

## NEWS AND NOTES

### POLLOCK WITHOUT PEERS

Jackson Pollock has no peers, not even four-year-old kids. After analyzing 37 attempts to imitate the artist's well-known "drip and splash" works, University of Oregon physics professor Richard Taylor has concluded that no one, so far, has been able to do what Pollock did. What he did was imbue the paintings with the intricate patterns-within-patterns known as fractals. No students or professors could do it. Fractals are like snowflake patterns, so complex that they can boggle the mind. This has helped in identifying possible Pollock paintings and the professor has found they do not have the characteristic fractal patterns.

### LOST & FOUND

**Found:** the finds were two portraits by Eakins, the great American realist painter who attended Philadelphia high school, and paintings by Henry Ossawa Tanner, N.D. Wyeth, Franz Kline and a group of 19<sup>th</sup>-century American impressionists.

Likewise in the Los Angeles Unified School District, which just completed a four-year inventory of its Art & Artifact Collection, the district owns 85,000 art objects, including paintings, murals, historical artifacts, architectural features and book, estimated to be worth about \$30 million. Included are three bas-relief works by Dali, a series of landscapes from the 1920s and 1930s, Greek coins and 34,000 original photographs.

**Lost:** On 24 May a fire in London destroyed a warehouse in the East End, leased by the art storage and shipping company Momart. Virtually all of the art in the building, most of it contemporary, was destroyed with work by Damien Hirst, Gillian Ayres, and Barry Flanagan all lost from their own collections and dealers Victoria Miro, Antony d'Offay, Leslie Waddington and Bernard Jacobson sustaining losses. A significant collection of work belonged to Charles Saatchi.

**Found:** A judge's son was jailed for allegedly stealing thousands of dollars worth of rare books from Bloomsburg University's library. (Pennsylvania). Timothy A. Naus, 22, was on parole for stealing antiques and old furnishings when his parole officer reported finding several stolen library books during a visit at his home. Naus, the only son of Columbia-Montour President Judge Scott W. Naus, was charged Thursday with library

theft, theft, receiving stolen property and criminal mischief and jailed on \$25,000 bail.

Library workers reported finding security tags and back pages torn from books late in September, just days after Timothy Naus was released from jail for stealing from a Clarion County antiques store while on parole. Timothy Naus served a year in prison for stealing antiques from shops in Bloomsburg and Mahoning Township in 2001 and 2002.

**Found:** A rare Viking graveyard, probably dating from the early 10<sup>th</sup> century, that was the final resting place of four warriors and two women, was found by a metal-detecting enthusiast wandering on a farm in northwest England. Swords, spears, jewelry, spurs and a possible horse harness were found, since the bones of the Vikings were destroyed by the highly acidic soil.

### ENDANGERED

The Cologne Cathedral in Germany has been placed on Unesco's list of endangered World Heritage sites. The 13<sup>th</sup>-century Gothic edifice is surrounded by high-rise buildings on the opposite bank of the Rhine River, causing "harmful visual impact" on the landscape.

### ART & POLITICS

Friedrich Christian Flick's contemporary art collection, a vast, high-priced trove of hip brand-name contemporary art, on exhibit at the Hamburger Bahnhof newly renovated, is a loan for seven years, allowing the owner to sell work while the exhibition naturally inflates the value of his collection. But

Flick is also the grandson of Friedrich Flick, a notorious Nazi industrialist, who employed thousands of slave laborers in his arms factories and who profited from Hitler's Aryanization program, so it is not surprising that someone (deranged, of course) dis some handspings and trampled on two works by Gordon Matta-Clark in the first exhibition of some 2500 works to be shown over the 7 years.

### DATELINE: Berlin

Two new museums have opened in Berlin: Berlinische Galerie, a museum of modern art that shared space until 1997 with the Martin-Gropius-Bau museum and then lent out its collection. Its 700,000 paintings, sculptures, photographs and installations, spanning 120

years, include works by Grosz, Dix, Kirchner, Baselitz.

The other museum is the Bode Museum with its coin collection on Berlin's historic Museum Island. More than 500,000 coins, from Greece in 600 B.C. to the present. It will complete its renovation by 2006.

### DATELINE: New York City

Jenny Holzer's saying about life and the state of the world have been distributed through the city emblazoned on banners even attached to airplanes. Most are works by contemporary poets, to be read for their content. The projections were visible for the last week of October through 1 November.

• **The New York City Construction Competition** took place in November with the use of canned food, which was subsequently given to the Food Bank for New York City when the installations were dismantled on the day before Thanksgiving. The did an outsized popcorn box and strip of film called "The Can-nes Film Festival", the "Canana Split" made up of 3.225 cans in the shape of a giant banana split. Then there was the tower that looked like a certain off-balance landmark in Italy and was called the "Leaning Tower of P's." And lots more!

• **The National Arts Journalism Program** at Columbia University has published a study on arts coverage in U.S. newspapers, which concludes that it is declining in both volume and depth. Most of the newsrooms are devoting space to listing of arts events; and electronic media are supplanting newspapers as a source for arts coverage.

### DATELINE: Lhasa, Tibet

The Gedun Choephel Artists' Guild has opened up a gallery in Lhasa, showing contemporary art packed with abstract symbolism, veiled social commentary, mixed-media expressions of postmodernism. 10 Tibetan and 2 longtime-resident Chinese painters have made this bold attempt to remake a culture bound by centuries of tradition, hemmed in by narrow stereotypes. This is Tibet's first "emiprofessional art space".

### DATELINE: London

Duchamp's 1917 readmade Fountain has

been named the world's most influential piece of modern art, knocking Picasso and Matisse from their traditional positions of supremacy. The UK sees a direct link between Duchamp's "readymade", as the artist called it, and the conceptual art that dominates today, e.g. Tracey Emin's *Bed* being a prime example.

Number 2 was Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger*, 3 was Andy Warhol's *Marilyn Diptych*, 4) Picasso's *Guernica*, and 5) was Matisse's *The Red Studio*. The rest of the top 10 are: 6) Joseph Beuys, *I Like America and America Likes Me*; 7) Constantin Brancusi's *Endless Column*; 8) Jackson Pollock's *One: No. 31*; 9) Donald Judd's 100 untitled works in mill aluminum, and 10) Henry Moore's *Reclining Figure 1929*.

#### DEADLINE: Chicago

A Chicago artist, Chapman Kelley, filed a federal lawsuit against the Chicago Park District, five months after it slashed the size of a Grant Park wildflower garden he planted 20 years ago.

In his suit, invoking the federal Visual Artists Rights Act, which aims to prevent the destruction or modification of recognized artwork, alleged the district destroyed his creation. He views it as a landscape painting done in wildflowers, and the suit includes several documents praising it as a work of art.

#### MUSEUM NEWS

- Michelangelo's *David* has been celebrated in its 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Concerts, fireworks, symposia and exhibitions took place in Florence, Italy in September, after a long restoration.

- The Munch Museum in Oslo, Norway has been retrofitted for security upgrades, after the theft of *The Scream* and another Munch painting.

- Ken Tyler, the American print publisher who has worked with leading contemporary artists since the 1980s, has donated 480 prints to the Tate Gallery in London. It includes 28 artists, including David Hockney, James Rosenquist, Michael Heizer and Joan Mitchell, is that final installment in a series of gifts from Tyler's collection to museums around the world.

- The Tate Modern in London has a show called "Raw Materials", but there is nothing to see, only to hear the noise, 22 recorded

texts in different voices yelling, whispering, pleading, mocking, bullying piped in via speakers set up at intervals along the hall so that visitors hear different segments as they move through the vast space. These are earlier works by Bruce Nauman, produced over nearly 40 years. Cacophony through 28 March.

- A new museum of Peruvian sculpture from the collection of Rafael Larco Hoyle's collection is the Museum of Pre-Columbian Art in Cuzco, Peru, opened by the collector's grandson.

- A new museum devoted to clay, The American Museum of Ceramic Art or AMOCA is located in downtown Pomona, California. It opens with a 108-piece retrospective exhibition of pots and sculptures by Paul Soldner, a leading figure in Southern California's effort to transform ceramics from a functional craft to an expressive art form. It is the dream of businessman David Armstrong, inspired by his passion for ceramics sparked by Soldner 45 years ago.

- The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, whose structure has remained the same since 1903, will have its first major expansion, designed by Italian architect Renzo Piano with a multistory building which will triple the Gardner's special exhibitions space, create a new main entrance and mark a dramatic leap for the museum which has wrestled with ways to modernize its operation without violating the strict, legal limits that Isabella Stewart Gardner created to maintain the museum's distinctive atmosphere.

#### ART & MAIL

- The U.S. Postal Service is now accepting any picture smaller than five megabytes, free of copyright restrictions and suitably decent, to make into official postage stamps. No portraits of people will be allowed anymore. Terrorism, I guess.

- Spamusement (spamusement.com) is a home for what its creator calls "poorly drawn cartoons inspired by actual spam subject lines."

#### DATELINE: Medzilaborce, Slovakia

The eastern Slovak town of 6,500 that is home to the Warhol Family Museum of Modern Art is planning to become a symbol

of Pop Art and Andy Warhol, with a grant from the European Union. The \$54,000 grant will be used to renovate the facades of nine houses in the center of town and to decorate four bus stops in Warhol's style. This will be a catalyst for tourism.

## UMBRELLA NEWS

#### Contributions to Umbrella Museum

Angela Lorenz, Joanne Echevarria-Myers, Sherman Clarke, Claire Isaacs, Laura Blacklow, Keith Smith & Scott McCaerney, Peter Netmail

#### UMBRELLA NEWS

After the G.O.P. Convention in New York, many of the items such as chairs were distributed to centers for the elderly around the city. Elderly New Yorkers also received rain ponchos and umbrellas.

UMBRELLA.net (2004), is a collaboration between Jonah Brucker-Cohen and Katherine Moriwaki (both US/Ireland) who exhibit, speak and conduct workshops at festivals. This work relies on rainfall being frequent and unpredictable, and can only come from a geographical region where carrying an umbrella is a daily necessity. Made in Dublin, similar work could have been produced in Melbourne or Auckland, but never in sunny Beirut or Brisbane.

UMBRELLA.net consists of 10 Bluetooth-equipped umbrellas with chat-capable PDAs. When it is raining and the umbrellas are open, they connect and illuminate with bright LEDs; pulsing red if searching for nodes, pulsing blue if connected to other umbrellas; or flashing blue if transmitting data between umbrellas.

This public artwork establishes a fleeting sense of community between umbrella users, who must be in close physical proximity for social engagement as the connection dissipates as they move away. This is an interesting observation on contemporary networking, as more and more we are contracting from the anonymous, interchangeable global internet, to operate within the intimacy of small local networks—hinterLANs—or discreet social groups which speak of containment and mutual need.