



DAVID BOWIE IS: STAR POWER

An Interview With Michael Darling
by Thea Liberty Nichols

David Bowie Is, coming to the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago in just a few weeks, is unprecedented to the extent that it is the first massive solo show the MCA has ever given to a musician. But as James W. Alsdorf Chief Curator Michael Darling discusses below, he was drawn to the exhibition because Bowie emulates the blending of media—crossing over of disciplines he finds so relevant to contemporary artists' practices.

Darling was kind enough to sit down with me a few weeks ago and explain how the globe-trotting blockbuster will be articulated by the MCA. In addition, he outlines an MCA permanent collection exhibition they are putting together to coincide with the show, entitled *Body Doubles*, which both directly and indirectly fleshes out some of the more complex themes that emerge Bowie, citing gender fluidity in particular.

Perhaps the centrality of outer space to many of Bowie's works and personae will find a warm welcome in Chicago, given the Afro-Futurist bedrock that under-appreciated artists like Sun Ra have cultivated and Cauleen Smith have mined. Just as Bowie is a crossover artist, there is the hope that the Bowie show will have cross over appeal by bringing non-art, and potentially even non-museum going, audiences through the MCA's doors. In many ways, *David Bowie Is* is momentous for that reason as well—it marks a sea change at the MCA, and represents the first of several soon-to-be-announced exhibitions that Darling has in the works, highlighting unexpected makers in boundary blurring shows.

Thea Liberty Nichols: Can you contextualize the exhibition for us? I know it originated at the

Victoria and Albert (V&A) in London, an art and design museum in Great Britain—can you talk about how the MCA got it, since it is the only US stop, and how it situates within the program of the museum? What does it mean for American audiences?

Michael Darling: We heard about the show early, let them know of our interest, and committed to it—we were talking to them from the beginning about it as an exclusive presentation. Because of the content and nature of the show, we really think this could be something that draws visitors from the West coast and from the East coast, as well as our local community. This circumstance is something that is fairly unique for our exhibitions, except for the hard-core art people that will come for certain shows. We're definitely seeing that anecdotally already from reservations that are coming in from all over the world.

Over the years, we have regularly gone outside of the visual arts in our programming here, and like to pepper the program with things like architecture or design, or most recently we did the Daniel Clowes show. So it is already a regular part of our diet to break up our hard core visual art stuff with these things that are a little bit extra curricular, that stretch the notions of contemporary art and culture in a way, so this definitely feels to us like one of those type of shows. However, it is also new in the sense that we have never done anything with a musical artist in this way. Of course the fact that we already have this vibrant performance program also makes this feel less foreign to us, and the fact that Bowie's career is exactly the same kind of career that I look for in the artists that I track and want to exhibit—Isa Genzkin is a great example. I mean, I just love how she is constantly reinventing herself and never getting stuck in a rut and always looking for the next thing. It is something I always tell young artists when I am visiting with them. That is sort of what I think defines a great career, and Bowie is the epitome of that in the musical world in terms of all these different personae he has created over the years, always changing with the wind and having a really good nose for the zeitgeist.

One of the things I think is really fascinating is if you start looking at the tour for this show—the exhibition is travelling to every different type of

museum out there. I mean, the V&A is more of a culture and design museum, so it makes sense there; here it is a contemporary art museum and we have made it our way; Toronto is maybe a more general fine art museum, and in Sao Paulo it was in a museum of sound and image. In Paris, it is going also to a music museum, and in Berlin, at the Martin Gropius Bau, more of a general-purpose kind of exhibition hall. So it is funny that people in these different countries are finding different hooks for the show, which is an amazing testament to Bowie in that he can cross over all these different disciplines. I also think it is fascinating that the show is not at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. It has some elements of those kind of rock and roll shows—in that the hard core Bowie fans will really geek out on these hand drawn lyric sheets that have never been seen before—but it feels like it is a broader cultural commentary on the period he lived through and helped to define in so many different ways. I think that is why it's interesting to us, because it works both ways: for people that are really knowledgeable (about Bowie) and people that are more interested in the ideas of his career.



Striped bodysuit for Aladdin Sane tour, 1973.
Design: Kansai Yamamoto.
Photo: Masayoshi Sukita. © Sukita / The David Bowie Archive 2012.

Please read the rest of this interview on
ArtSlant, at www.artslant.com/chi.



Installation view, Simon Starling: Metamorphology, MCA Chicago. June 7 - November 2, 2014 Photo: Nathan Keay, © MCA Chicago.

SIMON STARLING // MCA CHICAGO by Shreya Sethi

Simon Starling contends with the very idea of transportation as his subject. Undertaking poetic expeditions that highlight specific global exchanges, the British-born neo-conceptual artist works across multiple disciplines—drawing from extensive research to construct meaning. In *Flaga*, a red and white Fiat 126 hangs on the wall like a painting. The car—a symbol of postwar reconstruction in Italy—was driven to Poland, where it is now currently produced. The car has been reassembled to reference the Polish flag—its symbolic meaning is transformed, tracing the discourse between East and West over the last four decades. The vehicle was first introduced in 1972 in Turin;

the West. Its journey, undertaken here by proxy via Starling, is experienced in the real, adding an additional narrative that allows viewers various points of engagement with the work.

Concurrent exhibitions of Starling's work, currently on view at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) Chicago and the Arts Club of Chicago, present us with similar byproducts of pilgrimages made by both the artist and his artworks. Inspired by the many intertwining paths of economy, politics, and art in an increasingly global world, Starling physically retraces certain routes in order to locate his practice within a larger context.

a Fiat factory was also introduced in Poland in the early '70s, where labor and operations remained economically effective under the rule of communist leadership. While the model of Fiat no longer continued being produced for a Western audience past the early '80s, the car continued to be manufactured in Poland—becoming a symbol, indeed a sign, of daily life in the Communist Bloc. A vehicle of the East, once imagined for



the West. Its journey, undertaken here by proxy via Starling, is experienced in the real, adding an additional narrative that allows viewers various points of engagement with the work.

Starling's exhibition at the MCA, entitled *Metamorphology* (where *Flaga* can be found) serves as a kind of mini retrospective, including mostly large-scale installations made within the

last decade. The works possess a withheld energy, the dynamics of which are unlocked through substantial wall texts, written by the artist himself, simultaneously contextualizing and altering the work. The 2005 recipient of the prestigious

Turner Prize, Starling is very different from the ego-driven, highly individualist young British artists that have preceded him—namely Damien Hirst and Tracy Emin. Despite the work's dangerously large size and weight, they demonstrate humility. In Long Ton, two massive blocks of marble—one Chinese marble and another slightly smaller block of Carrara marble (digitally carved to recreate the shape of the former)—are suspended from the ceiling with the help of a pulley system. While it would be impossible to deduce the process undergone by the Carrara slab without the aid of text, the description becomes a part of the material once its history is known. The written material provided by Starling, often containing historical and factual information, demonstrates his reverence towards objects/subjects of inspiration. Starling's alteration of meaning always takes into account his subject's provenance.

A term Starling likes to use in relation to his work is collapse. This word is befitting for him, firstly due to the fact that one would literally be flattened under certain works if they were ever to fall (the marble blocks being one example), but also because the artist himself bears a certain pressure of accountability; the vertigo of global production and the weight of art history. Starling reacts to these powers of authority by materially working through his uneasiness in a way that addresses fundamentals. An important element of this is done through exploring the origin of raw materials—such as in *One Ton II*, a series of identically replicated photographs of a Platinum mine in South Africa. While the expanse of the mine is vast, calling attention to the massive excavation, recreated in the platinum used to make the photographic print, a kind of doubling recurs through the material and its representation, both here and throughout Starling's method.

Another work, entitled *Birds in Space*, is comprised of a massive raw steel plate resting on inflated jackets. Named after a series of bronze sculptures by modernist Constantin Brancusi, the steel plate references a significant moment in art history. 1926 witnessed an extraordinary legal case when custom officials refused to exempt Brancusi's sculptures from duties as works of art. Starling's *Birds in Space*—having travelled the same historical route—is in homage to Brancusi's victory, as well as an attempt to layer upon art history.

Starling's interest in Brancusi's legacy acts as a bridge between his exhibition at the MCA and *Pictures for an Exhibition* at The Arts Club of Chicago, while retaining many of the artist's similar contextual and material concerns. The exhibition presents us with photographs. Uniformly sized and black and white, they are classically

displayed next to one another. Several of photographs on view are of other artworks, mostly Brancusi's, strangely framed through doorways or even behind an old 8 x 10 camera. An odd photograph of an autographed Football or a Ferrari is included, always vertically displayed, notwithstanding its natural orientation, making a clear reference to archival strategies. Certain times the photographs are imposed over one another—in one instance, Brancusi's work forefronts the Wrigley Building.

Despite the deviations within the selected images on view, the entire exhibition is inspired by a pair of vintage photographs of Brancusi's 1926 exhibition at The Arts Club. Starling's work is the result of an adopted, methodical approach he uses to track down the present-day locations that house the eighteen sculptures visible in the original documentation—intertwining American history with the relocations over the last 87 years. In doing so, Starling illuminates a complex network of connections between art, economics, society, and history that are a part of the new narratives of the sculptures—the Chicago World's Fair, the expansion of diamond trade, and even certain moments of political change, to name a few.



Photographing the original works with the original 8 x 10 Deardoff used to document the Arts Club exhibition, Starling generates a new context out of old materials—ontologically challenging linear narratives of history to generate less familiar ideas about documents and the archive. By including the camera in many of the pictures, Starling also discloses his process and the bodily journey made. He illustrates how these photographs are our access to the concrete, in a world

where corporeal connections to materials are becoming increasingly complicated. The irony of this exhibition lies in the fact that The Arts Club refuses to let visitors photograph Starling's work—the audience is unable to integrate themselves within the practice on view. However, this is also where Starling's individuality can be detected. This is a personal curation of history, locating the artist's specific acts of creation in relation to an already created world. The transformations that Starling's works undergo in both exhibitions rely on the frame he creates to understand global systems, forever placed in relation to their complex pasts.

Read this piece and more coverage on *THE SEEN* blog. epochicicago.com

FREEDOM OF SHADOW: A TRIBUTE TO TERRY ADKINS

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Douglas Kearney, from *Freedom of Shadow* (Poetry, September 2014)

HOW WE WORK:

An Interview With Kate Ruggeri
By A. Martinez

Kate Ruggeri is a formerly Chicago, now New Haven-based artist, DJ, and curator who has shown at Roots & Culture (Chicago), Green Gallery East (Milwaukee), Western Exhibitions (Chicago), and Important Projects (Oakland). She is one of those people who exudes a humble cool, yet is enthusiastic about all she's committed to, and excited about life and the people and things in it. After a handful of years of staying in touch from afar, I wanted to connect more closely to ask Kate some questions about her life and her work before she moved to New Haven last July to pursue her MFA at Yale.

A. Martinez: Were art and making art important to you from a young age?

Kate Ruggeri: Oh, yeah. Totally. My parents were always really encouraging. In elementary school I started taking drawing classes outside of school. I won a few poster contests. I used to do this thing every year called *The Olympics of The Visual Arts*, which is a New York State program. Pretty much you assemble a team, work on a year long project, and then compete against other teams. When I got a little older I got really into dark room photography. You know, carrying a camera around all the time and developing film in your bathroom. My mom and I took figure drawing classes together. A lot of colleges have art classes for kids during the summer, so I was always doing that too.

Martinez: How long have you kept a journal? And what does this practice of journaling do for you and your art practice?

Ruggeri: Since elementary school. I think my first one has a little lock on it. I never really stopped. It's actually super important, to clear your head, to drain it. I try to write every day. I feel very scattered if I don't. For art making, it's good for me to work through ideas and to understand impulses I have. Often I make something and I'm not sure why I made that decision or was drawn to that form. Writing brings everything to the surface. It brings clarity. Studio work is one way of thinking and writing is how I detangle everything. Not just artwise, but life wise. It's all the same, of course.

Martinez: How do you begin a painting?

Ruggeri: Putting something down, anything! I break it in. I try not to think about it too much and just get the ball rolling. Usually it's a good color.

Martinez: You work in both 2D and 3D- how does a piece become one or the other?

Ruggeri: When I was in school I used to trip



They Have To Cut Out Part Of My Heart And Rebuild It With New Valves And Shit, 2014

myself up with that question. I can say now that they're all paintings. I'm a painter that has sculptural impulses. I try to feed both ways of making. I try to be democratic about it. The larger sculptures can be exhausting to make, so there is often a down period of just painting and drawing before starting one again. Material, color, and mark making can drive a piece to be 3D or 2D. Finding a good object. Seeing a particularly inspiring show of painting or sculpture.

Martinez: What artists inspire you?

Ruggeri: Philip Guston, Mike Kelley, Matisse, Picasso, Claes Oldenberg, Cy Twombly, Franz West, Rauschenberg, Joan Miro, Giacometti, Sterling Ruby, William J. O'Brien, Jonathan Meese, Mary Heilmann, Huma Bhabha, Gerhard Richter, Howard Fonda

Martinez: You have a pretty extensive record collection and DJ monthly at Danny's. Do you feel there's a connection between your music endeavors and your art-making?

Ruggeri: Yes. It feels very connected.

Martinez: What musicians inspire you?

Ruggeri: Parliament/Funkadelic, Dead Moon, Congos, Minutemen, Bad Brains, Robert Wyatt, Brian Eno, Miles Davis, Captain Beefheart, Sparks, Beach Boys, Lee Scratch Perry, Roxy Music, De La Soul, Neil Young, Patrick Cowley, Big Star.

Martinez: What do you typically listen to while in the studio working?

Ruggeri: It's different every time, chosen for the day and mood. But Nas "Illmatic" gets played a lot. J.Dilla, Shuggie Otis, Pastor T.L. Barrett, Skip Spence, Velvet Underground. Mixes from friends. Jorge Ben, Milton Nascimento, Witch,

Amanaz are all good...

Martinez: Do you do collaborations with other artists?

Ruggeri: Sure, I've done it a few times. Right now I'm working on a collaboration with Alex Valentine. He gave me these plates to draw on, and then we'll print them together on newsprint, and then use them to paper mache a sculpture. It's great because Alex is primarily a printmaker and I know barely anything about the process. I love the idea of making a sculpture made out of drawing. A perfect hybrid.

Martinez: What is a typical day in the studio like for you?

Ruggeri: Nights are better. I like working when no one is around. You can play music loud. I believe in a witching hour. It really depends, though. I usually am working on one sculpture and 4-5 paintings at the same time. If I just finished something big or just installed a show, I draw and watch movies at home. I don't really have a routine. Ben Medansky once described his ceramic studio as being around a million crying babies. That's how I feel in there. I work a lot in series, so I just treat 6 pieces at the same time, and then have some experiments going. Right now I have some exercise balls I've been sort of doodling on. Then I'll carve on these wood paintings until my hand hurts. Then I'll cut some wood shapes out to paint. Or dump plaster on something. It's a mix of working on very planned pieces and experiments. Everything always changes though.

Read more at badatsports.com/2014/how-we-work-an-interview-with-kate-ruggeri.

REMEMBERING THE DEAD

by Jessica Cochran

This year's Whitney Biennial curators Michelle Grabner, Anthony Elms and Stuart Comer cast the net so far beyond Chelsea that New York Magazine's Jerry Saltz lamented "curators are so determined to stay pure, to avoid acknowledging the machinations of commerce, that the show is completely disconnected from the entire world." Elsewhere, however, in the pages of the more academically inclined *Artforum*, Emily Apter took the biennial's discursive turn away from New York-centric art objects as an opportunity to consider the "liminal space" of a museum biennial "replete with printed matter, writing, texts of all sorts—in short, with words." "The textual object," she writes, "demands to be seen as a live, or "living," work, an interface of bio and res."

Its true, the archival impulse is what set the tone and struck a chord this year, particularly in the work of Chicago-based Joseph Grigely and Public Collectors (founded in 2007 by Marc Fischer), both curated into the biennial by Anthony Elms. Each taking as their subjects the lives of a deceased creative individual and his personal belongings, their projects build meaningfully on the Whitney Biennial's recent history of both deceased artists and artist-curated "sub



Malachi at the Empty Bottle (Pool Table Series), 2003
Photograph by Angeline Evans.

exhibitions," notably from the 2012 edition the inclusion of George Kuchar (died, 2011); Robert Gober's presentation of work by Forrest Bess; Nick Mauss' curation of queer-oriented work culled from the museum collection; and also discursive contributions, such as Andrea Fraser's essay *No Place Like Home*.

Joseph Grigely's project *The Gregory Battcock Archive, 2009-2014* is a mini exhibition of ephemera culled from the archives Gregory Battcock that Grigely recovered himself in the storage area of an artist studio building. Battcock was an intrepid New York critic (something of a reformed artist) who was mysteriously murdered in Puerto Rico in 1980 and known for his writing on minimalism and other emerging genres of conceptual art. The Whitney display, with postcards, photographs, manuscripts and scribbled notes organized into vitrines, is an extension of Grigely's own text-driven practice, specifically the project *Conversations with the Hearing*. For the art workers among us, this glimpse into the world of a dynamic talent and fastidious thinker gives pause for reflection: how will my activities live on after I am gone, and who is going to care?

In scholarship on artist's books, much has been written about the concept of paratext as it impacts a book's concept and meaning. An artist's reflexive manipulation of the book's gutters, typography, headers and index, for example, impact the text's meaning as it is delivered to the reader. So too in Grigely's presentation of the Battcock images and texts in the real dimensional space of the gallery, a different kind of paratext becomes important: the vitrines as support structures and the aesthetic arrangement of the material. The vitrines, "each made of a different hard wood, a different shape and height" and "composed as an irregular modular sculpture," inform the way we maneuver through and consume the text. Because, as Grigely told me, "no archive is dis-

interested" and in an extension of Joseph Albers' articulations of color theory, "you can't put one document beside another without changing both."

Public Collector's biennial contribution was dedicated to a different kind of archive—the recordings, ephemera and images of Malachi Ritscher, who, Fischer wrote in a publication for the project, was a "Chicago-based documentarian, activist, artist, musician, photographer, hot pepper sauce maker, and supporter of experimental and improvised music." Deeply respected and liked throughout the Chicago music community, Ritscher spent years independently recording thousands of live free jazz, experimental and underground improvised live shows at venues throughout Chicago, in addition to his day job as a union engineer and anti-war activist. On November 3, 2006, he self-immolated in front of the Flame of the Millennium sculpture by Leonardo Nierman in full view of the Kennedy Expressway just north of Chicago's busy loop interchange. As he wrote in texts found posthumously and displayed on a poster in the exhibition, "If I am required to pay for your barbaric war, I choose not to live in your world."

Unlike Grigely, for Public Collectors, "directing attention to and caring for the creative work of under-recognized people like Ritscher" is at the core of each project they mount. Amidst the presentation of recordings and ephemera, a recorder and a small paper sign, which Ritscher used to record and temper dialogue around him in the clubs, hangs above a series of brown suitcases: "Your cooperation (i.e. restraint) is appreciated." This statement drips with melancholy. Because while his protest suicide was carefully recorded and it was his hope that it would circulate widely, the video of his death was entirely suppressed; and the reporting of his death, much less any discourse generated, was subdued and grass roots, covered minimally by local and national papers.

Read the *Public Collectors PDF* at www.publiccollectors.org/Malachi_Ritscher_Whitney.pdf

Read more at badatsports.com/2014/remembering-the-dead



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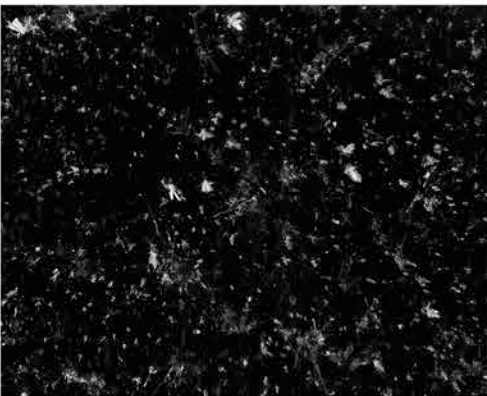
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CLOUDED POINTS OF ACCESS:

Phantoms In The Dirt At The Museum
Of Contemporary Photography
By Caroline Picard

What first reads like an astral constellation is in fact a photograph whose blackness is broken only by the erratic swarm of dead insect bodies. Greg Stimac's *Santa Fe to Billings*, 2009 documents the choreography of the countless lives his windshield intersected on a drive between locals. The momentum of each smash is evident—guts smear and spray across the surface, recording innumerable tiny accidents. To create this piece, Stimac placed an 8 x 10" sheet of Plexiglass on the hood of his car. Upon arriving to his final destination—Billings, in this case—he used the car's cigarette lighter to scan the resulting plate, thereby producing the final 20 x 30" photograph. This piece—its documentary mode, its gritty surface, its use of technology—is the perfect beginning for the Museum of Contemporary Photography's *Phantoms in the Dirt*, a group exhibition curated by Karsten Lund, which currently showcases sixteen artists. In each work lies a theoretical straw: something the viewer grasps with sudden exuberance and recognition—Yes! Bugs spatter on my car too!—only to bump into larger questions, mysteries, and catastrophes thereafter. Stimac's insects might provoke anxiety in the viewer about her own mortality, or encapsulate an expression of violence both sickening and banal, or even illustrate humanity's omniscient relationship to its environment. Like the early efforts to prove the existence of an afterlife by capturing spirits on photographic paper, *Phantoms in the Dirt* presents the enigmatic trick of landscape photography, stirring up powerful questions about authenticity, mechanical illusion, and existential meaning in the process.



Alison Rossiter
Eastman Kodak Azo F3, expired August 1932,
processed in 2011 (A)
Unique gelatin silver print
Courtesy of Yossi Milo Gallery, New York

Everything about the exhibition is balanced, precise, and clean. Even the various rusty sculptures—as with Shane Ward's *Barrel*, Jay Heikes' *Morality's Reef*, or Harold Mendez *Catastrophe*

Lacks Coherence—carry the aesthetic of artifacts carefully positioned and classified in distilled space. The museum provides a structured framework that indexes its constituent parts. Certain motifs repeat. Ironically, given the pristine museum setting, visual static persists. One has the experience of constantly trying to tune into the pure frequency of a radio station, only to find pixilation, dust, or piles of dirt interfering with the bandwidth. *Santa Fe to Billings* is one such example, but in wandering through the extensive three-story show, the motif gathers increasing force.

In a dark room in the far corner of the museum, Stimac's second piece, *Old Faithful Inversion*, 2012, projects a looped film reel of pluming smoke on the wall. To that percussive, mechanical music, five of Allison Rossiter's small 3 1/2 x 5 3/8 inch photographs hang in elegant frames. The darkness of the room, combined with the warm spotlights, provides a dramatic aura to her archival works. The images read like black horizon lines, with crystalline cloud patterns blooming in gray overhead. Like those old spiritualist pictures, however, there is a bit of a trick at work. Each of the prints — A, B and C from her *Eastman Kodak Azo F3, expired August 1922*, processed in 2011 series, and #1 and #2 from her *Kodak Azo No. 4, expired February 1, 1992*, processed in 2011 (# Mold) series was fabricated entirely in the darkroom using old, partially deteriorated photographic paper; the fractal patterns one takes to be the sky are in fact the growth of mold that leached into this particular batch of photo paper before it was used. Still, a searching desire in the viewer projects a landscape onto the devised shadow work of a darkroom, and like Ward's rusty barrel with its shocking puddle of frozen mercury, one has to engage with a deteriorated surface. Both the metal drum and the paper respond to the potentially devastating affects of air and moisture, demonstrating the unnerving activity of seemingly inert materials.

Positioned on the landing between the first and second floor, Arthur Ou's black and white photograph *Untitled (Mountain)* acts as a hybrid homage to Robert Smithson and Chinese landscape painting; a series of three dirt piles cascade down the three elegant nesting tables they lie upon, each pile appearing like its own mountain. Perhaps in answer to Smithson, the works are stunning for their purposefully domestic (rather than epic) proportion. The texture of the dirt, so rich and elaborate, compared to the smooth pedestals stands out bright and sharp against a pure white of the backdrop. Scattered beneath this almost floral arrangement of soil lies a negative cast of those three mountains, marking where dirt once fell loose to the floor, reminiscent of some past energy. Here again, the simple, inconvenient materiality of dirt disrupts an otherwise pristine effort.

On the second floor of the space, Jeremy Bolen shows an extensive suite of photographs that further exacerbate that impression. Like Stimac, Bolen presents a different kind of documentary photography. In Plot M#1 (Print from film



Arthur Ou
Untitled (Mountain), 2007
Archival pigment print on rag paper
Courtesy of the artist and Brennan & Griffin,
New York

exposed and buried at plot m above waste from the first nuclear reactor. The film was unearthed by an anonymous force), the artist provides a mash up of site specific information: traces of radioactive frequencies invisible to the naked eye, the grounds on which those frequencies were captured by burying film, and debris Bolen collected from the site appear simultaneously in one print. In this work, Bolen photographed a smooth stone marker located at Plot M in Red Gate Woods—a plot of land that entombs nuclear waste. Without exposing the entire role, the artist then buried the film in Plot M ground; as a result the photograph exhibits traces of lightless, radioactive energy as a blue, horizontal streak that crosses over the print through exposed and unexposed frames. After scanning the resulting film into the computer, and printing the final photograph, Bolen scatters material debris collected from the original site over the photograph; the material peppers the surface like static electricity, teasing one's expectation for a smooth, clean, photographic surface. One wants to open up the frame and remove the obstructive grit, to wipe the insects away and get a clear picture of that otherwise dark and existential space. The instinct is joined with the urge to enter Ou's photograph with a broom and a dustpan, to polish and shine Mendez's catastrophe, or to wipe away the mold spores of Rossiter's film paper.

Doing so would spoil everything.

Find the rest of this article on ArtSlant, at
www.artslant.com/chi.

CLASSIC COLUMN

by Amber Renaye

“What’s Good Here?”*

*It is easy to make something *look* good—as in attractive, impressive, and maybe even appealing. But making something that *is* good—something with inherent qualities of significance—requires a range of thought and skill. Goodness is the yield of infinite recipes: recipes of calculation, of spontaneity, of lust, fear, contemplation, emergence, and will. When something is immanently good it is because it has depth, substance. Even the word “good” has an intrinsic value, a subtle weight—like the comfort of a good blanket.

Good is with and without form, but always impressionable.

Good is arguable and worth arguing over despite reason.

Good is less enthusiastic than great, generally.

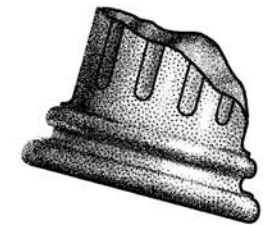
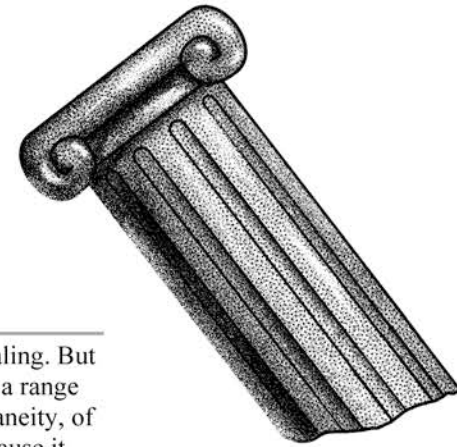
Good is not required. Plenty of things are not good.

Good is bad at the opposite end of the linguistic spectrum, but to not be good does not infer something is bad; the spectrum is long.

Good is forged (like anything else). It is falsified intentionally and by oblivion by way of aesthetic shortcuts and composed cunningness.

Good is what you make it - it's poetic, quantifiable only by other adjectives and emotional responses, determined by individual interpretation and expounded by experience.

Good is a level of quality. To say something is good reveals an individual standard but to say everything is good reveals a lack of judgment.



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“Being a mother, that most universal yet personal experience, has always been a creative act, albeit rarely acknowledged as such. In Mothernism, Lise Haller-Baggesen calls it for what it is: generative, radical, bodily, intense, staggering, connective, and then some.” — Lori Waxman

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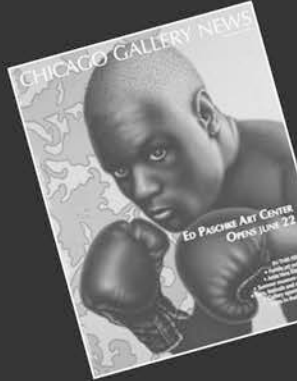
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