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First view

Economic downturn prompts stand-out booths

Less commercial climate results in "curated" presentations

As dealers struggle to stand out in the shrinking art market, increasing numbers are presenting single-artist exhibitions at the Armory Show, which opens in New York to invited guests on Wednesday, and to the public on Thursday. Others are presenting themed and curated group shows instead of unrelated selections from the gallery roster.

For some, this is clearly a response to the dire financial situation: while dealers struggled through Monday's snow storm to hang their booths, the Dow Jones index plummeted to its lowest mark for 12 years. Paris dealer Frank Elbaz, of the Galerie Frank Elbaz (P94/973), will show the sculptor Gyan Panchal. "Due to the economic situation, we're not expecting to do much business, so I'd rather make a beautiful and coherent booth. The main purpose of my presentation is to meet curators and collectors," he said.

One of the most striking solo shows is devoted to Hans Josephsohn, a late-blossoming 89-year-old sculptor whose massive, archaic bronzes greet arrivals near the fair entrance in front of the large stand taken by Hauser & Wirth of Zurich and London (P94/601). "We could have brought some discreet paintings and sold them easily," said associate director Joel Yoss. "But we don't like to do things the easy or the obvious way. We like to take risks—and hopefully we will sell some things at this fair." The largest Josephsohn works are on sale for \$210,000, but smaller wall reliefs are on offer at \$10,000, reflecting the tactic adopted by most galleries at this year's Armory of offering works at lower price points.

London dealer Simon Lee (P94/1504) has shifted to one-artist shows at fairs in the past two years. "Sales volumes are lower, but one feels somehow more satisfied," he said. "It is so unsatisfactory to show one of this artist and one of that—it can end up looking like a dog's breakfast. Fortunately I don't depend on art fairs for sales. I am more interested in them being extensions of the gallery." At the Armory Show he will present a stand devoted to New York-based painter Gary Simmons.

Some dealers say they have



Solo shows: Gary Simmons at Simon Lee (top), Hans Josephsohn at Hauser & Wirth

opted for solo shows for straightforward commercial reasons. London dealer Max Wigram (P94/708) believes he has an excellent opportunity to sell his exhibition of monochrome oils on board by James White, priced at about \$16,000 to \$25,000. "These are beautiful paintings—new and fresh to the United States, but an artist who is already well supported by collectors in Europe, and by some in New York who collect emerging artists."

Wigram believes a solo show can have real impact at a fair. "The market is not going to play such a big role any more, which means people will have to look in depth. My gallery represents a generation of artists who have nothing to do with the tomfoolery of the last few years."

Scott Speth of Western Exhibitions, Chicago, (P94/740) also believes in making a strategic impact. "We're a young gallery with young and emerging artists. There are so

many well-known national and international artists here, so we figured the best way to tell our story was to have a one-man show." Western Exhibitions is showing John Neff, a 34-year-old photographer.

Galerie Eigen+Art of Berlin and Leipzig (P94/1051) is presenting a one-man show for the third year running at the Armory, convinced that it is the best way to introduce emerging artists to the US market. This year's artist is Matthias Weischer; two paintings were already on reserve to collectors who had seen them via jpeg before the show even opened, at \$160,000 and \$38,000 each, according to gallery director Gerd Harry Lybke.

Other single-artist shows include Christine Hill at Ronald Feldman Fine Arts of New York (P94/951); Dasha Shishkin at Zach Feuer of New York (P94/1151); Eva Berendes at Jacky Strenz of Frankfurt (P94/743); Maria Finn at The Apartment in Athens

(P94/966); and Anton Henning at Galerie Bob van Orsouw of Zurich (P94/900).

Museum-style group shows include Paris space Galerie Lahumière's (P92/312) presentation "Paris 1950-60—the Roots" in the new modern section on Pier 92, featuring geometric abstract art; Sicardi of Houston (P92/353), showing Latin American kinetic art of the 1960s; and a group show of small works by women artists including Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse and Kiki Smith by New York dealers Amy Wolf and Marianne Elrick-Manley (P92/346). Studio la Città of Verona (P92/230) hired curator Marco Meneguzzo to direct "Italy Post-Contemporary", featuring nine artists led by Morandi and Fontana. Gallery owner Hélène de Franchis said: "I wanted to present a less commercial show with high-quality work representing the 40-year history of my gallery." Bruce Millar, Brook Mason, and Charmaine Picard

New Pier 92

Art of the Depression...

...the 1930s, that is

Collectors hoping to leave the deepening recession outside when entering the Armory Show's new modern Pier 92 today will find themselves confronted by a number of booths showing art from the Great Depression. Works include social realist paintings and photographs created under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and other programmes initiated by Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal of 1933-39.

At Forum Gallery's booth (P92/328), dealer Robert Fishko has a selection of WPA-era works by artists such as Reginald Marsh, Ben Shahn and Philip Evergood. One piece by James Daugherty, *Study for Hartford Armory Mural*, around 1920, was a draft of a proposed—and never executed—painting for a WPA building; two other 1920s works by obscure WPA artists Henry Arthur Miller and Samuel Woolf depict, respectively, an anti-war rally and a political convention (both \$15,000 or less).

"This art is something that people can always identify with—and maybe at this moment in a special way—and that's why we decided to focus on that aspect of our programme," said Fishko.

At Alan Koppel Gallery's booth (P92/444), which also features Yayoi Kusama and Gerhard Richter, one of the signature pieces from the WPA era is on display: Dorothea Lange's iconic photograph *Migrant Mother*, 1936, here as



Migrant Mother, 1936

an exhibition print for her 1965 MoMA show (priced at \$175,000). Dealer Bruce Silverstein (P92/240), who is also showing two works by Lange, said he thought the works might appeal to collectors as a not-so-funhouse mirror of the present moment.

Michael Rosenfeld (P92/237), who is showing Charles White's *Study for Chicago Public Library Mural*, a beautiful and moving WPA-era painting from 1940, said the period may be especially attractive to collectors, both for its historic resonance and the abundance of works still available for purchase—or undiscovered. "People are definitely taking notice of it again and there are a lot of great works out there," he said. Of course, just because they were made during the Depression doesn't mean they're cheap. White's painting is going for \$450,000. **Andrew Goldstein**

It's not just the Armory that has a taste for the modern

He may be one of the world's most expensive living artists but when it comes to spending his own millions, Jeff Koons turns to the classics. The New York-based artist has been revealed as the owner of this 1969 Picasso painting, *The Kiss*, currently on loan to the National Gallery in London as part of its exhibition on the Spanish artist (until 7 June). Koons bought the work at Sotheby's New York in May 2008 for \$17.4m. Inspired by a Henri Rousseau self-portrait and a portrait of his wife, both of which were owned by Picasso, it is one of the master's final depictions of lovers in a passionate embrace. Other works recently bought by Koons include a large limewood carving of St Catherine, dating from around 1505, by the German 16th-century sculptor Tilman Riemenschneider (acquired at Sotheby's New York for \$6.3m in January 2008) and an 1866 Gustave Courbet nude purchased at Sotheby's London in June 2007 for £1.64m. C.R.



Photo courtesy of the owner/Sotheby's Pressphoto/DAOS 2008

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Diary

Battle of the Bodacious Docents



The Armory's latest innovation launched this year is the Docent Programme whereby overseas collectors, important visitors, or just the plain curious can call the VIP hotline to have themselves escorted around the event by a complimentary docent worthy of any major museum. Or as Kari Morris, executive assistant to her brother, show president Paul, puts it: "Our specially-selected docents have the minds of academics and the bodies of centrefolds."

Amongst these Bodacious Docents as they have come to be known is the fabled Helen Klisser During, who not only runs New Zealand's greatest private sculpture park but was also on that country's official ski team, and who, having made a miraculous recovery from a broken back became known in the local media as "Kisser" rather than Klisser. Whilst she is rumoured to have a Kennedy amongst her walk-thro'gh clients, her rival art-history expert is a delicious Russian blonde codenamed Nataliya. "She's totally bodacious!" admits Morris in awe.

Big Pussy blows Vito away



This week's Bronx Museum benefit, held in the Arthur Avenue Market in Belmont, the old Italian neighbourhood, was supposedly a celebration of native son, artist Vito Acconci. But that *basso-profundo* "actionist" was being honoured at the same time as three others including



Ewan Gibbs conquers New York

"A lot of artists slag off art fairs but I think they're positive," admits English draughtsman Ewan Gibbs in town to mastermind his specially-commissioned Armory imagery. "Without them these artists wouldn't be able to afford the time to make work in their studios." As the fair's official artist this year, Gibbs, 35, relishes the opportunities the Armory has provided, plastering his work over every sort of branding. "The Armory put out 5,000 catalogues; more people are going to see my work this week than in my entire career so far." Gibbs has also produced a set of four linocuts for the fair (editions of just 20 each, above *New York*, 2007), keeping the integrity of his small print editions. New York is one of Gibbs's favourite cities and Manhattan has certainly been good to him. When he first came as a humble student from London's Goldsmiths College, he stayed at the YMCA, while now he resides on Park Avenue in an apartment owned by his major collector-patron. Gibbs's drawings (which start at £10,000) are infamously labour intensive, his often American-themed imagery plotted out on graph paper, taking from seven days to a month each to finish. "I can get through thirty H pencils in one drawing—my most important tool is an electric pencil sharpener, I treat myself to a new one every year." Adrian Dannatt

Vincent "Big Pussy" Pastore of HBO's gangster drama "The Sopranos". And from the moment the emcee mangled Vito's name, it was clear that he was not to be the star of the evening. No, Big Pussy stole his thunder entirely, reminiscing about the old days, doing an impromptu Sinatra song and leaving the crowd cheering for more. But Vito briefly had his moment when, strangely for this Italian Catholic enclave, he was introduced with a detailed description of his, ahem, seminal 1971 performance *Seedbed* at Sonnabend Gallery. Alas when Acconci finally took the mic, it was to inform the audience, in serious tones, that he now realised that his masturbatory performance was all about "architecture and inhabiting space", hardly a rib-tickler among the local goombahs.

Who is A.H.?

Opening in the midst of the Armory madness on the Bowery is an intriguing show at Janos Gat Gallery (until 28 March) simply and mysteriously entitled "Photographs by A.H." This project consists of 120 images of graffiti crosses daubed on the walls of abandoned buildings in Beirut dating back to 1975 and the outbreak of the 20-year civil war. They reflect the often overlooked "Intra" conflict—or Christian vs Christian militia war—that was over-shadowed by the predominantly Muslim vs Christian disputes. The secretive artist is revealed to be one Ahmad El Hussein, scion of a famed Lebanese political dynasty and one of the great *bon vivant* salonists of both Paris and Manhattan, where his glamorous loft conveniently abuts Janos's gallery.

Holman brings in da noise

Who should be spotted lingering outside the Armory piers in anticipation of the grand



opening but underground hip-hop legend Michael Holman, looking suitably Old Skool complete with boombox. "I'm out here to promote my new project called Sound Rally For the Future® which is a global, mass act of humanity, making sound or noise for exactly one minute at noon, simultaneously across all global time zones, with the purpose of creating mass consciousness." This ambitious conceptual scheme will actually take place for the first time next year, on 21 June, Summer Solstice of the year 2010, but Holman wants to be sure the whole art world will be ready to make as much racket as possible at the appointed hour. "Sound Rally For The Future® is simply the ringing and rattling of an ancient alarm clock, with pots and pans, music, prayer, shouts, by whatever means you choose. We will raise a cosmic cacophony." And Holman sure knows what's hip, he's da man who took Malcolm McLaren up to the Bronx to discover break-dancing back in the dayz, so give the man a shout-out when you see him. Or as he puts it "Be prepared for instantaneous evolution!"

Guess who's coming to dinner?

Dinner-and-a-show is what everyone wants and in the

high-stakes social arena of the Manhattan art world during the Armory which soirée you get invited to is certainly more important than which exhibition you might attend. Hence the guest list of Marian Goodman's sit-down nosh-up celebration on Tuesday of veteran conceptualist Dan Graham, whose new show includes the perfectly named sculpture *Half Square/Half Crazy*, a nod to the artist's own extreme eccentricity. Here the majestic roll call of invitees included Russian property billionaire Janna Bullock, starchitect Steven Holl, curators Chrissie Iles, Rochelle Steiner and Philippe Vergne, not to mention America's favourite collectors Don & Mera Rubell. Fellow old-school conceptual guru Lawrence Weiner had to juggle his famously complex social calendar and finally plumped for Goodman's goodies, replying with one of his signature cryptic texts: EVERYONE ELSE IS AT ENA. For yes, Ena Swansea, fabled artist and Chelsea hostess was throwing a rival dinner party at the same hour, equally chock-a-block with the art *haute monde* but with the added advantage of the legendary Boeuf Bourguignon cooked by her husband Antoine Guerrero, master chef and PS1 supremo. Guests found round Ena's table included artists Marina Abramovic and Kimssooja, top-collector Mickey Cartin, and Christian Rattemeyer of MoMA. New York's leading collectors and philanthropists Raymond Leary and Melva Bucksbaum made up for the only missing regular Swansea guests—Princess Gloria von Thurn und Taxis, unfortunately in Africa, and singer Rufus Wainwright, present by his absence. Whilst celebrating the Armory-action of special guests Galleria Continua of Tuscany, Ena raised her own wry toast to the state of the art world: "to the Armory—waste not, want not!"



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Ricky Swallow
Guy Tillim
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Bill Viola
Uwe Wittwer
Tarek Zaki

1933. N^o 7. A Swivel for a fishing Line. S. B.
8. The same. S. B.
9. An Ornament hanging at their breast.
10. a Comb.
11. a Pipe which they use in skinning the Seal.
12. The butt-end of a Harpoon Staff.
13. A Sort of Button on their breast, which the Women have to carry their Children on.
14. made fast to the fishing Line.
15. A Harpoon sheath'd with wood, for fear of cutting holes in their Canoes.
16. An Ornament for the breast.
17. The same as n^o 5.
18. A Harpoon.
19. A Tooth, but of what creature I know not.
20. 2^o.
21. A Contrivance belonging to a Drill.
22. A Foxtot to blow up seal skin with.
23. The same as 22.
24. An ornament hanging at a Woman's breast.
25. An Ornament for the Nose.
26. An Ivory Doll. for Fish (one).
27. The same as 25.
28. In the Paper is a Stone belonging to 3.
29. For Children to play with.
30. A Lance.
31. The same as 29.
(Cetera non descripta.)

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International fairs

Financial situation forces gallery withdrawals

Events affected in New York, Dubai and Maastricht



The Armory Show is opening today with an unprecedented sweep of exhibitors across two piers (total numbers are up from 160 last year to 177 this year in Pier 94 plus the additional 68 modern galleries in Pier 92), but veteran fairgoers will probably notice some conspicuous absences. Due to the economic downturn or other reasons—some relating to the show's new management under Merchandise Mart Properties—around 45 dealers have not returned to the fair.

"There have been some dropouts over the last few months," said Armory Show spokesman Giovanni Garcia-Fenech. He added that several dealers had opted for smaller, cheaper stands.

For many of the galleries who aren't returning, the expense of exhibiting was too great in the face of uncertain sales. "I decided not to have a booth this year only because it's two or three months' rent, and I would rather pay my bills here," said Bill Brady of New York's ATM Gallery.

Some galleries, such as Berlin's Buchmann Galerie, were on the fair waiting list and were then offered space but turned it down because of the economy. However, Greene

Galleries are thinking carefully about attending art fairs

Naftali withdrew in July "for reasons unrelated to the economy but related to the management of the fair", said dealer Carol Greene. Some felt the Armory, founded by maverick dealers such as Colin de Land and Matthew Marks, had lost touch with its origins. "It's become a huge corporation," said one gallerist.

A number of dealers—including Marks—skipped the Armory this year in favour of the Art Dealers Association of America's Art Show, a more local affair held last month in Manhattan's Park Avenue Armory. David Maupin of Lehmann Maupin Gallery said he took a "hiatus" from the Armory this year to do the ADAA fair "because it's small, really focused, and is a destination".

However, 114 galleries did return to the Armory this year, including major players such as Yvon Lambert (P94/933), David Zwirner (P94/1001) and PaceWildenstein (P94/1019). "We are committed to the fair as a New York [and Paris/London]-based gallery," said Olivier Belot, the director general of Yvon Lambert. "The new modern

section in Pier 92 means the fair will have a different audience with a new energy."

The Armory is not the only fair to see some exhibitors melt away. More than two dozen galleries who showed at Art Dubai last year will not be back when the fair returns later this month (18-21 March). "We just decided not to do it, it's a big schlep," said New York dealer Bonni Benrubi, who added that she's "grateful" for her decision considering the difficult state of Dubai's economy.

London's Xerxes Gallery has "pulled out" according to a representative, while Portugal's Galeria Mário Sequeira decided not to reappear. "It's always difficult to start in a different market and in this climate it's particularly hard," said Federico Sequeira.

Also opening later this month is the Tefaf fair in Maastricht (13-22 March). The former European Fine Art Fair, which specialises in top end fine and decorative arts, has lost nine exhibitors including the Acquavella Galleries, Jablonka Galerie and the Grey Gallery.

Andrew Goldstein

On show

British collector reveals photo collection in New York

Anita Zabłudowicz is also planning a Las Vegas space

Collector, philanthropist and driving force behind London's 176 exhibition space in a former Methodist chapel, Anita Zabłudowicz, is visiting New York to exhibit photographic works from her collection and, she says, to search out new and emerging talent. Works by Wolfgang Tillmans, Thomas Struth, Gregory Crewdson and Stephen Shore will be on view at a cocktail reception being held on Friday at the New York offices of the Zabłudowicz collection as part of the Armory Show VIP calendar. Zabłudowicz, the wife of investment and real estate millionaire Poju Zabłudowicz, is joining collectors including Ellen and Jerome Stern and Ronald Lauder who are also giving access to their homes or exhibition spaces.

While she may be in New York during Armory week, Zabłudowicz is as focused on the city's commercial gallery shows as she is on the fair itself. "It is a really good quality fair, a bit like a smaller more accessible version of Art Basel Miami Beach, but what is so important is that the Armory influences all the surrounding galleries in New York. Even those not showing at the fair itself create really strong, exciting exhibitions during that period," she says.

Given the current financial climate, this year the effect the Armory Show has on the smaller galleries is perhaps more important than ever to Zabłudowicz. "Due to the credit crunch we are going to be doing a bit of everything this time. We can't focus so much on purchases so I am going to look, research and discover as well. I would like to buy lots, obviously, but this year I really can't."

Zabłudowicz says she tries not to be influenced by press coverage of artists—"I try not to get involved in the hype"—and that it is gut instinct that leads her to choose a particular work. "I usually go for genius," she says. "That is not



Above: Wolfgang Tillmans, *Lights* (2002). Right: Dash Snow's *It Takes One To Know One* (2004)



easy to define but you just feel it. I want it to be something I have never seen before. Usually technically they are quite brilliant but sometimes that is at first not evident, for instance with someone like [Thomas] Hirschhorn. It could be a brilliance in the way they are thinking," she explains.

Some of her most cutting-edge artist discoveries have come from New York with Dash Snow, Terence Koh, Rashid Johnson and Aaron Young all a part of the Zabłudowicz Collection. While her process of discovery may not be pre-planned, she has a knack of identifying artists who later achieve high profiles. "I like to find artists about three years after they have graduated. That way I can follow and afford them hopefully until the day I die," she says. "At that point the art is still pure in my eyes, it is art for art's sake. They haven't yet been grabbed by the big collectors or made a part of the international fair circuit."

Supporting younger artists is very much Zabłudowicz's ethos. The 176 exhibition space in London has a strong

education programme, and it regularly sponsors Zoo Art Fair, a satellite of the Frieze Art Fair that focuses more on emerging artists.

Meanwhile, Zabłudowicz also told *The Art Newspaper* that she is planning to develop an exhibition space in Las Vegas. The plan started when Zabłudowicz bought a 10,000 sq. ft installation by Keith Tyson last year, and the artist told her that it would be appropriate to install it in the casino city. As Las Vegas is looking to extend its cultural offerings, the city's mayor offered Zabłudowicz a free plot of land to build somewhere to show the work. The project is temporarily on hold as a result of the economic situation.

William Oliver

Inside the artist's studio: Joel Shapiro

Joel Shapiro's 24,000 sq. ft, four-storey studio in Long Island City is perched in the shadow of the Queensboro Bridge. He maintains two of the four floors of the 1911 former power plant for his projects while his wife, the painter Ellen Phelan, also has a studio. The first floor, filled with industrial equipment, is banked by a balcony with shelving holding upwards of 80 maquettes. His third-floor studio contains massive bulletin boards stretching the length of the building and 15 worktables. The top floor is the couple's "penthouse" with a deck, which they use but do not live in. Shapiro also has an adjoining warehouse. **The Art Newspaper: What was the impetus for your move from your building in historic Greenwich Village (now occupied by Galerie**

Zürcher) to industrial Long Island City?

Joel Shapiro: I wanted space and sunlight. Manhattan is no longer a possibility; it's malled out. This feels the way Soho felt in the 60s. I got this right after 9/11 and it took 200 trash containers to clean it out. I never have to put on lights here. Part of me is tempted to turn it into an exhibition space. It's adequate for two artists—I'm teasing. I know [the second studio on the third floor] is a little indulgent, but it is where I spend most of my time.

TAN: What does your new studio accommodate in terms of machinery?

JS: I have industrial woodworking equipment in the studio, such as drills, saws and rigging devices.

TAN: To some degree, your new quarters approximate



The artist has moved from Greenwich Village to a larger studio in Long Island City

the trendy dine/den/live concept, home design and studio all rolled into one.

JS: Up in the penthouse, we have a kitchen and we've had birthday parties for my granddaughter. Ellen and I

keep thinking we might move here but we wouldn't. **TAN: What impact does the increased space have on your art?**

JS: I can see what I am doing. I paint papers with my



own colours to make the collages. Since I'm less dependent on the confines of architecture, I can do things I can't do elsewhere, like work on larger pieces. I can also work on multiple things

simultaneously. I can suspend shapes in space.

TAN: What do you have in the pipeline?

JS: A large piece was just installed on Savile Row in London. I am working on another for the US Consulate in Canton (Guangzhou, China). The McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas, is doing a retrospective.

TAN: With seven fairs coming up this weekend, what is your take on the current art scene?

JS: Fairs are a very easy way to catch up with galleries. [But] I'm shocked by some of the dealers. There's been a lot made that's pretty awful.

Interview by Brook Mason
□ Joel Shapiro is one of a number of artists opening their studios as part of the Armory's VIP programme. He is represented by PaceWildenstein (P94/1019)



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James Drake, *Exit Juárez*
(detail), 2007. Charcoal,
tape, and miscellaneous
items on paper, 95 x 80 in

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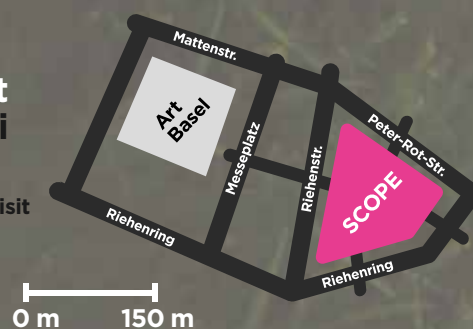
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New York exhibitions

Jeremy Deller tackles troubled legacy of Iraq War

Turner prize-winner to take the controversial show on a three-week tour of the US in late March

British artist Jeremy Deller, whose work encourages public discussion of social issues and who won the UK Turner prize in 2004, is presenting a rotating cast of more than 30 military veterans, journalists, scholars and Iraqi nationals discussing the situation in Iraq—while seated on a sofa in the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York. The show continues through Armory week. Art:Concept (P94/607) and The Modern Institute (P94/801) are showing his work at the Armory.

Deller's commissioned exhibition, "It Is What It Is: Conversations About Iraq", gives visitors the chance to put questions to key witnesses and experts such as Donny George, the former director of the Iraq Museum in Baghdad, and Nour Al-Khal, who worked as a translator for slain American journalist Steven Vincent. The remains of a car hit by a bomb attack on Al-Mutanabbi Street in central Baghdad, where 38 people were killed, is installed in the gallery to encourage discussion.

The second part of the project, co-sponsored by the public art group Creative Time, takes the venture on the road as Deller travels across the US for three weeks in an RV with an army veteran, an Iraqi artist and a writer who will document the journey from New York to Los Angeles. The road trip, like the museum intervention, is meant to encourage non-partisan public dialogue.

Deller's exhibition is part of the Three M Project, an initiative started in 2004 by the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago and the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, to jointly commission, exhibit and acquire works by artists



Clockwise from top: the show is a forum for discussing the Iraq War; Jeremy Deller; a car that was hit by a bomb attack in Iraq is part of the exhibition

It's one thing to do something like this in New York, in a liberal museum environment, and it's another to turn up at a truck stop in Mississippi

who have not yet received significant recognition. "It Is What It Is" is at the New Museum of Contemporary Art until 22 March and then travels to the Hammer Museum (April-May), and the Museum of Contemporary Art (October-November 2009). **The Art Newspaper: As the sixth anniversary of the US-led invasion of Iraq approaches on 20 March, there seems to be less media coverage of the conflict. Is your project a way to bring the Iraq War back into consciousness?** **Jeremy Deller:** The Iraq War is something that America is dealing with today and will have to deal with for years to come. Its legacy is immense.

for you to bring people together who would normally not interact? **JD:** To speak with someone who has been in Iraq, has fought there or has lived under a regime, is fascinating to me. I'm setting up a series of opportunities for people to meet and their conversations are at the heart of the project. You can read as many books as you want or watch films, but there is no replacement for actual experience. **TAN: Can you talk a bit about the significance of the title of the project, "It Is What It Is"?** **JD:** I was speaking to Jonathan Harvey, who is the army soldier we're taking on the road with us, and I asked

him how he deals with the grief, the stress and the trauma when something terrible happens like a friend gets blown up, and he kept saying: "It is what it is." I kind of liked the term because it's such a meaningless phrase, but you can fill it with tons of meaning if you're talking about something very serious. **TAN: Have you ever travelled to Iraq?** **JD:** I was meant to go last year but a couple of people warned me off it because it was still too dangerous. **TAN: Why do you consider the project to be "post-activist"?** **JD:** I didn't want this exhibition to be an anti-war show. It's about getting an idea of the complexity of the situation and the variety of opinions that exist. It might be better to say that it's "post-protest" art. I hate that whole self-righteousness of political art and that's what I wanted to avoid. **TAN: Why is it important for you to distance yourself from the events that you orchestrate?** **JD:** If you're writing a play you don't want to be on stage where it's being performed. There are enough artists in Britain who love to have their photos taken and they're such a boring bunch. I don't want to be one of those people. **TAN: What is interesting**

about your projects is that you act as a catalyst that sets off a chain reaction. **JD:** Exactly, so that's why I was hoping I could just set up the road trip and I would meet up with them at the end and ask how it was. I wanted the project to be self-sufficient. I'm only going because they insisted. **TAN: How does your current project relate to your Fourth Plinth proposal for Trafalgar Square (2006), and can you describe that proposal?** **JD:** Trafalgar Square is in the centre of a very imperial part of London, with references to British empire, royalty and military victories all around it. The proposal was to place a vehicle that has been destroyed in an attack on civilians in Iraq on the plinth for six months, which definitely would have been a jarring presence. When I didn't get the plinth commission I thought I could use the car for the Three M commission. **TAN: How did you import the burned-out car from Iraq and where will the car ultimately end up?** **JD:** We made inquiries about travelling to Iraq to get a car, but it was looking to be really difficult, so we bought the car from someone who used it in an exhibition in Amsterdam. The car won't be given to the museums because it's not art. **TAN: Taking the proverbial**

cross-country road trip in a recreational vehicle is a cliched part of American culture. Was this on your mind when you organised the trip? **JD:** No, but I thought it would be interesting to travel in this holiday RV with this destroyed car on a flatbed lorry behind us. It's one thing to do something like this in New York, in a liberal museum environment, and it's another to turn up at a truck stop in Mississippi. **TAN: Will you be documenting the road trip in some way?** **JD:** We are going to film it in a way that isn't intrusive. **TAN: And will this become an artefact of the project to be exhibited?** **JD:** Yes, definitely. I'm keeping my mind open as to what will happen with the film. I think we will make little films every day to document our progress or lack of it. **TAN: The Iraq Museum, which closed in 2003 after it was looted and partially destroyed, reopened on 23 February. What role do you think culture can play in bringing stability back to the country?** **JD:** I don't know about stability, but culture gives a sense of identity to people, like sport does. Iraqi civilisation is one of the most important in history, so the reopening must

be a source of great pride. I think culture is something that can unite a country. **TAN: You have worked on at least four major projects in the US focusing on US cultural and political heritage. Why do you keep coming back?** **JD:** Because I keep being asked and they speak English in your country, more or less. **TAN: Do you have a particular interest in US culture?** **JD:** It's a love-hate relationship, but over the last seven to eight years it's been more hate than love. It's a beautiful, endlessly interesting country, filled with really interesting, friendly people. It's a stimulating place. **TAN: What, if anything, have you learned since the project began?** **JD:** I've learned how complicated the situation is, and this is something you can understand after talking to Iraqis for just ten to 15 minutes. If the US government had known how complicated the country was when it was planning the war they would have never done it, and that's very clear now. **TAN: What is your view of Britain's involvement in the war in Iraq?** **JD:** It was a massive mistake. They are going to pay for it. *Interview by Charmaine Picard*

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Artists on Pier 94

Laurent Grasso: mind over matter

Paris-based artist Laurent Grasso is making his presence felt in the US and Europe this year. The multimedia artist's *Infinite Light* (2006-08) neon facade, which graces the pedestrian bridges that connect the main campus of Hunter College on New York's Upper East Side, was installed last year. Meanwhile, Grasso also won the 2008 Marcel Duchamp Prize, a major French contemporary art award given by the Association for the International Diffusion of French Art. He received €35,000 and gets his own show in Espace 315 of Paris's Centre Pompidou (15 June-14 September).

Grasso is also showing a site-specific installation in the

group show "Gakona" at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris (until 3 May) which focuses on an Alaska-based scientific research programme.

Galerie Chez Valentin (P94/955) presents a highly stylised, hypnotic video piece by Grasso (*Untitled*, 2008) which depicts an ovoid rock levitating above a lunar-esque landscape set against a garish blue sky. The work, which has the feel of a 1930s sci-fi movie, presents an unnerving, tightly controlled universe, not unlike the surreal scenarios created by the Belgian artist René Magritte. Why, for instance, does the piece evoke some kind of telekinetic experience whereby the spectator seems able to raise and lower the rock through the power of

the psyche? "I wanted to put the viewer in this position [of power]. This idea [of moving the rock through the mind] is enhanced by an increased delay between the rock taking off from the ground and it floating in the air," says Grasso.

Time and space are turned on their head in Grasso's fantastical version of reality. "The work was shot on the island of Tenerife around a volcano. I like to play with reality, science and fiction and [focus on] when science becomes fiction and when fiction becomes science," adds Grasso. The piece (edition of five) is priced at €15,000.

Gareth Harris

Grasso's *Untitled*, 2008



Zoe Leonard: the view from above

US artist Zoe Leonard was thrust into the spotlight in 1992 when she interspersed her series of black-and-white photographs depicting female genitalia among 18th-century portraits in Kassel's Neue Galerie as part of *Documenta IX*. Her aim, she once said, is to analyse "how we affect the landscape around us, what we build, what we leave behind, what we make." Themes explored in Leonard's works include memory, nature, civilisation and gender; the artist co-founded the feminist collective "Fierce Pussy".

Leonard's work on show at Galleria Raffaella Cortese (P94/1168) includes two images from the "Bubblegum" series (nos. 5 & 6, 2000-03, \$18,000 each). These shots of New York sidewalks studded with the dried detritus of faded



"Untitled (City Grid)", nos. 1 & 2, 1989-2008



bubblegum resemble abstract canvases. The "Untitled Aerial" (Shiny River nos.1-3, 1989-2008) series shows a

sliver of grey water running across a grainy panorama (on sale for \$25,000-\$30,000). But it is Leonard's "Untitled (City

Grid)", nos. 1 & 2, 1989-2008 (priced \$18,000 and \$30,000 respectively) series which stands out; these bleak gelatin silver prints show row upon row of residences dotted around a landscape devoid of human presence. "Untitled (Train Tracks Vertical)", 1986-2007, is also on offer at \$30,000.

A new work by Leonard, *You See I Am Here After All*, 2008, at Dia:Beacon in upstate New York (until 7 September), consists of 3,852 vintage postcards of Niagara Falls, dating from the early 1900s to the 1950s, which are sourced from flea markets and online auctions. A parallel exhibition by the artist is at Dia: at the Hispanic Society of America in New York ("Derrotero", until 12 April).

G.H.

Adel Abdessemed: causing another stir



While animal rights groups force the closure of an exhibition of work by Algerian-born artist Adel Abdessemed in Turin, New York dealer David Zwirner is showing a selection of his work examining death, violence and religion at the Armory ahead of a solo show to take over all three of the gallery's spaces in April. Abdessemed has been attracting controversy since last year, when another solo show at the San Francisco Art Institute was also shut down because of protests against the video installation *Don't Trust Me*, which shows six animals being killed with a sledgehammer on a farm in Mexico.

For one of his newest works *Prostitute* (right, 2008, \$150,000) on view at Zwirner's stand (P94/1001) at the Armory, Abdessemed hired three sex workers to hand-copy the Bible, the Torah and the Koran. Displayed as a wall installation, the slim, leather-bound manuscripts are stacked in shopping bags hung vertically like shelves. While this

piece questions the inherent sanctity of religious texts—is a Bible written by a prostitute any less holy than one written by a monk?—other works take a more wry look at taboo subjects such as death and violence. *Saturday* (2008, edition of six, \$9,000, above) is a photograph of the artist's daughters walking a pair of dog skeletons down a New York street.

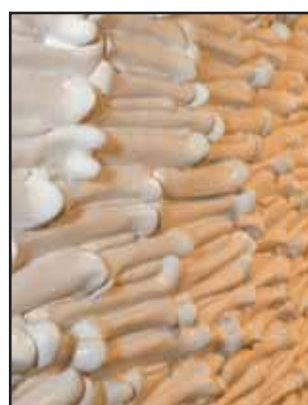
Helen Stoilas



T.V. Santhosh: remembering victims of violence and war

A stark cell with walls built to resemble stacks of human bones has been created on Korean gallery Arario's stand (P94/1510) by Indian artist T.V. Santhosh. *A Room to Pray* (2008, edition of three, €116,000) is a nightmare version of the classic white cube gallery, whose floor is a burning carpet of red LED lights streaming the transcript of a Hiroshima survivor describing her experiences of the atomic bombing. The work, presented in collaboration with Mumbai's The Guild Art Gallery, is a reminder of the history of violence and war in modern civilisation.

Visitors to the fair are encouraged to use the space to empathise with victims of violence and think about how such events can be prevented



***A Room to Pray* (2008) by T.V. Santhosh and a detail from the same work (above left)**

from happening again. "It is a prayer room where someone can sit and pray for other people rather than for oneself," Santhosh told *The Art Newspaper* as he was



installing the piece yesterday. Also on view with Arario are works by the Indian artist Tallur L.N. which address food shortages in places such as Asia and Africa. A squat bunker of inflated

grain sacks, *Panic Room* (2006), sits in a corner while a human figure made of clay and coconut husks, *Hangover* (2006), dangles by a noose in the centre of the stand. **H.S.**

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Tibor de Nagy Gallery

What's on

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Brooklyn Museum
200 Eastern Parkway
www.brooklynmuseum.org
Hernan Bas: Works from the Rubell Family Collection
Until 24 May

Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum
2 East 91st Street
www.cooperhewitt.org
Solos: Tulou/Affordable Housing for China
Until 5 April

Dia: at the Hispanic Society of America
Broadway between 155th and 156th Streets
www.hispanicsociety.org
Zoe Leonard: Derrotero
Until 12 April

Guggenheim Museum
1071 Fifth Avenue
www.guggenheim.org
The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia 1860-1989
Until 19 April
The Hugo Boss Prize 2008: Emily Jacir
Until 15 April

Metropolitan Museum
1000 Fifth Avenue
at 82nd Street
www.metmuseum.org
Raqib Shaw at the Met
Until 8 March
Reality Check: Truth and Illusion in Contemporary Photography
Until 22 March

Museum of Arts and Design
2 Columbus Circle
www.madmuseum.org
Second Lives: Remixing the Ordinary
Until 19 April

Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
www.moma.org
Martin Kippenberger: the Problem Perspective
Until 11 May
A Shimmer of Possibility: Photographs by Paul Graham
Until 18 May
Tehching Hsieh
Until 18 May
Focus: Sol LeWitt
Until 1 June

New Museum
235 Bowery
www.newmuseum.org
Agathe Snow and Mathias Poledna
Until 8 March
Daria Martin: Minotaur
Until 22 March
Jeremy Deller: It Is What It Is, Conversations About Iraq
Until 22 March

Studio Museum in Harlem
144 West 125th Street
www.studiomuseum.org

Barkley L. Hendricks: Birth of the Cool
Until 15 March

Whitney Museum
945 Madison Avenue
at 75th Street
www.whitney.org
Alex Bag
Until 12 April

Commercial

303 Gallery
www.303gallery.com
525 West 22nd Street
Valentin Carron
Until 11 April
547 West 21st Street
Florian Maier-Aichen
Until 11 April

Anton Kern Gallery
532 West 20th Street
www.antonkerngallery.com
Lothar Hempel
Until 21 March

Arario Gallery
521 West 25th Street
www.ararionewyork.com
Suejin Chung
6 March-30 April

Bonni Benrubi Gallery
41 East 57th Street
www.bonnibenrubi.com
Laura McPhee
Until 11 April

Carolina Nitsch
534 West 22nd Street
www.carolinanitsch.com
Carolee Schneemann
Until 28 March

Cheim & Read
547 West 25th Street
www.cheimread.com
Paul Morrison
Until 21 March

D'Amelio Terras
525 West 22nd Street
www.damelioterras.com
Matt Keegan
Until 25 April

Danese
535 West 24th Street
www.danese.com
Larry Poons
Until 14 March

David Zwirner
519, 525 and 533 West 19th Street
www.davidzwirner.com
Lisa Yuskavage
Until 28 March
Philip-Lorca diCorcia
Until 28 March
Michael Borremans
Until 25 March

Deitch Projects
www.deitch.com
18 Wooster Street
Ryan McGinness
7 March-18 April
76 Grand Street
Jon Kessler
7 March-4 April
4-40 44th Drive
Long Island City
Vanessa Beecroft
6 March-12 April

Friedrich Petzel
535/537 West 22nd Street
www.petzel.com
George Herold and John Stezaker
Until 21 March

Gagosian Gallery
980 Madison Avenue
www.gagosian.com
Alec Soth
Until 7 March
Warhol from the Sonnabend Collection
Until 7 March
555 West 24th Street
Manzoni: a Retrospective
Until 21 March

Galerie Lelong
528 West 26th Street
www.galerielelong.com
Alfredo Jaar
Until 2 May

Gladstone Gallery
515 West 24th Street
www.gladstonegallery.com
Andrew Lord
Until 28 March
530 West 21st Street
Thomas Hirschhorn
Until 11 April

Greenberg Van Doren
730 Fifth Avenue at 57th Street
www.gvdgalleries.com
Jasper Johns Prints
Until 14 March

Jack Shainman
513 West 20th Street
www.jackshainman.com
Hank Willis Thomas and John Bankston
Until 14 March

James Graham & Sons
32 East 67th Street
www.jamesgrahamandsons.com
Joe Fyfe Until 7 March

John Connelly Presents
625 West 27th Street
www.johnconnellypresents.com
Mungo Thomson
Until 4 April

Kent Gallery
541 West 25th Street
www.kentgallery.com
Emily Prince
Until 4 April

Lehmann Maupin
540 West 26th Street
www.lehmannmaupin.com
The Glamour Project
Until 21 March

Lombard-Freid
531 West 26th Street
www.lombard-freid.com
Michael Rakowitz
6 March-4 April

Marianne Boesky
535 West 22nd Street
www.marianneboeskygallery.com
Yoshitomo Nara
Until 28 March

Marlborough Chelsea
545 West 25th Street



Justin Lieberman

Zach Feuer Gallery, until 7 March

Inspired by Philip K. Dick's fantasy novel, *The Man in The High Castle*, which imagines the world that would exist if Japan and Germany beat the Allied forces in World War II, Lieberman's installation at the gallery depicts the home of a Japanese collector of American pop cultural artefacts. Comic books, newspapers, video cassettes, records, toys, lunchboxes, baseball cards and other ephemera are frozen in clear acrylic resin like specimens in amber.
530 West 24th Street, www.zachfeuer.com; at Armory, P94/I151

www.marlboroughgallery.com
Juan Genovés and Kenneth Snelson
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Matthew Marks
522/526 West 22nd Street & 523 West 24th Street
www.matthewmarks.com
Ellsworth Kelly
Until 11 April

Michael Rosenfeld
24 West 57th Street
www.michaelrosenfeldart.com
Charles White and Norman Lewis
Until 7 March

Mitchell Innes & Nash
534 West 26th Street
www.miandn.com
Leon Kossoff
Until 28 March
1018 Madison Avenue
Chris Martin
Until 27 March

Paul Kasmin Gallery
293 Tenth Avenue
www.paulkasmingallery.com
Erik Parker
Until 28 March

Peter Blum Gallery
99 Wooster Street
www.peterblumgallery.com
Jason Fox
Until 7 March
526 West 29th Street
Short Circuits: Seven European Artists
Until 14 March

Robert Miller Gallery
524 West 26th Street
www.robertmillergallery.com
Walter Niedermayr
Until 14 March

Ronald Feldman Gallery
31 Mercer Street
www.feldmangallery.com
Rico Gatson
Until 14 March

Sara Meltzer Gallery
525-531 West 26th Street
www.sarameltzergallery.com
Enrique Martínez Celaya
Until 28 March

Sikkema Jenkins & Co.
530 West 22nd Street
www.sikkemajenkinsco.com
Broken Thorn Sweet Blackberry
Until 28 March

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery
521 West 21st Street
www.tanyabonakdargallery.com
Thomas Scheibitz
Until 18 April

Tony Shafrazi Gallery
544 West 26th Street
www.tonyshafrazigallery.com
Thoralf Knobloch
Until 18 April

UBU Gallery
416 East 59th Street
www.ubugallery.com
Hans Bellmer
Until 11 April

Washburn Gallery
20 West 57th Street
www.washburngallery.com
The Cedar Bar
Until 14 March

Yvon Lambert
550 West 21st Street
www.yvon-lambert.com
Candice Breitz
Until 21 March

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at 55th Street
www.thearmoryshow.com
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8 March, 12pm-7pm

Bridge Art Fair
The Waterfront,
222 12th Avenue
www.bridgeartfair.com
5 March, 7pm-10pm;
6-7 March, 12pm-8pm;
8 March, 12pm-7pm

Fountain Art Fair
Pier 66 at 26th Street
in Hudson River Park
http://fountainexhibit.com
5-8 March, 11am-7pm

Pool Art Fair
Wyndham Garden Hotel
37 West 24th Street
www.poolartfair.com
6-8 March, 3pm-10pm

Pulse New York
Pier 40, West Street
at West Houston
www.pulse-art.com
5-7 March, 12pm-8pm;
8 March, 12pm-5pm

Scope New York
Lincoln Center, Damrosch
Park, 62nd Street and
Amsterdam Avenue
www.scope-art.com
5-7 March, 12pm-8pm;
8 March, 12pm-7pm

Volta NY
7 West 34th Street between
5th and 6th Avenues
www.voltashow.com
5-8 March, 1pm-9pm

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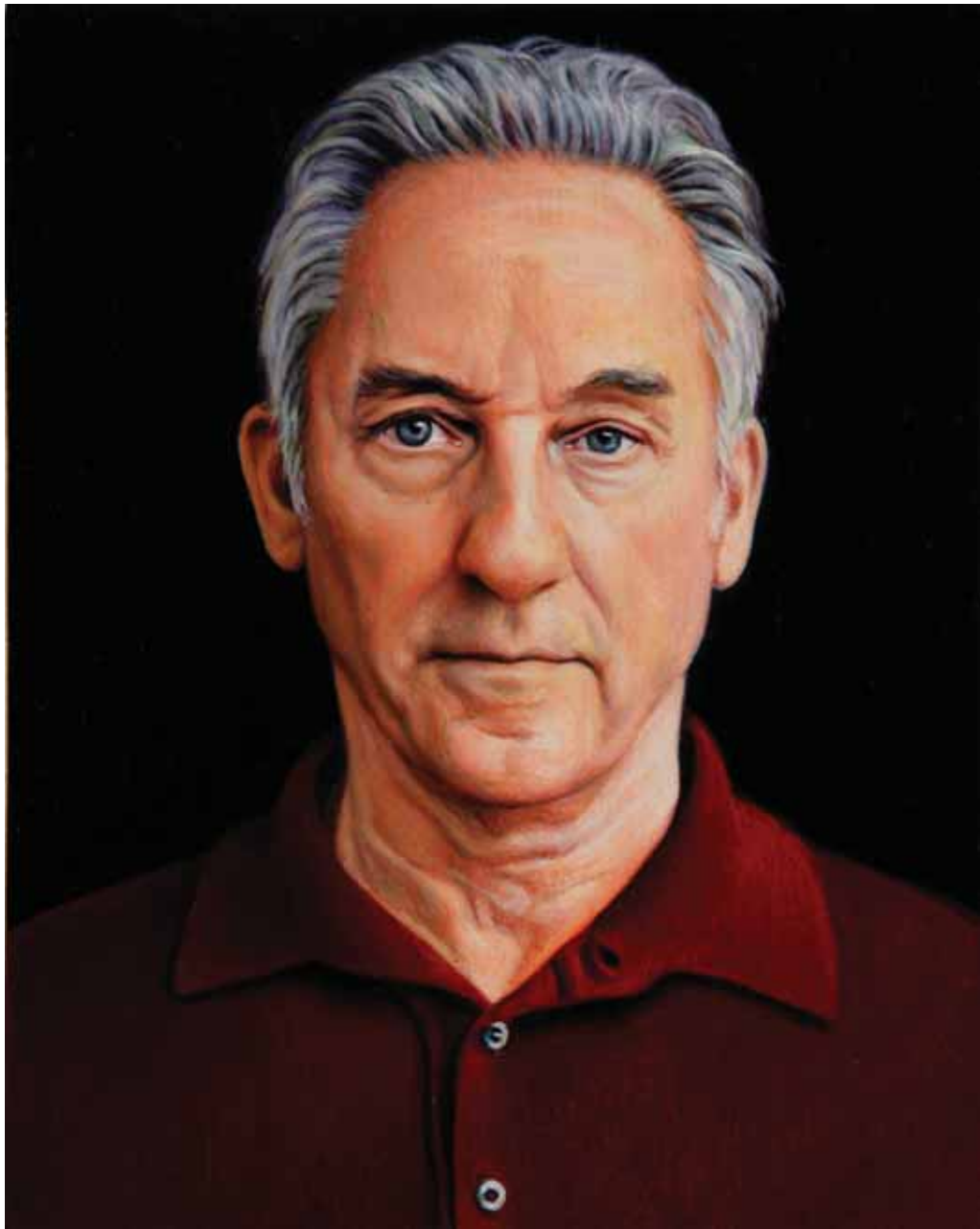
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Jim Torok, *Ed Ruscha (with black background)*, 2007, oil on canvas, 5 x 4 inches, Private collection

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THE ARMORY SHOW – THE INTERNATIONAL FAIR OF NEW ART PIER 94 NEW ART BY LIVING ARTISTS

303 GALLERY, AIDAN GALLERY, GALERIE AKINCI, ANDRÉHN-SCHIPTJENKO, ANGLES GALLERY, THE APARTMENT, THE APPROACH, ARARIO GALLERY, ARNDT & PARTNER, ART: CONCEPT, ART IN GENERAL, BARONIAN FRANCEY, BELLWETHER, PETER BLUM GALLERY, BODHI ART, BOERS-LI GALLERY, MARIANNE BOESKY GALLERY, TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, BORTOLAMI GALLERY, ISABELLA BORTOLOZZI, BROADWAY I602, CANADA, CEREALART, CHEIM & READ, CHERRY AND MARTIN, GALERIE CHEZ VALENTIN, MEHDI CHOUAKRI, JOHN CONNELLY PRESENTS, CONTEMPORARY FINE ARTS, GALLERIA CONTINUA, CORKIN GALLERY, CORVI-MORA, GALERIE CRONE, SORCHA DALLAS, D'AMELIO TERRAS, MONICA DE CARDENAS, GALLERIA MASSIMO DE CARLO, ELIZABETH DEE, DEITCH PROJECTS, DIEU DONNÉ PAPERMILL, INC., DVIR GALLERY, GALERIE EIGEN + ART, GALERIE FRANK ELBAZ, DEREK ELLER GALLERY, ENGHOLM ENGELHORN GALERIE, EXHIBIT-E, RONALD FELDMAN FINE ARTS, ZACH FEUER GALLERY, MARC FOXX, HONOR FRASER, FREDERICKS FREISER,

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