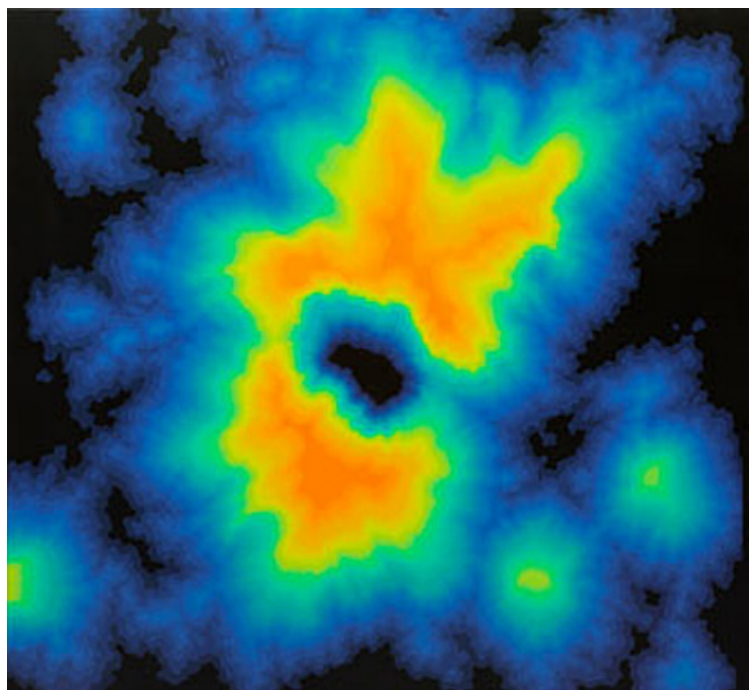


Weekly Newsletter
August 17, 2012



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Weekly Recommendations

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Jack Goldstein, "Untitled," 1988, acrylic on canvas, 84 x 96".

Jack Goldstein
Orange County Museum of Art [OCMA], Orange County
by Daniella Walsh

Continuing through September 9, 2012

To describe Jack Goldstein as man of contradiction is an understatement. On the one hand, an erstwhile "salon painter" who painted to sell, he also purposely avoided revealing "authorship" of paintings to the point where he hired others to execute them according to his instructions. All the while he eschewed any sort of ... [CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

Editors' Roundtable

This issue's guest commentary by DeWitt Cheng

The recent deaths of Christopher Hitchens, Gore Vidal and now art critic Robert Hughes are shocking because the irrepressible energy and wit that they each conveyed — exuded, really — seemed effortless (whatever demands the work really made) and limitless. Can we survive losing such brilliant, acerbic iconoclasts? The August 6 death of Hughes is especially grievous to longtime readers of his yeasty, take-no-prisoners art criticism in Time magazine (for three decades) and his books on a wide-ranging host of subjects, including art history ("The Shock of the New" and "American Visions," both also filmed for television); art heroes (Lucian Freud, Frank Auerbach and Goya, the latter also adapted for film, as "Goya: Crazy Like a Genius"); sociopolitics ("The Culture of Complaint: The Fraying of America"); and cultural history ("The Fatal Shore," "Barcelona," "Rome").

In the past few years the art market's successfully co-optation of avant-gardism, transforming revolt into luxury consumer goods, has become impossible to deny. Hughes and others who were once deemed conservative curmudgeons by the boom-times art crowd foresaw this



Gregg Renfrow, "Curiouser and Curiouser," polymer and pigment on cast acrylic, 69 1/2 x 48".

Gregg Renfrow
Elizabeth Leach Gallery, Portland, Oregon
by Richard Speer

Continuing through September 1, 2012

There is a quality at once primordial and futuristic about the works in Gregg Renfrow's current exhibition, "Closer to the Water." His polymer-and-pigment sheets of cast acrylic appear to drip off the picture planes like gooey stalactites or petrified honey, imparting a delicious organicism even as the fields of color layer atop one another with a plasticine sheen that evokes late-1960s modernist design. Indeed, the Bay Area artist was heavily influenced by ... [CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

long ago. Perhaps Hughes and the late Hilton Kramer are now enjoying a Parnassian fist-bump — and one of the meals Hughes prepared with such messy gusto, with (in the words of a relative) “not only bits of shell and crab meat in his hair and eyebrows, but on the ceiling as well.”

If many of us regret missing such a spectacle, we still have the moveable feast of Hughes’ writing, as passionate and witty as it is informed and independent-minded. In his Huffington Post obituary, John Seed wrote that he used “The Shock of the New,” “the single best book about modern art that has ever been written,” as a textbook for 25 years, always warning his students that “they may be overwhelmed by the author’s confidence in his own judgments, his erudition and by his sarcasm.” We who are past feeling overwhelmed by Hughes’ twelve-cylinder prose style, or distraught by his aesthetic edicts, can enjoy the literary ride in a way that we cannot for most other art criticism.

I have selected some rather delicious excerpts from Hughes’ 1990 “Nothing If Not Critical: Selected Essays on Art and Artists,” a compendium of incisive essays on the Old Masters, the Modernists of the 19th and 20th centuries, and contemporary artists, that should be required reading for anyone aspiring to even a modicum of cultural literacy.



Engels, "You Don't Know Me," 2010, oil on fabric, glass, wood, 23 x 30 x 4".

"Latin America: A Contemporary View"
Zane Bennett Contemporary Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico
by Michael Abatemarco

Continuing through August 24, 2012

The first in a two-part series of exhibitions, “Latin America: A Contemporary View” offers a mix of the modern and contemporary in work that ranges across mediums. It is a well-rounded exhibition with a neat tie-in to Tamarind Institute, the nation’s premier center for lithography, located in ... [CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

On Sir Joshua Reynolds' "weird mayonnaises of [materials]:" "It was not unknown for the face to fall off a Reynolds portrait if ... shaken ... An elderly Irish rake ... found that his youthful portrait by Reynolds was even more poked and wrinkled than he had become. One might say Joshua Reynolds, rather than Oscar Wilde, invented the portrait of Dorian Gray." He describes Zurbaran's painting of the Christian martyr, St. Agatha, as "daintily bearing on a platter her [severed] breasts ... looking like two pale, pink, heavenly scoops of gelato." On tradition: "Degas copied everything from Mantegna to Moghul miniatures, and even the work of lesser painters than himself; an artist, he said, should not be allowed to draw as much as a radish from life without the constant habit of drawing from the old masters." On reproduction, in his article on Van Gogh: "It is a characteristic of great painting that no matter how many times it has been cloned, reproduced and postcarded, it can restore itself as an immediate utterance with the force of strangeness when seen in the original."

Hughes' witty evisceration of Willem de Kooning compared the history of art to a rich soup that no one should deny himself; one might say the same of the morsels served up with such relish by the fearless Robert Hughes. If the Futurist impresario

F.T. Marinetti boasted of being "the caffeine of Europe" during The Great War, Hughes was the caffeine of the postwar American Century (or half century). Christopher Hitchens wrote of his friend, fittingly, "No critic could have had a better run." Hail and farewell.



"My Idea of Fun"
Ebersmoore, Chicago, Illinois
by Robin Dluzen

Continuing through August 31, 2012

In "My Idea of Fun," the curator/Chicago artist Michael Rea presents us with precisely that: the sort of surprise, delight and humor he embraces within his own practice manifested through the works of seven of the friends, students and teachers who have ... [CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

Left:
Kate Ruggeri, "Tree Gremlin," 2012, studio remnants, oil and clay.



Charles Linder
Gallery 16, San Francisco, California
by DeWitt Cheng

Continuing through August 17, 2012

Certain artists used to be labeled "painter's painters," meaning that their achievements were most completely understood and appreciated predominantly by their peers. If some conceptual art seems to address only other dyed-in-the-wool conceptualists, there are still artists who pursue ... [CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

Left:
Charles Linder, "Hey Nineteen,"
gas cans, chrome, light fixtures, mirrored pedestal.



Jed Berk and Oliver McIrwin
Aran Cravey Gallery, Venice, California
by Marlena Donohue

Continuing through September 9, 2012

In a really provocative, technically complex multimedia collaboration, Jed Berk and Oliver McIrwin point us toward a world where the lines between the natural and the technologically imagined will be blurred, or even lost. We all know it is coming, and Berk and McIrwin are most certainly artists of this generation who obviously see ... [CLICK TO READ MORE](#)

Left:
Jed Berk and Oliver McIrwin, "Jellyfish," 2012,
multimedia.

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