

# CALLING BEAUTY

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# BEAUTY IN THE EXPANDED FIELD OF PAINTING

JAMES VOORHIES

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In September 2001, immediately following the most devastating terrorist attack in the United States, the then director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Philippe de Montebello, opened the museum's doors *en gratis* for all New Yorkers and tourists to take respite in the experience of great works of art and thus, it was believed, find ground in the visual evidence of the resiliency of humankind. This gesture was as much a confirmation as a distraction from the tragedy. It was testament to art's ability to console us and to inspire confidence in the perseverance of man and nature, to transform us. Art was used as a catalyst for generating an awareness of the continuity of humankind by unfurling—for free, no less—a cadre of works of art produced amidst vast histories of world violence and destruction.

It is rather unexpected to begin an essay about beauty with a reference to 9/11. But this act by Mr. de Montebello on behalf of the power of art to transform human experience substantiates the sweeping tendency to connect art and its cousin beauty with the aesthetic realm of the sublime. Aesthetics insists on examining ways in which experiences are registered and represented. In aesthetics, the sublime is an experience of unspeakable greatness against which nothing else can be compared—something of unbelievable magnitude, whether in art, nature, religion, humanity, life or death, that moves us. Beauty in art is often associated with the sublime in its ability to do just that. So, in the face of a catastrophe like 9/11, Mr. de Montebello's invitation to behold the beautiful in art was a humanistic offering with the expectation that beauty could provide an experience of transcendence and thus assuage the challenges of our contemporary condition.

The exhibition *Calling Beauty* examines the shifting parameters of what is considered beautiful in contemporary art in relation to the historical weight and responsibility that beauty bears in order to fulfill expectations like Mr. de Montebello's. From the Renaissance to Modernism, the history of art has persistently evaluated the success and failure of art within the criteria of how well it represents the world. Beauty, and its ability to move us, is connected with concepts of aesthetic judgment of truth evaluated on various degrees of trust. Painting was the primary art form mandated with this behemoth task of conveying truth and thus beauty. Two-dimensional supports—wood, canvas, wall, fresco—and pigments are charged to conjure the three-dimensional world with precise visual acuity. Since Giotto onward, illusionary space laid the groundwork for these limitations with which painting wrestled until early Modernism when artists

Kazimir Malevich, Wassily Kandinsky and František Kupka, to cite only a few, challenged them and set painting free.

Without a doubt, it is an immense field of intellectual discourse to take up in the modest scope of this exhibition. Painting, aesthetics and beauty have been the focus of lifetimes of work by scholars, writers, theorists and artists from Plato and Kant to Wilde and Warhol. With an awareness of the waters in which the exhibition treads, *Calling Beauty* takes as its point of departure these interests in painting and representation alongside the words of American author and literary theorist Susan Sontag. In her essay “An Argument About Beauty,” Sontag examines what we call beautiful by tracing beauty from the rare and exclusive to the less discriminatory criteria of looser standards. Whereas beauty has been inextricably linked to high culture, class and refinement and connected to works of art by Old Master and modern artists, like those in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Sontag delves into alternative considerations of what is beautiful in art and how we got there.

As a work of art all its own, Sontag's “An Argument About Beauty” is meant to be considered in context and in communication with ideas and other works in the exhibition. *Calling Beauty* does not serve to illustrate the essay. But amidst the proliferation of texts regarding beauty, Sontag's words serve as salient points of entry for our thinking about what has been viewed as beautiful, how that view has influenced contemporary art and whether or not it has shaped, paradoxically, an aesthetics of the everyday. For instance, if painting's number-one intention was to represent the world, and now photography can do it or social-context practices can mingle right there in real life, then what is the point of painting? Is painting anything other than a vehicle of pleasure and visual distraction from the

very world that it was originally asked to represent? Has the sought-after virtue of beauty that once propelled painting become its liability? If, as the exhibition posits, representation of reality is the goal of art, then have newer mediums like photography, installation, video, performance and, especially, social context released painting from its historical shackles?

With a consideration of these questions, *Calling Beauty* is roughly organized around four long-established genres of representational art: still life, landscape, nude and portraiture. It is possible to locate a conversation with painting in every work in the exhibition. The adherence to these categorical pillars is responsive to the rigid classifications to which painting once adhered as a result of the charge to convey the natural world. Works by participants in *Calling Beauty* draw peripherally and specifically on conventional genres, traditional subjects and iconic imagery in the history of art, emerging from a place somewhere between representation and beauty in art. Their practices bring to the surface a retreat from those traditions to a reconsideration of them, thus a renewed engagement with artistic conventions in the expanded field of contemporary art.

The poses of the sitters in Thorsten Brinkmann's photographs from the series *Serialsammler* bring to mind the history and tropes of portrait painting. Some figures are seated in profile akin to fifteenth-century Italian Renaissance wedding portraits, while others are draped in fine fabrics—velvet, satin, damask—like portraits of sixteenth-century Dutch nobles. Still others are surrounded by objects in settings that recall the tactics of early nineteenth-century American portraiture when a burgeoning middle class sought to relay the message of rising social status by picturing themselves with the objects that proved it.

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But nothing is that clear cut for Brinkmann. For these photographs he outfits himself with extraordinary costumes and backdrops made from castoff clothing and household objects salvaged from the street and thrift stores. While the images echo those formal conventions of portraiture, they also mimic the act of Old Master artists who sometimes slyly inserted self-portraits into a work of art; think the most obvious example: Velázquez and his *Las Meninas* (1656). Brinkmann's outlandish costumes, however, invariably mask his image and disrupt immediate expectations of what is a portrait. He withholds the most vital component—the human face—substituting it with objects ranging from flowerpots and lampshades to purses and tennis-racket covers placed over his head.

Brinkmann's meticulously produced prints are unglazed, leaving their rich suppleness and painterly acuity visually accessible. They are placed in handmade frames of wood and installed over found domestic wallpaper washed lightly with emerald and scarlet pigments. Against all of this are situated found objects—lamps, couches, doors, coffee tables—just like those pictured in the photographs. The overlapping and discordant experience of the whole installation includes these physical objects that spectators stand among and sit on as they view the photographs. Thus spectators are implicated in the work as their presence yields yet another form of portraiture within the installation. Brinkmann does not make it easy for us. The ability to decipher between the body and the object or to determine what is portraiture, still life, photography, performance or sculpture is blurred. But that's all part of the experience.

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The paintings in the series *My Collection Inadequately Documented* by Ellen Harvey also make it difficult to discern what is portraiture, still life and, in this case, documentation. Her paintings

are based on photographs the artist took of herself at home, standing before a mirror among her collection of artworks. Indeed, as the title indicates, the paintings do not function as documentation or even what is considered proper self-portraiture. The flash in the mirror obscures Harvey's identity, and the quality of the original photographs makes it impossible to easily determine what is documented. By capturing poorly the collection through the photographic medium, it may seem at first that Harvey has missed the point. But when delving further, the viewer finds that missing the point is exactly the point. It isn't subject matter but the context in which art is produced, understood and evaluated—such as museum spaces, frames, collections, studios and nicely delineated genres—that is the real focus at hand. Subject matter is traditionally the primary interest of painting and its effort to convey a sense of beauty through the representation of a subject. Harvey explores the impossibilities, failures and inadequacies in art and its mediums to do so.

*My Collection Inadequately Documented* draws on the place of the mirror, the photograph and the painting in this history of art. Pairing the mimetic aspect of the photograph with the reflective quality of the mirror, two devices relied upon to perfectly represent the world, Harvey unites them only to dismantle the illusion of their perceived abilities. As far as the formal qualities of painting, she then meticulously and laboriously copies in oils the poorly shot images. Although the camera depicted in some photographs is a 35mm lens, she paints the image blown up in the ubiquitous shape of the Polaroid snapshot, a unique photographic medium in that every Polaroid is in fact an original, an object, resting somewhere between not-painting and not-photography. That object quality is transferred to unframed, Polaroid-shaped paintings on wood.

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Thus, the traditional and expected functions of the photograph and the painting are reduced to failure as Harvey humorously mocks the fiction of representation in art and the extraordinary effort and time used to achieve it.

A similar fascination with the object-ness of the print surfaces when viewing Moyra Davey's photographs from the series *Photographs from Paris*. The photographs were taken when Davey was in residence at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris in 2009. The approximately 12-x-18-inch photographs of coffee cups, sugar packets, keys, metro tickets, clocks and domestic interiors were developed and then folded up, taped and mailed from Paris to friends in New York and Canada. On the receiving end, these battered monuments to the passage of time, geographic distance and recollection show the physical evidence of their journey to the recipients. These portraits of the obsolescent and overlooked are marred by postmarks and ink, small tears, scuffs and pieces of tape. The usual respect for the fragility of a photographic print is ignored by Davey. In fact, one is intrigued by what she has physically done to them. Our attention is arrested as we scrutinize the photographs, first as objects and then for everything they picture. While the print attains through this process an importance all its own, we realize the images are of the nothing/everything we live with each day, making the initially insignificant suddenly seem significant. Now, having survived the journey, the works hang pinned to the gallery wall, some projecting slightly outward toward us from the folded impressions. Their escape from the art world was only fleeting.

The seeming carelessness with the photographic print is evidently intentional. Davey is interested in creating a discourse about the state of large-format, digitally altered and staged photography that has gained momentum over the past



decades, elevating the humble origins of the snapshot to proportions more akin to Baroque and Old Master paintings. Davey, alternatively, works with a modest scale and prints her own photographs. Her practice reclaims the anti-monumental, intimate roots of photography when beauty was found in the casually observed and the accidentally stumbled upon, caught and then shared freely.

The titillating scene is at first incomprehensible: two young, athletic men dressed only in futuristic-looking helmets and jockstraps shuffling and reshuffling black blocks on casters. Attempting to make some kind of order, they arrange abstract compositions out of these three-foot-high, irregular geometric forms. This performance in the video *Tanagram* by [Anna Molska](#) unfolds against an equally perplexing soundtrack of out-of-this-world babble over a synthesized beat, followed by male voices—the Red Army Choir—singing in Russian. The blocks are arranged finally into the shape of a single black square. It appears and then disappears as quickly as it comes together. Viewed from above, an aha! moment occurs upon seeing this image that recalls the Russian Suprematist artist Kazimir Malevich and his *Black Square* (1915). Whether the viewer finds connections with Suprematist painting or Constructivist theatre, Molska's five-minute video playfully scrutinizes modernism's desire—maybe even its mandate—to rearrange, push, squeeze and arrest the organic, three-dimensional world into pure geometry and pure color.

The title *Tanagram* is taken from the name of a Chinese puzzle game in which players attempt, just as the performance demonstrates, to make order out of irregular geometric shapes. Molska unites this basic premise with the histories of politics and art in the Soviet bloc. Connections between the artist as builder, worker or organizer of space and form are implicit in the title and actions

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of the video. The belief that the artist is a practical, productive and important component of a society working together was imperative to Constructivist philosophy. These ideas are evident in the actions of the two men as they collaborate to find a solution, to make some order in the entropic madness. Alluding to the geographic proximity and politically charged relationship between Poland and Russia, Molska's young protagonists, satisfied with their collective labor, lie down and exchange a few words lifted from a Polish-Russian language instruction cassette about coming of age and service in the Polish army.

While Molska turns Malevich's painting into a performance and puts her semi-nude men to work, [Ryan McGinley](#) asks naked youth to frolic in the great outdoors and lose themselves in reverie—as long as his camera catches it. Images from the series *I Know Where The Summer Goes* are inspired by amateur photographs from 1960s and '70s nudist magazines; the title is taken from a lyrical song by the Scottish indie pop band Belle and Sebastian. In the summer of 2007, McGinley traveled across the United States with sixteen hired models, three assistants and a specific itinerary and list of activities in mind. Reinvigorating the staid approach to staged photography and the static conventions of tableau vivant, McGinley transforms them into exciting new concepts with continually shifting, ephemeral scenes and roving figures (composed with a calculated group of models and planned settings). And the beauty of youth is not lost on him. Wanderlust and an unwelcome sense of mortality overtake the viewer standing before these images of the young at leisure, bored and playful, with intimate titles like *Marcel*, *Ann*, *Coley*. The traditional study of the nude, then, is no longer a posed, nameless studio figure but identified and connected to feelings of freedom, carelessness and frivolity.

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Although McGinley's working process establishes certain limitations, it embraces the unpredictable in human nature and obscures fine lines between performance, everyday life, constructed reality and commercial advertisement in art. It reduces the art-historical emphasis on the female nude as an object of the male gaze, at times even obscuring the easy identification of some figures as male or female.

Eve Sussman and the Rufus Corporation's video installation *89 Seconds at Alcázar* is a lavish recreation of the minutes preceding and immediately following the single moment in time captured by Spanish artist Diego Velázquez in his masterpiece *Las Meninas* (*The Maids of Honor*) (1656). The video brings to life Velázquez's painting of the royal family and court of King Philip IV, the intimate setting of the salon at Alcázar (palace of the Hapsburgs), and the self-portrait of their official painter—Velázquez. In the perfect re-creation of seventeenth-century Spanish domestic interior and costume design and the imagined myriad of small but not insignificant moments, the fluidly choreographed eleven-minute shot folds slowly into the iconic tableau vivant that is *Las Meninas*. It then unravels as quickly as it comes together, mimicking the few seconds of time the royal family and their courtiers posed in the configuration Velázquez made timeless.

As official court painter, Velázquez was charged with documenting the royal family. *Las Meninas* does exactly that. But in this painting of Velázquez painting the portrait of King Philip IV and Queen Mariana, the artist's self-portrait is also situated there amid the family and the royal court. The images of the King and Queen can be seen in the reflection in the mirror in the distant background in the exact same position where we, the viewer, stand before the painting, an act drawing on the inherent layers of representation in art.

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With *89 Seconds at Alcázar*, Sussman and the Rufus Corporation address what is staged representation in everyday life. They deconstruct that iconic moment, smooth it out into a video of rich painterly texture, sweeping and precise choreography and crisp audio that places equal emphasis on typically overlooked movements, simple gestures, quiet whispers, crackling sounds of wood burning, deep-bass heartbeats and a tender, unexpected roll of the dog.

*89 Seconds at Alcázar* could be viewed as a contemporary “behind the scenes” or “making of” Velázquez's seminal work in the history of art. The video turns the painting into a film still, exposing it as just one frame in a series of moments in the course of everyday life, not unlike, perhaps, a photograph of a wimpled nun with a Starbucks cup from the set of *89 Seconds at Alcázar* that playfully, in reverse, inserts the acclaimed video into the context of contemporary culture, aligning it with the very kind of art-world machinery in which *Las Meninas* rests. *89 Seconds at Alcázar* was shot with a Steadicam in High-Definition video in a garage in Brooklyn, New York. Its realization required a team of thirty-five, including choreographer, costume designer, set designer, architect, actors and film crew.

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Interweaving disparate subjects, layers of representation and mediums, Matts Leiderstam's *Returned* is based on symbols and codes in art history, landscape design and homosexual culture. The selection of photographs, paintings, actions and projection installation that make up *Returned* combines seventeenth-century ideals of landscape as represented in paintings by French neoclassical artist Nicolas Poussin with nineteenth-century European and North American urban park design and the clandestine exchanges between gay men that take place in parks such as Parc des Buttes-Chaumont in Paris and Central Park in New York. Leiderstam paints copies of Poussin's *Spring or The*

*Earthly Paradise* (1660–1664), which served as inspiration for the design of “natural” settings in urban parks. The artist then abandons his copies at specific sites in these parks where codes between gay men lead to sexual dalliances amongst the very fabricated waterfalls, grottoes and rock formations influenced by Poussin’s paintings. All of Leiderstam’s copies, except the one left at the Buttes-Chaumont that was copied from the original in the Louvre, were painted from reproductions, further reinforcing the futility in the act of representing nature by painting, an act made even more questionable by nineteenth-century urban planners in their representation of nature from a painting that represents nature. In his copies, Leiderstam omits the figures of Adam and Eve, simultaneously placing emphasis on the subject of landscape and eradicating the Christian iconography associated with the myth of the fall of man as perpetuated throughout the history of art. A photograph is the only trace of the copies and the gesture. Leiderstam’s *Returned* reveals how understandings of place, society, religion and culture are based on information and visual language, revealed as well as left behind.

This installation of *Returned* includes an image of the site of abandon at Buttes-Chaumont presented on a 12-x-12-foot wood support with exposed braces on its reverse. At first glance, one is uncertain whether the work is painting, photography, video or a combination of all three (in fact, it is all three). The image of Leiderstam’s copy sitting on an easel in the grotto-like setting of the park is mimicked by the work’s installation itself, a projection situated in the darkened gallery. As the spectator ambulates around it, another facet of the installation is revealed in the discovery of other photographs from the series, other copies situated in other parks, installed on the wall behind it. The viewer’s combination of uncertainty and discovery

mirrors the response and action of those intrepid others who come upon the “real” copies abandoned in the parks.

Elizabeth Gerdeman uses the gallery wall as support for her 11-x-27-foot site-based mural *Grandeur: From Cole, Church, Bierstadt and Moran*. The work examines the intersections between historical and contemporary representations of nature by combining references to nineteenth-century American painting with contemporary home products and marketing practices. American landscape artists such as Albert Bierstadt painted grand, romantic visions of the expansive American territories. Sometimes altering the landscapes—augmenting scale, substituting color, removing unpleasant details—Bierstadt’s enormous canvases inspired awe, creating a visual language that helped to lure settlers westward in the mid 1800s. His fabrication of the image of a sublime landscape in the American West propelled the concept of Manifest Destiny, a belief in the preordained right of the American people to push westward and acquire all land to the Pacific Ocean.

For *Grandeur*, Gerdeman used reproductions of landscape paintings by Thomas Cole, Frederic Edwin Church, Thomas Moran and Bierstadt. Not unlike Bierstadt’s working model of editing landscapes at will, Gerdeman extracted aspects from each painting, reduced the details to basic line work and then painted them enlarged and overlapping on the wall. *Grandeur* is painted with the Olympic brand of consumer products, which utilizes a nature vocabulary to market house paint to the American homeowner. Colors such as “Alpine Valley,” “River Reed,” and “Quaking Grass” are part of a palette that “marries the hazy peaks and mossy green boulders for a fresh statement.” In *Grandeur*, the landscape excerpt of each artist is painted with a specific Olympic color. Gerdeman’s

work emphasizes the continued representation of nature in art and in the world to compensate for our distance from it. While landscape becomes a receptacle for (and projection of) our spiritual longings for the sublime, as proffered over 150 years ago by American artists, Gerdeman today suggests that art should not deceive us into thinking we are somehow in touch with nature, or even with our own needs and desires.

While intimations of landscape painting are evident in Darren Waterston's oil-on-wood-panel works, easy categorization in that genre eludes us. His ideas of pictorial space are shaped by an experience of landscape in America and Europe combined with an understanding that abstraction is inherent in every aspect of life. Waterston puts abstraction in the service of a visionary project by combining a sensitivity to the natural world, scholarly awareness of the histories of art and culture, virtuosic sense of color and expert knowledge of the materials of painting. He uses recognizable forms such as branches, crosses and flowers drawn from the external world in complex improvisations that mirror internal worlds, like modern artists Wassily Kandinsky and František Kupka before him. Waterston's paintings such as *Beata* conjure apocalyptic scenarios as he imagines flashing, otherworldly realms at the brink (or fissure) of consciousness, as if some kind of electrical charge has strangulated, scorched, interrupted or, optimistically, resuscitated life. In these B-side versions of Bierstadt's play on the sublime, viewers are set on trajectories in which the mind and eye roam aimlessly hand-in-hand with imagination and desire. Although one may search for clues to determine what occurred in these synaptic "landscapes," the eye remains uncertain. That is the point.

Waterston uses materials, supports and framing devices of traditional easel painting in ways

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that expose the very limitations of that medium and of representational art in general. In *Tondo No. 6*, the overpowering, viscous quality of pigment breaches the limits of the circular shape of the Renaissance tondo, lobbing over in a kind of slow flight from the edge. Painting is, after all, only liquid and chemical makeup. In *Tondo No. 18*, imagery has germinated completely outside the circular form, while abstract molecular and biomorphic shapes float and hover inside what looks more like the oculus of a microscope. In *Tondo No. 7*, representation holds a stronger ground: a cross-like form rests unsteadily atop an indecipherable, silhouetted conglomeration set against a Michelangeloesque "calm after the storm" sky.

A sense of mortality pervades the work of Darren Waterston, but not in a depressing kind of way. The sensation transcends ordinary ideas of death, much as his work transcends the conventional landscape. It is, in a word, sublime. This brings us back full circle to the function of the museum—the Met or any museum, for that matter—as a site for respite and experiencing the sublime, including the beautiful. Beauty in art takes shape and surfaces in the awareness of human perseverance, transcending era or medium. It is found in the continual regeneration and reworking of our presence in the world—not in how well something is represented. Like all things sublime, beauty, too, is an expanding field.

SUSAN SONTAG

(1933–2004)

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“AN ARGUMENT ABOUT BEAUTY”

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## 1

Responding at last, in April of 2002, to the scandal created by the revelation of innumerable cover-ups of sexually predatory priests, Pope John Paul II told the American cardinals summoned to the Vatican, “A great work of art may be blemished, but its beauty remains; and this is a truth which any intellectually honest critic will recognize.”

Is it too odd that the Pope likens the Catholic Church to a great—that is, beautiful—work of art? Perhaps not, since the inane comparison allows him to turn abhorrent misdeeds into something like the scratches in the print of a silent film or craquelure covering the surface of an Old Master painting, blemishes that we reflexively screen out or see past. The Pope likes venerable ideas. And beauty, as a term signifying (like health) an indisputable excellence, has been a perennial resource in the issuing of peremptory evaluations.

Permanence, however, is not one of beauty’s more obvious attributes; and the contemplation of beauty, when it is expert, may be wreathed in pathos, the drama on which Shakespeare elaborates in many of the Sonnets. Traditional celebrations of beauty in Japan, like the annual rite of cherry-blossom viewing, are keenly elegiac; the most stirring beauty is the most evanescent. To make beauty in some sense imperishable required a lot of conceptual tinkering and transposing, but the idea was simply too alluring, too potent, to be squandered on the praise of superior embodiments. The aim was to multiply the notion, to allow for kinds of beauty, beauty with adjectives, arranged on a scale of ascending value and incorruptibility, with the metaphorized uses (“intellectual beauty,” “spiritual beauty”) taking precedence over what ordinary language extols as beautiful—a gladness to the senses.

The less “uplifting” beauty of face and body remains the most commonly visited site of the beautiful. But one would hardly expect the Pope to invoke *that* sense of beauty while constructing an exculpatory account of several generations’ worth of the clergy’s sexual molestation of children and protection of the molesters. More to the point—his point—is the “higher” beauty of art. However much art may seem to be a matter of surface and reception by the senses, it has generally been accorded an honorary citizenship in the domain of “inner” (as opposed to “outer”) beauty. Beauty, it seems, is immutable, at least when incarnated—fixed—in the form of art, because it is in art that beauty as an idea, an eternal idea, is best embodied. Beauty (should you choose to use the word that way) is deep, not superficial; hidden, sometimes, rather than obvious; consoling, not troubling; indestructible, as in art, rather than ephemeral, as in nature. Beauty, the stipulatively uplifting kind, perdures.

## 2

The best theory of beauty is its history. Thinking about the history of beauty means focusing on its deployment in the hands of specific communities.

Communities dedicated by their leaders to stemming what is perceived as a noxious tide of innovative views have no interest in modifying the bulwark provided by the use of beauty as unexceptionable commendation and consolation. It is not surprising that John Paul II, and the preserve-and- conserve institution for which he speaks, feels as comfortable with beauty as with the idea of the good.

It also seems inevitable that when, almost a century ago, the most prestigious communities concerned with the fine arts dedicated themselves to drastic projects of innovation, beauty would turn

up on the front line of notions to be discredited. Beauty could not but appear a conservative standard to the makers and proclaimers of the new; Gertrude Stein said that to call a work of art beautiful means that it is dead. Beautiful has come to mean “merely” beautiful: there is no more vapid or philistine compliment.

Elsewhere, beauty still reigns, irrepressible. (How could it not?) When that notorious beauty-lover Oscar Wilde announced in *The Decay of Lying*, “Nobody of any real culture ever talks about the beauty of a sunset. Sunsets are quite old-fashioned,” sunsets reeled under the blow, then recovered. *Les beaux-arts*, when summoned to a similar call to be up-to-date, did not. The subtraction of beauty as a standard for art hardly signals a decline of the authority of beauty. Rather, it testifies to a decline in the belief that there is something called art.

### 3

Even when Beauty was an unquestioned criterion of value in the arts, it was defined laterally, by evoking some other quality that was supposed to be the essence or *sine qua non* of something that was beautiful. A definition of the beautiful was no more (or less) than a commendation of the beautiful. When, for example, Lessing equated beauty with harmony, he was offering another general idea of what is excellent or desirable.

In the absence of a definition in the strict sense, there was supposed to be an organ or capacity for registering beauty (that is, value) in the arts, called “taste,” and a canon of works discerned by people of taste, seekers after more rarefied gratifications, adepts of connoisseurship. For in the arts—unlike life—beauty was not assumed to be necessarily apparent, evident, obvious.

The problem with taste was that, however much it resulted in periods of large agreement

within communities of art lovers, it issued from private, immediate, and revocable responses to art. And the consensus, however firm, was never more than local. To address this defect, Kant—a dedicated universalizer—proposed a distinctive faculty of “judgment” with discernable principles of a general and abiding kind; the tastes legislated by this faculty of judgment, if properly reflected upon, should be the possession of all. But “judgment” did not have its intended effect of shoring up “taste” or making it, in a certain sense, more democratic. For one thing, taste-as-principled-judgment was hard to apply, since it had the most tenuous connection with the actual works of art deemed incontestably great or beautiful, unlike the pliable, empirical criterion of taste. And taste is now a far weaker, more assailable notion than it was in the late eighteenth century. *Whose* taste? Or, more insolently, *who sez?*

As the relativistic stance in cultural matters pressed harder on the old assessments, definitions of beauty—descriptions of its essence—became emptier. Beauty could no longer be something as positive as harmony. For Valéry, the nature of beauty is that it cannot be defined; beauty is precisely “the ineffable.”

The failure of the notion of beauty reflects the discrediting of the prestige of judgment itself, as something that could conceivably be impartial or objective, not always self-serving or self-referring. It also reflects the discrediting of binary discourses in the arts. Beauty defines itself as the antithesis of the ugly. Obviously, you can’t say something is beautiful if you’re not willing to say something is ugly. But there are more and more taboos about calling something, anything, ugly. (For an explanation, look first not at the rise of so-called political correctness, but at the evolving ideology of consumerism, then at the complicity between these

two.) The point is to find what is beautiful in what has not hitherto been regarded as beautiful (or: the beautiful in the ugly).

Similarly, there is more and more resistance to the idea of “good taste,” that is, to the dichotomy good taste/bad taste, except for occasions that allow one to celebrate the defeat of snobbery and the triumph of what was once condescended to as bad taste. Today, good taste seems even more retrograde an idea than beauty. Austere, difficult “modernist” art and literature have come to seem old-fashioned, a conspiracy of snobs. Innovation is relaxation now; today’s E-Z Art gives the green light to all. In the cultural climate favoring the more user-friendly art of recent years, the beautiful seems, if not obvious, then pretentious. Beauty continues to take a battering in what are called, absurdly, our culture wars.

#### 4

That beauty applied to some things and not to others, that it was a principle of *discrimination*, was once its strength and appeal. Beauty belonged to the family of notions that establish rank, and accorded well with social order unapologetic about station, class, hierarchy, and the right to exclude.

What had been a virtue of the concept became its liability. Beauty, which once seemed vulnerable because it was too general, loose, porous, was revealed as— on the contrary— excluding too much. Discrimination, once a positive faculty (meaning refined judgment, high standards, fastidiousness), turned negative: it meant prejudice, bigotry, blindness to the virtues of what was not identical with oneself.

The strongest, most successful move against beauty was in the arts: beauty, and the caring about beauty, was restrictive; as the current idiom has it, elitist. Our appreciations, it was

felt, could be so much more inclusive if we said that something, instead of being beautiful, was “interesting.”

Of course, when people said a work of art was interesting, this did not mean that they necessarily liked it—much less that they thought it beautiful. It usually meant no more than they thought they ought to like it. Or that they liked it, sort of, even though it wasn’t beautiful.

Or they might describe something as interesting to avoid the banality of calling it beautiful. Photography was the art where “the interesting” first triumphed, and early on: the new, photographic way of seeing proposed everything as a potential subject for the camera. The beautiful could not have yielded such a range of subjects; and soon came to seem uncool to boot as a judgment. Of a photograph of a sunset, a beautiful sunset, anyone with minimal standards of verbal sophistication might well prefer to say, “Yes, the photograph is interesting.”

#### 5

*What is interesting?* Mostly, what has not previously been thought beautiful (or good). The sick are interesting, as Nietzsche points out. The wicked, too. To name something as interesting implies challenging old orders of praise; such judgments aspire to be found insolent or at least ingenious. Connoisseurs of the interesting—whose antonym is the boring—appreciate clash, not harmony. Liberalism is boring, declares Carl Schmitt in *The Concept of the Political*, written in 1932 (the following year he joined the Nazi Party). A politics conducted according to liberal principles lacks drama, flavor, conflict, while strong autocratic politics—and war—are interesting.

Long use of “the interesting” as a criterion of value has, inevitably, weakened its transgressive



bite. What is left of the old insolence lies mainly in its disdain for the consequences of actions and of judgments. As for the truthfulness of the ascription—that does not even enter the story. One calls something interesting precisely so as not to have to commit to a judgment of beauty (or of goodness). The interesting is now mainly a consumerist concept, bent on enlarging its domain: the more things that become interesting, the more the marketplace grows. The boring—understood as an absence, an emptiness—implies its antidote: the promiscuous, empty affirmations of the interesting. It is a peculiarly inconclusive way of experiencing reality.

In order to enrich this deprived take on our experiences, one would have to acknowledge a full notion of boredom: depression, rage (suppressed despair). Then one could work toward a full notion of the interesting. But that quality of experience—of feeling—one would probably no longer even *want* to call interesting.

## 6

Beauty can illustrate an ideal; a perfection. Or, because of its identification with women (more accurately, with Woman), it can trigger the usual ambivalence that stems from the age-old denigration of the feminine. Much of the discrediting of beauty needs to be understood as a result of the gender inflection. Misogyny, too, might underlie the urge to metaphorize beauty, thereby promoting it out of the realm of the “merely” feminine, the unserious, the specious. For if women are worshiped because they are beautiful, they are condescended to for their preoccupation with making or keeping themselves beautiful. Beauty is theatrical, it is for being looked at and admired; and the word is as likely to suggest the beauty industry (beauty magazines, beauty

parlors, beauty products)—the theatre of feminine frivolity—as the beauties of art and of nature. How else to explain the association of beauty—i.e., women—with mindlessness? To be concerned with one’s own beauty is to risk the charge of narcissism and frivolity. Consider all the beauty synonyms, starting with the “lovely,” the merely “pretty,” which cry out for a virile transposition.

“Handsome is as handsome does.” (But not: “Beautiful is as beautiful does.”) Though it applies no less than does “beautiful” to appearance, “handsome”—free of associations with the feminine—seems a more sober, less gushing way of commending. Beauty is not ordinarily associated with gravitas. Thus one might prefer to call the vehicle for delivering searing images of war and atrocity a “handsome book,” as I did in the preface to a recent compilation of photographs by Don McCullin, lest calling it a “beautiful book” (which it was) would seem an affront to its appalling subject.

## 7

It’s usually assumed that beauty is, almost tautologically, an “aesthetic” category, which puts it, according to many, on a collision course with the ethical. But beauty, even beauty in the amoral mode, is never naked. And the ascription of beauty is never unmixed with moral values. Far from the aesthetic and the ethical being poles apart, as Kierkegaard and Tolstoy insisted, the aesthetic is itself a quasi-moral project. Arguments about beauty since Plato are stocked with questions about the proper relation to the beautiful (the irresistibly, enthrallingly beautiful), which is thought to flow from the nature of beauty itself.

The perennial tendency to make of beauty itself a binary concept, to split it up into “inner” and “outer,” “higher” and “lower” beauty, is the usual way that judgments of the beautiful are

colonized by moral judgments. From a Nietzschean (or Wildean) point of view, this may be improper, but it seems to me unavoidable. And the wisdom that becomes available over a deep, lifelong engagement with the aesthetic cannot, I venture to say, be duplicated by any other kind of seriousness. Indeed, the various definitions of beauty come at least as close to a plausible characterization of virtue, and of a fuller humanity, as the attempts to define goodness as such.

### 8

Beauty is part of the history of idealizing, which is itself part of the history of consolation. But beauty may not always console. The beauty of face and figure torments, subjugates; that beauty is imperious. The beauty that is human, and the beauty that is made (art)—both raise the fantasy of possession. Our model of the disinterested comes from the beauty of nature—a nature that is distant, overarching, unpossessable.

From a letter written by a German soldier standing guard in the Russian winter in late December of 1942: “The most beautiful Christmas I had ever seen, made entirely of disinterested emotions and stripped of all tawdry trimmings. I was all alone beneath an enormous starred sky, and I can remember a tear running down my frozen cheek, a tear neither of pain nor of joy but of emotion created by intense experience.”\*

Unlike beauty, often fragile and impermanent, the capacity to be overwhelmed by the beautiful is astonishingly sturdy and survives amidst the harshest distractions. Even war, even the prospect of certain death, cannot expunge it.

\* QUOTED IN STEPHEN G. FRITZ, FRONTSOLDATEN: THE GERMAN SOLDIER IN WORLD WAR II (LEXINGTON, KY: UNIVERSITY PRESS OF KENTUCKY, 1995), 130.

### 9

The beauty of art is better, “higher,” according to Hegel, than the beauty of nature because it is made by human beings and is the work of the spirit. But the discerning of beauty in nature is also the result of traditions of consciousness, and of culture—in Hegel’s language, of spirit.

The responses to beauty in art and to beauty in nature are interdependent. As Wilde pointed out, art does more than school us on how and what to appreciate in nature. (He was thinking of poetry and painting. Today the standards of beauty in nature are largely set by photography.) What is beautiful reminds us of nature as such—of what lies beyond the human and the made—and thereby stimulates and deepens our sense of the sheer spread and fullness of reality, inanimate as well as pulsing, that surrounds us all.

A happy by-product of this insight, if insight it is: beauty regains its solidity, its inevitability, as a judgment needed to make sense of a large portion of one’s energies, affinities, and admirations; and the usurping notions appear ludicrous.

Imagine saying, “That sunset is interesting.”

THORSTEN  
BRINKMANN

BORN 1971

LIVES IN HAMBURG

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VILLA SILVERBAUM, FROM THE SERIES  
PORTRAITS OF A SERIALSAMMLER,  
2005–PRESENT

C-PRINTS, PIGMENT ON DECORATIVE  
WALLPAPER AND FOUND OBJECTS  
DIMENSIONS VARIABLE

DRUNE QUOLL, 2007

C-PRINT  
30 X 23 ¼ INCHES





# ELLEN HARVEY

BORN 1967

LIVES IN BROOKLYN

---

FROM THE SERIES My Collection  
INADEQUATELY DOCUMENTED, 2009

TOM'S OFFICE

MY LIVING ROOM WITH WALK-IN

MY BEDROOM WITH JOHN ARNOLD'S  
PAINTING

GUEST ROOM

OIL ON WOOD PANEL

20 X 20 INCHES







# MOYRA DAVEY

BORN 1958

LIVES IN NEW YORK CITY

---

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM PARIS, 2009

16 C-PRINTS, POSTAGE, TAPE

11  $\frac{3}{4}$  X 17  $\frac{3}{4}$  INCHES





ANNA MOLSKA

BORN 1983

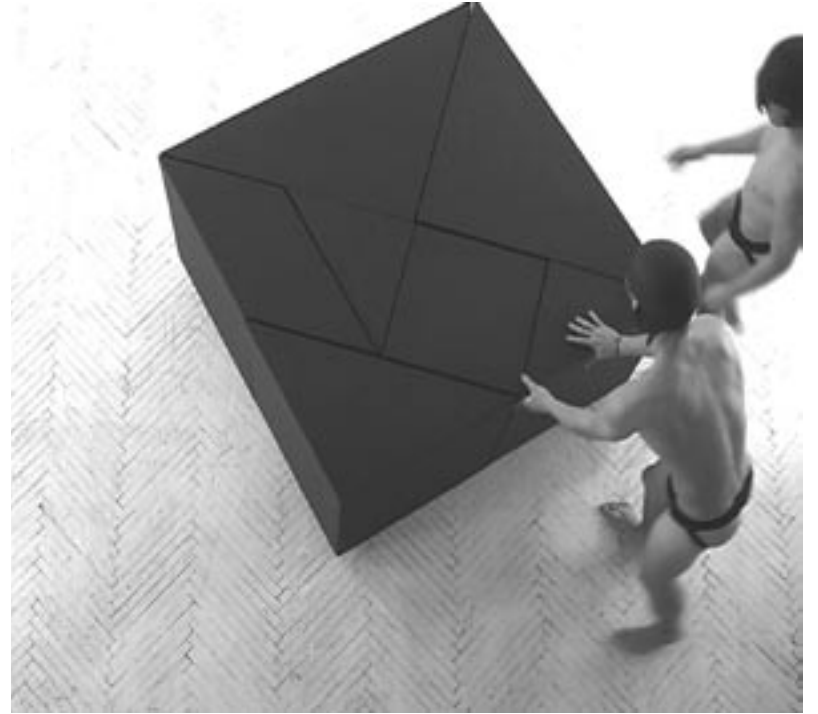
LIVES IN WARSAW

---

TANAGRAM, 2006-07

VIDEO

5:10 MINUTES



# RYAN MCGINLEY

BORN 1977

LIVES IN NEW YORK CITY

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MARCEL, ANN, COLEY, 2007

C-PRINT

16 X 20 ½ INCHES

FIREWORKS HYSTERIC, 2007-08

C-PRINT

40 X 30 INCHES

FALLING GREEN WATER, 2007

C-PRINT

24 X 20 INCHES







EVE SUSSMAN  
AND THE RUFUS  
CORPORATION

SUSSMAN BORN 1961  
LIVES IN BROOKLYN

---

89 SECONDS AT ALCÁZAR, 2004  
HIGH-DEFINITION VIDEO INSTALLATION  
11 MINUTES  
EVE SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS  
CORPORATION

DOG ROLLS  
VIDEO STILL

THE THREE  
PRODUCTION STILL

PHILIP AND MARIANA REFLECTED  
PRODUCTION STILL

LIGHT ON HER NECK  
VIDEO STILL

THE WIDOW ON THE SET  
PRODUCTION STILL





89 SECONDS AT ALCÁZAR, 2004

EVE SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS CORPORATION

MARIANA OF AUSTRIA, QUEEN OF SPAIN: HELEN PICKETT  
PHILIP IV, KING OF SPAIN: JEFF WOOD  
DIEGO VELAZQUEZ: WALTER SIPSER  
INFANTA MARGARITA: SOFIE ZAMCHICK  
DOÑA MARCELA: ANNETTE PREVITI  
MENINA MARIA: ERIN KALEEL  
MENINA ISABEL: ANDREA HUELSE  
MARI BARBOLA: PETER DINKLAGE  
GUARDADAMAS: NESBITT BLAISDELL  
NICOLASICO: ZACHARY MILLS  
JOSE NIEN TO: RICHARD TABNIK

CHOREOGRAPHY: CLAUDIA DE SERPA SOARES  
SOUND: JONATHAN BEPLER  
COSTUME DESIGN: KAREN YOUNG  
MASTER SCENIC ARTIST: REBECCA GRAVES  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: JEFF BLAUVELT  
STEADICAM: SERGEI FRANKLIN  
LIGHTING DIRECTOR: DAVE HAMMET  
PRODUCERS: EVE SUSSMAN, JEFF BLAUVELT, JEN HECK, SANNA  
MOORE, CHERYL KAPLAN  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: JEN HECK  
CASTING DIRECTOR: STEPHANIE HOLBROOK  
A.C./FOCUS PULLER: ANDREW ROMERO  
EDIT: EVE SUSSMAN  
BLUE SCREEN COMPOSITE: JOSH GLASER  
EDIT FACILITIES: HD-CINEMA & SURPLUS PRODUCTIONS  
STILL PHOTOGRAPHERS: BOBBY NEEL ADAMS, BENEDIKT  
PARTENHEIMER  
DV DOCUMENTARY CAMERA: PETER MATTAI, JASON JONES  
SUPER 8: EVE SUSSMAN, MARIO PEGO, JEN HECK  
GRIP: NICOLE RIVERA  
ARCHITECTURAL MODELING: ROBERT WHALLEY  
HEAD PAINTER: AMY SULLIVAN  
SCENIC PAINTERS: COLIN MILES, MARK LANE-DAVIES, TONY PINOTTI  
SET DESIGN: EVE SUSSMAN, ROBERT WHALLEY  
SET BUILDERS: JASON JONES, JOAN GIROUX, ALEX IONESCU, CALEB  
BOWMAN, JOSH NATHANSON, AMY SULLIVAN, COLIN MILES  
RIGGING: SIMON LEE  
COSTUME ASSISTANTS: KIEREN CARROLL, CHANDI LANCASTER,

MELISSA CANELLA, LINDA RICCIARDI, ERIKA FUREY  
FABRIC DYER: CHAR HAVLA  
MAKE-UP ARTISTS: MARY ELIZABETH MICARI, PAULA SPELLMAN,  
LASONYA GUNTER, AMITY GIVENS  
HAIR: ARZO NAZAMY  
WIG MAKER FOR HELEN PICKETT: EDWARD MAHONEY  
DOG TRAINER: JEREMY ALTMAN  
INTERNS: KIRSTEN CHAMPLIN, ANDREW MAUSY  
LOCATION: DAN WURTZEL STUDIOS, BROOKLYN, NY

DOG ROLLS, 2004

THE RUFUS CORPORATION IN A VIDEO STILL FROM 89 SECONDS AT  
ALCÁZAR BY EVE SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS CORPORATION  
PHOTO: EVE SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS CORPORATION

THE THREE, 2004

(WALTER SIPSER, ERIN KALEEL AND SOFIE ZAMCHICK AS DIEGO  
VELÁSQUEZ, MARÍA AND MARGARITA)  
PRODUCTION STILL FROM 89 SECONDS AT ALCÁZAR BY EVE  
SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS CORPORATION  
PHOTO: BENEDIKT PARTENHEIMER FOR THE RUFUS CORPORATION

PHILIP AND MARIANA REFLECTED, 2004

(HELEN PICKETT AND JEFF WOOD AS MARIANA OF AUSTRIA, QUEEN  
OF SPAIN AND PHILIP IV, KING OF SPAIN)  
PRODUCTION STILL FROM 89 SECONDS AT ALCÁZAR BY EVE  
SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS CORPORATION  
PHOTO: BENEDIKT PARTENHEIMER FOR THE RUFUS CORPORATION

LIGHT ON HER NECK, 2004

(HELEN PICKETT AS MARIANA OF AUSTRIA, QUEEN OF SPAIN)  
VIDEO STILL FROM 89 SECONDS AT ALCÁZAR BY EVE SUSSMAN AND  
THE RUFUS CORPORATION  
PHOTO: EVE SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS CORPORATION

THE WIDOW ON THE SET, 2004

(ANNETTE PREVITI AS THE DOÑA MARCELA)  
PRODUCTION STILL FROM 89 SECONDS AT ALCÁZAR BY EVE  
SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS CORPORATION  
PHOTO: BENEDIKT PARTENHEIMER FOR THE RUFUS CORPORATION

MATTS  
LEIDERSTAM

BORN 1956

LIVES IN STOCKHOLM

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PARIS 1999-03-15, RETURNED, PARC  
DES BUTTES-CHAUMONT MADE AFTER  
NICOLAS POUSSIN'S SPRING OR THE  
EARTHLY PARADISE, 1660-64, ROME,  
2000-01

INSTALLATION WITH SLIDE PROJECTION  
AND WOODEN BENCH

RETURNED, FRESCATI, 1998  
STOCKHOLM

RETURNED, THE RAMBLES, 1997  
CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK CITY

RETURNED, HAMPSTEAD HEATH, 1997  
LONDON  
OIL ON CANVAS, C-PRINT  
16 X 22 INCHES









ELIZABETH  
GERDEMAN

BORN 1980

LIVES IN COLUMBUS

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GRANDEUR: FROM COLE, CHURCH,  
BIERSTADT AND MORAN, 2010  
LATEX PAINT, SITE-BASED MURAL  
27 X 11 FEET



DARREN  
WATERSTON

BORN 1965  
LIVES IN SAN FRANCISCO

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BEATA, 2008  
OIL ON WOOD PANEL  
47 X 36 INCHES

TONDO No. 6, 2009

TONDO No. 18, 2009

TONDO No. 7, 2009  
MONOTYPE ON RIVES BFK BUFF  
22 ½ X 15 INCHES

NIGHT BLOOM, 2007  
OIL ON WOOD PANEL  
47 X 47 INCHES







# CHECKLIST

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## THORSTEN BRINKMANN

VILLA SILVERBAUM, FROM THE SERIES PORTRAITS OF A SERIALSAMMLER, 2005–PRESENT

13 C-PRINTS

BIG CANDYPINKI, 2006

22 X 17 ¼ INCHES

COLLECTION OF CHRISTINA MÜLLER, COURTESY GALERIE KUNSTAGENTEN, BERLIN

COMTESS SILVERBAUM, 2008

68 X 48 INCHES

COLLECTION OF NICHOLAS BOECK

DRUNE QUOLL, 2007

30 X 23 ¼ INCHES

COLLECTION OF INGRID AND HELMUT ROOSEN-TRINKS, COURTESY GALERIE KUNSTAGENTEN, BERLIN

HOPi GREEN HOLDING KNI, 2006

67 X 51 INCHES

COLLECTION OF EVAN MIRAPPAUL

KONG ROSE THE YOUNGEST, 2007

30 ¾ X 23 ½ INCHES

COLLECTION OF INGRID AND HELMUT ROOSEN-TRINKS, COURTESY GALERIE KUNSTAGENTEN, BERLIN

CONDE DE MÜTZ, 2008

32 X 24 INCHES

DON BROTTTO, 2007

15 ¾ X 11 ¾ INCHES

DUKE JOEL-PETER OINK, 2007

12 ¾ X 9 ¾ INCHES

ENN DIVIE, 2008

21 X 16 ¾ INCHES

INUK NUNAVUT, 2006

23 ½ X 17 ¼ INCHES

MONTE FUGLA, 2008

13 X 10 ¼ INCHES

PIERRE O CROSS, 2008

12 ¾ X 10 INCHES

STANDY DE HANDMAN, 2007

39 ¼ X 30 INCHES

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND GALERIE KUNSTAGENTEN, BERLIN

## MOYRA DAVEY

PHOTOGRAPHS FROM PARIS, 2009

16 C-PRINTS, POSTAGE, TAPE

11 ¾ X 17 ¾ INCHES

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND MURRAY GUY, NEW YORK

## ELIZABETH GERDEMAN

GRANDEUR: FROM COLE, CHURCH, BIERSTADT AND MORAN, 2010

LATEX PAINT, SITE-BASED MURAL

27 X 11 FEET

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

## ELLEN HARVEY

FROM THE SERIES MY COLLECTION INADEQUATELY DOCUMENTED, 2009

TOM'S OFFICE

MY LIVING ROOM WITH WALK-IN

MY BEDROOM WITH JOHN ARNOLD'S PAINTING

GUEST ROOM

OIL ON WOOD PANEL

20 X 20 INCHES

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND MEESSEN DE CLERCQ,  
BRUSSELS

MATTS LEIDERSTAM

PARIS 1999-03-15, RETURNED, PARC DES BUTTES-  
CHAUMONT MADE AFTER NICOLAS POUSSIN'S SPRING OR

THE EARTHLY PARADISE, 1660-64, ROME, 2000-01

INSTALLATION WITH SLIDE PROJECTION AND WOODEN  
BENCH

COPY PRODUCED WITH PERMISSION OF MODERNA MUSEET,  
STOCKHOLM

RETURNED, THE RAMBLES, 1997, CENTRAL PARK, NEW  
YORK CITY

RETURNED, HAMPSTEAD HEATH, 1997, LONDON

RETURNED, MONT ROYAL, 1998, MONTRÉAL

RETURNED, PARK K., 1998, MARCINKOWSKIEGO, POZNAN

RETURNED, FRESCATI, 1998, STOCKHOLM

OIL ON CANVAS, C-PRINTS

16 X 22 INCHES

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND ANDRÉHN-SCHIPTJENKO,  
STOCKHOLM

RYAN MCGINLEY

FALLING GREEN WATER, 2007

C-PRINT

24 X 20 INCHES

PRIVATE COLLECTION, NEW YORK

FIREWORKS HYSTERIC, 2007-08

C-PRINT

40 X 30 INCHES

COURTESY MARK FLETCHER AND TOBIAS MEYER

MARCEL, ANN, COLEY, 2007

C-PRINT

16 X 20 ½ INCHES

COURTESY MR. AND MRS. CHARLES NEWMAN

ANNA MOLSKA

TANAGRAM, 2006-07

VIDEO

5:10 MINUTES

COURTESY OF THE FOKSAL GALLERY FOUNDATION,  
WARSAW

SUSAN SONTAG

"AN ARGUMENT ABOUT BEAUTY" FROM AT THE SAME  
TIME: ESSAYS & SPEECHES BY SUSAN SONTAG, EDITED  
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EVE SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS CORPORATION

89 SECONDS AT ALCÁZAR, 2004

HIGH-DEFINITION VIDEO INSTALLATION

11 MINUTES

DARREN WATERSTON

BEATA, 2008

OIL ON WOOD PANEL

47 X 36 INCHES

NIGHT BLOOM, 2007

OIL ON WOOD PANEL

47 X 47 INCHES

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND HAINES GALLERY, SAN  
FRANCISCO (PHOTO BY MONIQUE DESCHAINES)

TONDO No. 6, 2009

TONDO No. 7, 2009

TONDO No. 18, 2009

MONOTYPE ON RIVES BFK BUFF

22 ½ X 15 INCHES

PUBLISHED BY SMITH ANDERSON EDITIONS

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND SMITH ANDERSON



# SPECIAL THANKS

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A SINCERE APPRECIATION GOES TO CCAD PRESIDENT DENNY GRIFFITH AND PROVOST ANEDITH NASH FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF BUREAU FOR OPEN CULTURE.

A GRATEFUL THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS.



Greater Columbus  
Arts Council



Ohio Arts Council



THORSTEN BRINKMANN

MOYRA DAVEY

ELIZABETH GERDEMAN

ELLEN HARVEY

MATTS LEIDERSTAM

RYAN MCGINLEY

ANNA MOLSKA

SUSAN SONTAG

EVE SUSSMAN AND THE RUFUS CORPORATION

DARREN WATERSTON

BUREAU FOR OPEN CULTURE



Columbus College of Art & Design