

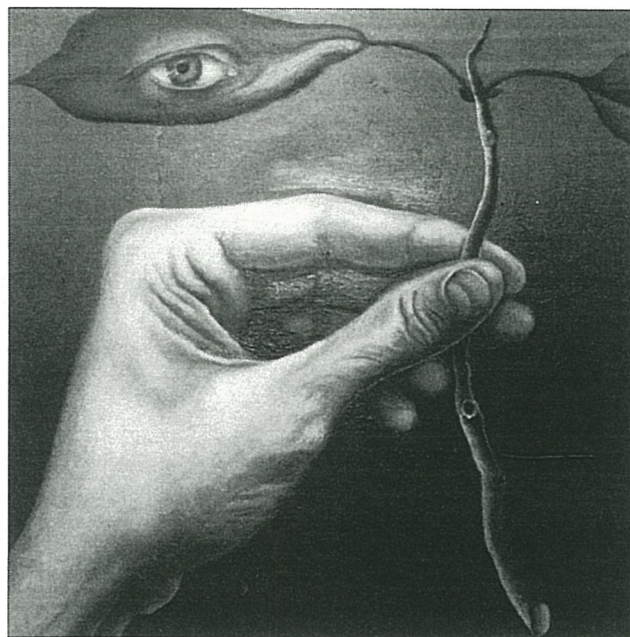
Artweek



■ Art & Money ■ Kimberly Austin ■ Rita Reischke ■ Matt Gainer ■ Eric Chesebro

MAY 1998
\$4.00





Phyllis Shafer, painting in *Serious Fun*, at Gallery Oboy, San Francisco page 21

4 Viewpoint

by Kate Bonansinga

5 Mixed Media

by Draza Fratto O'Brien

12 Art & Money

The Battle of Art and Money
by Mary Hull Webster 12

Has art lost its value?
by Patricia B. Sanders 13

The Other Job
by Deirdre Visser 14

A conversation with Lewis Hyde, author
by Meredith Tromble 15

A conversation with Ann Hatch, philanthropist
by Meredith Tromble 16

Actual dollars and virtual photos
by Kevin O'Brien 17

18 Reviews

Northern California

Kimberly Austin at Braunstein/Quay Gallery
by David Hunt 18

Mary V. Marsh at the San Jose Museum of Art, and 'Kindred Voices' at the SF Art Commission Gallery
by Terri Cohn 18

'Fading Millennium' at Gallery 16
by Mark Van Proyen 19

Linda Geary at Triangle Gallery
by Diane Roby 20

Lynn Beldner at Graystone
by Alicia Miller 20

'Serious Fun' at Gallery Oboy
by David Hunt 21

Southern California

Rita Reischke and Matt Gainer at Strange Air
by David DiMichele 21

Lewis deSoto at Christopher Grimes Gallery
by Holly Willis 22

Greg Colson at Griffin Contemporary Exhibitions
by Christopher Miles 23

The Drawing Group at Laband Art Gallery
by George Tapley 24

Idaho

Mel Strawn and Glen Bach at Prichard Art Gallery
by Ben Mitchell 25

Oregon

Eric Chesebro at Augen Gallery
by Lois Allan 26

Departments

News 2
Previews 6
Calendar 7
Competitions 28
Classifieds 31

ARTISTS FORVM

places emphasis on thematic exhibitions and related programs that provide a forum for the discussion of ideas that surround and inform an artist's work. ARTISTS FORVM presents work in the context of conceptual concerns investigated by the artist in the studio, and works closely with artists to develop a variety of programs related to the exhibitions. The programs—artist talks, critical lectures, panel discussions, workshops and demonstrations, poetry readings, music performances, and other events offered in the form of subscription series—provide an opportunity to have more direct contact with the artist and the ideas.

LANDSCAPES

REAL AND IMAGINED

Paintings, drawings, prints and garden sculptures by

JOAN BROWN
LLISA DEMETRIOS
LUCIA EAMES
JOSEPH GOLDYNE
ANN HOGLE
WOLF KAHN
DON RICH
DIANE ROBY
PAT SHERWOOD
LIBBY SMITH
DAVID TOMB
DON WILLIAMS

April 21 to June 27, 1998

ARTISTS FORVM SPRING 1998 SUBSCRIPTION SERIES

A subscription series featuring conversations with artists, writers and curators, held on Wednesday evenings at 6:45 p.m., preceded by a reception at 6 p.m.

May 6
LANDSCAPE—A HISTORICAL CONTEXT:
Conversation with Joseph Goldyne and Timothy Anglin Burgard, Ednah Root Curator of American Art, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

May 20
LANDSCAPES DESCRIBED—A LITERARY VIEW:
Readings by poets and writers

June 3
CALIFORNIA LANDSCAPE/PLEIN AIR:
Jacqueline Pilar, Curator, Fresno Art Museum, in
Conversation with Ann Hogle and Libby Smith

\$50 Subscription Series of three events
\$20 Individual events

Early reservations are recommended as seating is limited.
Programs may be subject to change. Please call to confirm dates.

ARTISTS FORVM

www.artistsforum.com
251 Post St., Suite 425 San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 981-6347 Tuesday – Saturday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Art & Money

but it trains you in visual intelligence. You are always in the mode—visually problem solving. The teaching feeds the work and the work feeds (the teaching).” However, because her job does relate so closely to her art she says she has to work to maintain the “delicate balance.” So Thiebault swims, an activity that allows her to transition from verbal to non-verbal mode and renews her energy for her artwork.

Waiting tables is right up there with teaching as an archetypal job for artists. Thiebault was a cocktail waitress for ten years before pursuing teaching. She found the work physically exhausting and mentally draining. However, for installation artist Sono Osato, who at 18 lied about her age to get a job as a cocktail waitress, it has always been an easy way to support herself. She still waits tables, working nights so that she has the day for her art. Although Osato plans one day to teach, for now the money in waitressing is fast, easy, and fairly good, and she doesn't have to take the work home.

None of the artists I spoke with have chosen one single and unvarying career path. Bay Area veteran artist David Ireland did drafting and worked in insurance before hiring himself out as a carpenter. Wayne got her first job at 15, pasting labels onto liquor bottles. (Although she only lasted three days on the label-pasting assembly line, she says it put her off liquor for life.) Since that first job, Wayne has designed accessories for the garment industry, worked on a WPA project, written radio scripts, and administered the Tamarind Lithography Workshop, a studio that she founded. For most artists, the search is a process of experimentation and discovery of the job which best meets one's financial requirements while leaving time and energy for the studio; sifting through the possible jobs available in that historical moment.

Because artists are not necessarily choosing a job for its career development potential, a choice may be made for very practical reasons that relate to their art. Does the job offer access to materials or facilities?

Performance and video installation artist Julio Morales works at the Blow-Up Lab, doing large-format printing and design work. The chief benefit, aside from its flexible scheduling, is access to facilities, materials and technology that he and his collaborators use in their artwork. Can one develop useful skills? Carpentry work gave Ireland the opportunity to develop skills which could be readily integrated into his art.

Sometimes overlaps between the art and the job, even in a job ostensibly unrelated to one's art, can appear, taking unanticipated forms. Consistent with Wayne's assertion that “everything one learns feeds into one's art,” Osato sees interconnections between waiting tables and her sculptural installations, conceptually relating both to theater. Osato “brings together unlikely found objects and implies connections through the relationships. It's a kind of hybridization ... It's like staging. You frame the objects, elements, and connect them.” For the artist it's a process very similar to working with the public.

If I'd hoped, in talking to these artists, to figure out where to find that interesting, part-time, challenging but not stressful, well-paid job that I could leave at work, I'd have been disappointed. But I learned that an artist doesn't have to make choosing a second job into a career choice. One can be self-employed for a while, then teach and then work in the computer industry.

Deirdre Visser is a Bay Area-based freelance writer and photographer.

A conversation with Lewis Hyde, author

By Meredith Tromble

Lewis Hyde's first book, *The Gift*, discussed the relationship between money and art in an entirely original way, combining information from anthropology, economics, psychology and literature. In graceful prose (he is also a practicing poet) Hyde offered a theory of art as a gift, a special object with social and spiritual components that make it an uneasy commodity. He built his argument with information from cultures where the primary economic flow is not the exchange of money but the exchange of gifts. In his new book, *Trickster Makes This World* (1998, Farrar, Straus and Giroux), Hyde examines trickster myths of several cultures, mixing them with stories from the lives of modern artists such as Marcel Duchamp and John Cage. He points out that trickster figures, in addition to being gods of the marketplace and commerce, operate on the fringes of society, helping to keep culture porous and open to new ideas.

Artweek *It seems you're setting out to answer all the questions that drive artists bats: Why can't I make any money? Why am I always on the outside?*

Lewis Hyde I think that's right. “Why can't I make any money” is a way to think about *The Gift* and “why am I always on the outside” is a way to think about the *Trickster* book. In both cases I'm trying to imagine artistic practice. When I began to write *The Gift* I thought there was a way in which what artists do had not been well imagined or articulated. There was always this portion of noncommercial feeling in art which we didn't have a full enough language to explore. So talking about works of art as gifts instead of commodities was my way of trying to elucidate what a lot of people feel but had trouble placing in language.

But at the beginning of *The Gift* I used an old debaters' ploy of saying all the things that are going to be problems with my argument are things I'm not going to bother to talk about. Such as the fact that gifts always are connected to hierarchy and structure. You can be kept in your place with gifts as well as made happy by gifts. That was one of the things that sort of bugged me when I was done with that book.

I was attracted to an old Greek story, the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, which is essentially about a thief who figures out how to get himself a part of the action, how to get inside the group instead of being an outsider. At the beginning of the story Hermes has stolen some cattle and his mother tells him he's a bad boy. He responds “If my father [meaning Zeus] won't give me what I want, I will steal it.” That's a challenge to the gift exchange model. If you're lucky enough to be part of an ongoing community and tradition that recognizes gift exchange that's great, but if you're not, if you're a real outsider, what do you do? These trickster stories are a way of filling out how that feels and talking about that part of what it is to lead a life of the imagination, which in this culture is the part where one is not part of the mainstream but can be insulted publicly by Jesse

Helms and have everybody think that that makes sense. **AW** *The Gift* described the artistic community as a gift community, meaning that the participants value and attempt to accumulate status and prestige rather than wealth. That made sense to me because I see many people working for peanuts or doing other work that they don't enjoy, so that they can participate in the art world. But the marketplace keeps intruding—it seems impossible to have a true gift community in our culture.

LH In the Old World most people would live in one place all their life, have one job, speak one language and have one set of gods. The trickster figures—characters like Hermes, or Coyote in North America, Loki in Scandinavia—were imagined as somewhat crazy marginal types who moved around. They're gods of the



Lewis Hyde. (Photo: John Seavolt.)

road, shapeshifters who can take on lots of different identities. They are skillful and interested in exchange and money, not necessarily to get rich, but to keep things flowing. In the modern world, everybody moves around. You're interviewing me on a Wednesday in San Francisco, but I was in Los Angeles last night and I'll be in Seattle tomorrow night. A thousand years ago nobody would have been in those three places except once in a lifetime. Capitalist democracy is the apotheosis of Trickster. Trickster figures now run the world.

AW *Although one often hears laments about this development, when you analyze the stories you point out that the morally ambiguous characteristics of Trickster—his lies and tricks—are bound up with survival.*

LH A lot of the old Native American trickster figures are ridden by their appetites. They are hungry and horny and their sexual and stomach interests drive them around. That's the point of departure ... but in order to get fed, the character has to wise up, has to figure out how to catch its prey and how to avoid being caught. And so it becomes intelligent about deception.

And as soon as you have intelligence that begins to understand about deception you begin to get symbolic intelligence and language and imagination. So partly what I argue is that these old trickster stories, like the Coyote stories, derive imagination from appetite. They begin with somebody who's hungry and end with somebody who knows about language and making a world, a world that isn't just given to us.

AW *Speaking of money which is given to artists, although most artists support government funding for the arts, there have been a few, such as Bruce Conner, who have argued vehemently that it does as much harm as it does good.*

LH I do support the NEA, although I can see why some artists are uncomfortable with it. For centuries, artistic practice has required patronage. I think that's partly because of the kinds of issues that I talk about in *The Gift*, that artistic practice is not well-delivered through the marketplace. It's not about commodities. Therefore often artists are forced either to accept patronage or live incredibly simple lives. The problem for this country, for 200 years, has been if you leave the patronage of kings and churches how can artists live? In the early days of the country the suspicion was that they shouldn't. People like [John] Adams thought that the sort of luxury associated with art was toxic to republican ideals and it was better to have very plain houses with nothing on the walls. I think the best way to arrange patronage in a capitalist democracy is an open question. One model is to turn to rich people. That's nice, if you get a Guggenheim. Another model would be to say, we are the community, we are the people who make wealth in this country, let's create a system of pooling our wealth to support the things we care about that won't be supported by the market.

Meredith Tromble is editor-in-chief of *Artweek*.

A conversation with Ann Hatch, philanthropist

By Meredith Tromble

Family legend has it that Ann Hatch's great-grandfather got his start selling a load of gristmills that he received in lieu of back pay. He must have had a great line of patter, because from that start he built up one of the great nineteenth century fortunes. Like other wealthy men of the age, he collected art. Eventually he opened his Minneapolis home and collection to the public, the start of the institution that is now the Walker Center for the Arts. Hatch inherited, along with some part of her great-grandfather's money, involvement in the family foundation which is connected with the Walker. In 1983 she also founded an institution, the Capp Street Project in San Francisco, in a house which had been renovated by the artist David Ireland. Through Capp Street she became an internationally known patron of installation art. This spring Hatch announced that the Capp Street Project would become part of the new Institute for Exhibitions and Public Programs at the California College of Arts and Crafts, and that she was turning her energies to founding the Oxbow Arts High School in Napa in partnership with Robert Mondavi (see "News," page 2). *Artweek* met with Hatch in her San Francisco home to discuss her experiences of art philanthropy.

Artweek *You were practically a teenage philanthropist, beginning to attend family foundation meetings when you were thirteen. How do you think your family background prepared you for your later work?*

Ann Hatch I don't recall ever having money when I was a child growing up in Pebble Beach. Things were charged, people knew who you were. There was no actual cash. When my mother passed away I inherited a lot of money which I had no preparation for whatsoever. I had never intellectualized money, much less handled it, or had any training in it. It was extremely uncomfortable in the beginning. I didn't want people to know I had money. Gradually I started to feel more comfortable with it and then I realized it could be quite a resource to extend to other people and enjoy myself.

I do remember those early foundation meetings. The Walker Art Center had just hired a new director, Martin Friedman.

Martin was an amazing man to watch. He worked directly with the artists—he probably chose the menu for the cafe and changed the toilet paper in the bathrooms—even though it was a large institution he controlled everything. And it worked. That made an impression on me. But it didn't hit me at the time, I actually thought about it more much later. It must have trickled in more than I realized, because when I opened Capp Street I had this bolt of awareness. Here I was opening a gallery in a house, which is exactly what my grandfather did.

AW *I understand that both your major projects, Capp Street and the Oxbow School, were inspired by places—Capp Street by David Ireland's house and the school by some land on a riverbank.*

AH That's right. I'm a very physically oriented person, very visual and I like real estate. I had no conscious desire to do an art space when I first saw David's house. I was winding up a marriage which had been based in the apple industry. I can always make people laugh with that story—I was living at two farms with my husband and small child and taking apples as seriously as one could and it wasn't working out. I saw David's house and made a decision right then and there to buy it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with it but I felt it was a very strong creative space and I was interested in the power that it had on me, instantly. I developed the project based on what wasn't happening. I would hear artists say that they didn't have people to support them financially or physically when they showed in museums. They weren't allowed to make new work and they didn't have places to stay. Capp Street was developed to provide those things; a nice place to stay, a reasonable budget to do new work, a staff to help with the work, a catalog, good photography. I was a little out of my

league, a little terrified, when I started. I still don't speak art talk particularly. I felt quite tender about that in the beginning. But after fifteen years I know that an idea doesn't have to be intellectually based or academically proven or theoretically justified—it can just exist as an opportunity. People tell you if it's a good idea or not.

AW *What's the difference between being a collector and being a philanthropist?*

AH Buying things is an entirely different discipline. If you're really buying things you want to buy the very best stuff and you want to buy things in relationship to each other, so you don't have one fabulous thing and three mediocre things. People who collect are rigorous. They're very attentive to auctions and details and pricing and who else is buying ... that whole activity just did not appeal to me. I'm not an acquisitive person. I

much prefer giving the money away through a structure like Capp Street. It's much more interesting than buying things and less burdensome. You give someone the money, then it's their responsibility to do something great. It's elasticizing money instead of holding it.

I should add here, however, that speaking about this publicly is not an invitation for people to call me up and ask for a grant. I have committed my funds to certain channels.

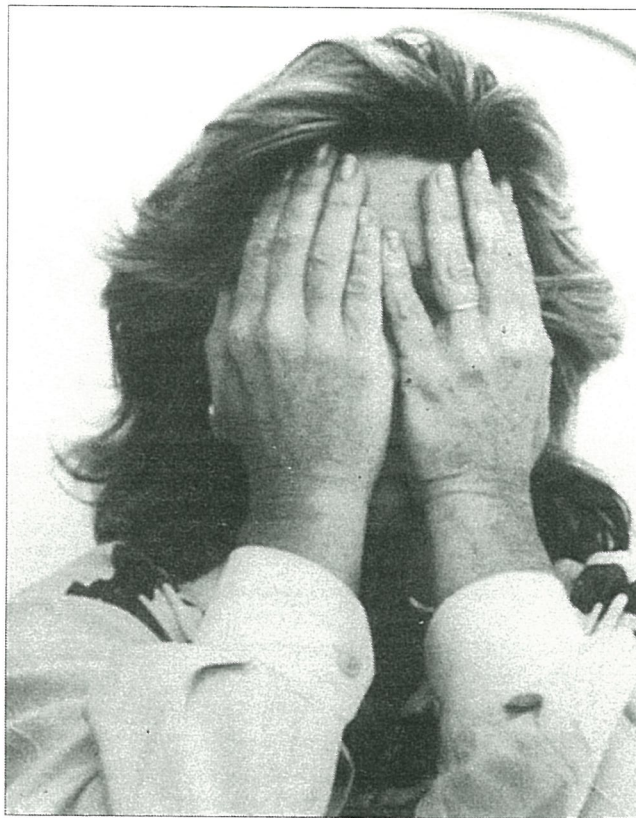
AW *There seems to be a general move, in funding the arts, away from grants to individual artists and towards community projects. Do you see your shift in emphasis towards the school in that light?*

AH The obvious thing at Capp Street is that our audiences are not broadening very much. The audience is not growing enormously and it's not changing radically. I think that wanting to do the school was a little bit self-serving, in the sense of wondering who is going to be the next generation of folks that come to see this kind of work.

The school is not about making sixty artists a semester. It's about integrating the creative process into the students' awareness so they can bring it to whatever they go on to do.

AW *I've heard it said that people give what they themselves would most like to receive. Do you receive creative satisfaction from your philanthropy?*

AH You feel like you're really a part of where you are. It makes you feel very vital and connected and I value that enormously. I know people that I wouldn't know otherwise. I like being around people who are doing something to shape the world we live in. I've been reading about some of the women that gave money in the arts, like Peggy Guggenheim and Gertrude Whitney. A lot of museums were started by women—women with less than high self-esteem in some cases—yet they inherited the money and took a focus, devoted themselves to that focus, and good things happened.



Ann Hatch. (Photo: Chiaenza/Hauser.)