



Emily Cheng at Byron C. Cohen



Christina McPhee at Byron C. Cohen



Janusz Pozniak at Sherry Leedy

**Fresh at Sherry Leedy**

Sherry Leedy Contemporary Art presents *Fresh*, a summer invitational exhibition, featuring new work by emerging and established artists. The exhibition includes painting, sculpture, glass, and mixed-media work by 15 artists from across the country.

Representing the medium of painting in *Fresh* are New York artists Julie Helferman, known for her monumental oil paintings of surreal personal narratives, and David Shapiro, a well-known abstract painter, whose latest works on paper combine narrative form, line and color, with subtle layers of translucent materials.

Ceramic works include a new installation of multiple wall-mounted ceramic spheres, encrusted with signature glazes, by North Carolina artist Virginia Scotchie. Also on view are ceramic wall reliefs by California-based Charles Timm-Ballard, engaging dialogues between landscape painting and the artist's own memories of specific geographies, while remaining rooted in the context of clay.

The work by mixed-media artist and Kansas University professor Tonya Hartman comprises hand-stitched, textual tableaux that reveal "a diary of dreams and memories, both intimate and universal."

Exhibiting for the first time in Kansas City is Ukrainian-born artist Alexander Quavers, whose detailed "fantasy" drawings contain scenes of human and animal forms, in a world of "pastel cloudscapes and crystalline showers."

Other artists include Billy Hassell, Janusz

Pozniak, Monica Reede, Tilly Woodward, Bede Clarke, Peter Feldstein, Laura Beard Aeling, Richard Buckheim, and Judith McCrea.

*Fresh* opens with a reception for the artists and the public from 7 to 9 p.m. Friday, June 8, and is on view through July 28.

— Hallie Smith

**Signs of the Times at Block Artspace**

Opening Friday, June 8, at the H&R Block Artspace, with a public reception from 6 to 8 p.m., is *Signs of the Times*. Exploring the use of text in contemporary art, as both image and carrier of meaning, the exhibition draws together the diverse works of three important artists: Jesse Howard, Jenny Holzer, and Jack Pierson. Incorporating original, borrowed, and found texts, the featured works represent a spectrum of approaches, though are united in their use of the word as central element. With messages ranging from overt political to more subtle social commentary, the text-based objects raise questions about the role of the artist in society while blurring distinctions between form and content.

The exhibition was originally conceived as a means of providing a larger context for the dozens of works by Jesse Howard — a well-known self-taught artist who lived and worked in Fulton, Missouri, until his death in 1986 — which reside in the permanent collection of the Kansas City Art Institute. Both revered and hated during his lifetime for his often acerbic politically and reli-

giously oriented commentaries — manifested in hundreds of hand-painted signs — Howard is now renowned as an important "folk artist" and, in many ways, an extraordinary chronicler of his time and place.

Providing a counterpoint to Howard's work will be the engraved metal wall plates with aphorisms from Jenny Holzer's *Living Series* (1980–82), and photographs by Jack Pierson (as well as one sculpture) in which found letters, gathered from common culture — movie marquee, advertising signage, etc. — are assembled into words. Also this summer at Artspace will be a new *Project Wall*, featuring Holzer's *Protect Me From What I Want*, from her *Survival Series*.

— Kate Hackman

**Gold of the Nomads at Nelson-Atkins**

*Gold of the Nomads: Scythian Treasures from Ancient Ukraine* is the first major American exhibition of Scythian art in over 25 years.

The Scythians, a nomadic warrior culture existing along the shores of the Black Sea more than 2,500 years ago, had a passion for gold treasures. Their giant burial mounds, some discovered only within the past decade, have revealed a plethora of gold artworks.

Objects on view include gilded drinking horns, headdresses with pendants of gold, elaborate swords and golden scabbards, and finely crafted bows and arrows, which the Scythian elite believed would accompa-

ny them into the next world.

This is the exhibition's last North American stop before "traveling to Paris *Gold of the Nomads: Scythian Treasures from Ancient Ukraine*, organized by the San Antonio Museum of Art and the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, is at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art from June 8 through August 19.

— H. Smith

**Cheng, McPhee and Molsawat at Cohen**

Byron C. Cohen Gallery shows works by Emily Cheng, Christina McPhee, and Taweesak Molsawat from Friday, June 1 through July 28.

Emily Cheng's pattern and decoration paintings subdue nature by reducing images of flowers to patterns of color, line, and shape, bringing to mind the depictions of nature now seen in our modern day-to-day lives on wallpaper, tablecloths and rugs. Cheng thinks of her paintings as "target images that configure gesture, luxury, and focus."

In her most recent body of work, Christina McPhee surveys the possibilities of digital technology. *NaxSuite* explores the inside and outside spaces of the mind, the body, and the landscape. *NaxSuite* originated out of McPhee's film *NAX* (2000), a narrative of visual memory.

Taweesak Molsawat's work reflects his Buddhist heritage and his experiences of different cultures. Molsawat, whose work was featured in a solo exhibition at the Pearl last year, is interested in the role of

everyday objects as symbols of contemporary cultural structures. Informed by a background in jewelry design, his finely crafted pieces aim to "express our true nature in order to realize ourselves and create a better social structure of living together."

— H. Smith

**SPACE ODDITY at Nease**

*SPACE ODDITY*, a group show at Joseph Nease Gallery, opens Friday, June 8, and runs through Saturday, June 30.

Featured artists include James Brinsfield, Shaun Cassidy, Nate Fors, Lester Goldman, Rachel Hayes, Marcie Miller Gross, Karen Owsley Nease, Eric Sall, Judith Sanazaro, Jessica Snow, James Woodhill, and John Torrealano.

The show presents one or two pieces from each artist, most of whom are Kansas City-based artists. Exceptions are former KCAI instructor Shaun Cassidy, who now lives and works in North Carolina; San Francisco-based artist Jessica Snow, whose work was recently seen in the H&R Block Art Space Pierogi Flat Files show, and New York artist John Torrealano, whose plastic jewel-studded pieces are titled *wall ball* and *Eye Bomb*.

*SPACE ODDITY* is a reflection on the present, a word play on the 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey* and also the title of a 1972 David Bowie song. As concerns the exhibition, the phrase *SPACE ODDITY* provides a loose theme, woven throughout the show. Each featured artist has contributed a



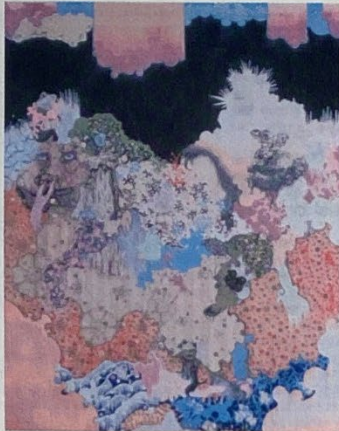
Larry McNaney at Jan Weiner



Taweesak Molsawat at Byron C. Cohen



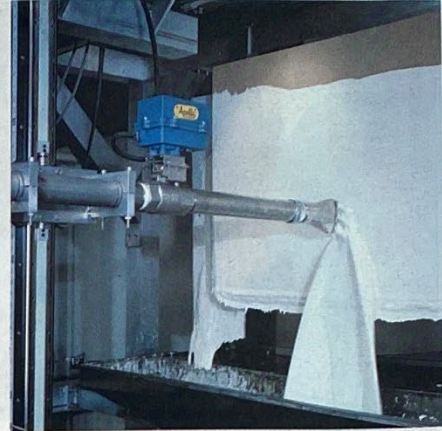
Jack Pierson at H&R Block Artspace



Alexander Quavers at Sherry Leedy



Boar, 2nd century B.C., at Nelson-Atkins



Roxy Paine, *Painting Manufacturing Unit*, Grand Arts

recent work or created a new piece specifically for the exhibition that relates to ideas of space, time, strangeness, weirdness, or various combinations of these ideas.

Opening reception for *SPACE ODDITY* is Friday, June 8, 6–8 p.m. The show runs through Saturday, June 30. Joseph Nease Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays.

— H. Smith

### Balkenhol at JCCC

The Gallery of Art at Johnson County Community College features a new acquisition and installation of sculpture by Stephan Balkenhol.

Balkenhol is a German artist, known for his figurative sculptures on pedestals that are carved from single blocks of wood. Balkenhol's work contains a sense of humanism, revealed through his representation of "ordinary people." His sculptures of "familiar strangers" in casual clothing and wearing vacant expressions, are characteristic of the figures we see all around us in everyday life.

By working in the inexpensive medium of wood, as opposed to bronze or marble, his pieces also suggest something "anonymous rather than heroic." The artist works with soft woods such as cedar, poplar, and wawa, using a chainsaw to hew the figure and pedestal from its block of wood. After using a variety of tools to detail the piece, he then paints the surface, except for the flesh of the figure, which is always left natural.

Balkenhol's *Man Lying on Platform* was recently purchased for the college's perma-

nent art collection by Toni and Marti Oppenheimer of Los Angeles, through funds provided by the Oppenheimer Brothers Foundation and administered through the JCCC Foundation. The funding is used only for acquisition of sculpture and related expenses for the Oppenheimer-Stein Sculpture Collection.

The collection's selections of work by contemporary sculptors of national and international significance are made by committee members Toni and Marti Oppenheimer and Bruce Hartman, director of the JCCC Gallery of Art. This recent acquisition is the sixth piece of art donated by the Oppenheimers.

*Man Lying on Platform* is the focal point of the gallery's current exhibition, which runs through June 20.

— H. Smith

### McAnany at Weiner

*It's a beautiful day!*, postmodern landscape paintings by Larry McAnany, is on exhibit at Jan Weiner Gallery June 1–July 10.

McAnany, whose abstract work was last seen at the Late Show in November 1998, is working in new media. After "putting down the paintbrush and picking up the hammer," he has turned to a self-described mixture of sculpture, painting, and collage. No longer confined to applying paint to canvas, he gathers and uses wood, screen, rubber, plastic, and more.

Moving beyond the legacy of modern images, McAnany says, "I am seeing a more personal language being created. I

am looking at this time as very experimental, both in the material sense as well as the methodology."

No longer thinking about the landscape in terms of foreground, middle ground, and background, McAnany describes the approach behind his current work as making art in a more personal, flexible, and wide-open manner.

McAnany's work is on exhibit June 1–July 10. Opening receptions are Friday, June 2, 5–8 p.m. and Saturday, June 3, 1–4 p.m.

— H. Smith

### Paine at Grand Arts

Grand Arts opens an exhibition of work by New York-based artist Rosy Paine on Friday, June 29. Paine is known for his sculptures, made in the mid-1990s, of life-like fields of mushrooms, individually created from resins, polymers, and lacquers. The realistic objects, seemingly sprouting out of table tops or gallery floors, leave no clue to the artist's hand. The invisibility of the artist's hand has been a major concept throughout Paine's work.

During the past three years, Paine has been creating a series of "computer driven art making machines." *Paint Dipper*, the first, automatically and repeatedly submerges a stretched canvas into a vat of white acrylic paint. The process creates minimal paintings with layered paint staccatos along the bottom edge. The second piece in the series, SCUMAK (Auto Sculpture Maker), creates biomorphic polymer sculptures on a conveyor belt over

a five-hour period.

For the exhibition at Grand Arts, Paine has produced a third art-making machine.

*Painting Manufacturing Unit* uses a computer-driven nozzle to spray acrylic paint across the surface of a suspended canvas. Excess paint is then reclaimed and, after a drying period, the process begins again, forming topographic lines over the canvas's surface.

Grand Arts hosts an opening reception Friday, June 29, 6–9 p.m., and an informal talk with the artist Saturday, June 30, at 2 p.m. in the main gallery. The work is exhibited through August 11.

— H. Smith

### Against Design at Kemper Museum

*Against Design*, a traveling exhibition from University of Pennsylvania, is on view at Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art from June 22 through September 2.

*Against Design* features work by a generation of artists, from the U.S. and Europe, intent on blurring boundaries between art, architecture and design. Artists include: Kevin Appel, Roy McMakin, Jorge Pardo, Joe Scanlan, Pae White and Andrea Zittel from the United States; Tobias Rehberger from Germany; Angela Bulloch from Great Britain; Atelier van Lieshout artists from Holland; and Clay Ketter from Sweden.

This exhibit demonstrates a trend in which artists investigate built environments and create art that may not necessarily fit into previously defined categories of art and design. The *Against* in the title does not

refer to opposition, but rather comparison; art that is directly influenced by design.

Included are an oversize vehicle, room-size tableaux of functional and quasi-functional furniture and large scale images. All draw on developments in modern and contemporary art, particularly minimalism and formalism, as well as industrial design and architecture from the 1920s-60s. The work is shown in a museum setting for viewers to consider utility in art and "high art" in design.

Many pieces are meant to be interactive. For example, Angela Bulloch's *Bean Bag Set* (1966), transforms what could be a recreation room into a comfortable, participatory "art space." It undermines the tone usually associated with museums. Dutch collaborative Atelier van Lieshout, founded by Joep van Lieshout makes large-scale scenes which visitors are encouraged to enter, as in the case of *Tampa Scull* (1998), a room-size installation combining trailer home and a bomb shelter design.

The artists, in their 30s and early 40s, make work that comments on art historical precedent, exploring relationships between pleasure and form, color and material.

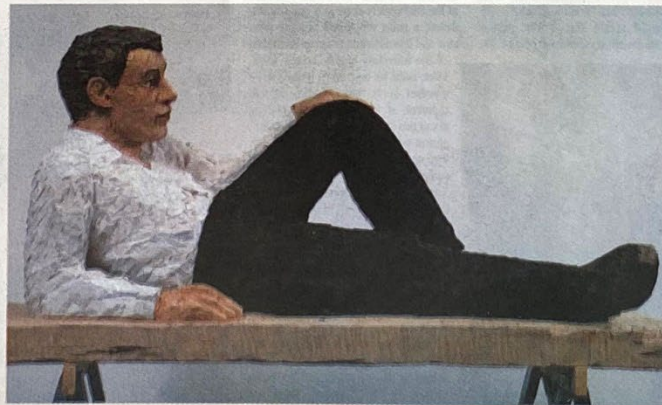
*Against Design* was organized by the Institute of Contemporary ART, University of Pennsylvania, and made possible by an Emily Hall Tremain Exhibition Award. The award, based on innovation and experimentation among curators, was established to support thematic exhibitions that challenge audiences and expand the boundaries of contemporary art.

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Top: Brinsfield, *Space Race*; Bottom: Torreano, *Eye Bomb*; both at Joseph Nease



Stephan Balkenhol, *Man Lying on Platform*, Gallery of Art at Johnson County Community College



Pae White, *Pony Girl Edition*, Kemper