

NEWS & NOTES

LOST & FOUND

Lost: Constance Lowenthal has been named the director of the Commission for Art Recovery, trying to recover art wherever they can find it. This is the second new attempt to trace art stolen from Jewish collectors in 1930s and 1940s. If there are heirs, then the art once reclaimed will be returned to them. If there are no heirs, the art will be sold and the proceeds will go to Jewish charities.

Found: New ways of rescuing decomposed stone have aided conservationists to save monuments from pollution, according to an article in the New York Times on 18 November 1997. The secret is in consolidants and the way chemists are working to make them adhere better to limestone and marble.

Found: A 13-word fragment of Old Hebrew script about a payment of 3 shekels of silver to King Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem has been dated to sometime between the 7th and 9th centuries BC, making the inscription the oldest non-biblical reference to the Jewish holy place ever discovered.

Damaged: A woman in January touring the White House sprayed rust-brown paint on two historic sculptures in the Blue Room. The woman caused more than \$1,000 damage to the room's wall covering and defaced two marble busts of Christopher Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci, dating to 1815.

Damaged: The same man who slashed Barnett Newman's "Who's Afraid of Red, Yellow and Blue III," a 1967 masterpiece housed at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, that fateful day in 1986, served 5 months in jail and three months on parole, and then faded into obscurity until November when he entered the museum again, walked up to a second-floor gallery and, with nobody else around, slashed "Cathedral" by Newman 7 times with a small, Stanley-brand knife. He waited for guards to apprehend him. Being a monochromatic painting, it will be harder to repair and restore this painting. The 31-year-old man faced two years in prison and a fine of no more than \$15,000. The painting was worth \$12 million.

Found: Guatemala has begun efforts to reclaim Mayan antiquities that were the centerpiece of an exhibit at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, which contained artifacts from Africa, Mesoamerica, and Oceania. The pre-Columbian works from Mali and Guatemala number over 100. Many queries are involved over the antiquities. The Guatemalan government has formally demanded the return of 32 pre-Columbia objects showcased in a new MFA gallery.

Found: An anonymous telephone call led police to a stolen Tintoretto painting stashed in a baggage locker at a train station in suburban Rome. "Deposition of Christ", from the late 16th century, was stolen from a private home in Rome in 1996. Twelve people are under investigation in the theft of the painting, which was recovered in late January from the station at Tiburtina. It was one of 18 lesser-known paintings recovered in late January by the paramilitary police investigating art thefts in Rome, Tuscany and Lombardy.

Damaged: Three Matisse paintings—including one on loan from Washington's National Gallery and another from Russia's Hermitage Museum—were found to be damaged in January at a Rome museum. The Capitoline Museum was temporarily closed, and police investigated the matter. The damage was "very minor", according to officials.

Damaged: A quote by pop icon Yoko Ono telling viewers of a Cincinnati museum show of her paintings that "no one can tell you not to touch the art" was apparently misinterpreted by one man, who now faces criminal charges for allegedly defacing her work. Jake Platt, 22, of Seattle, allegedly drew lines with a red marker in December across several of Ono's stark black-and-white paintings that were on view at Cincinnati's Contemporary Art Center. A friend of Platt's told the Cincinnati Enquirer that Platt considered his act an "art statement," and his attorney called the matter "an innocent mistake." Ono's quote concerning touching the art was printed on a sign in the arts center. The paintings—valued at \$10,000 apiece—were returned to New York for an assessment of the damage.

Seized: 15 works by artist Robert Rauschenberg by authorities who threatened to sell them if he doesn't pay \$5.5 million owed to an art dealer. The works were taken from "Robert Rauschenberg: A Retrospective" now showing at the Menil Collection in Houston, Texas. A few days later, the 15 works were returned to the exhibition without any public explanation. But the artist still has to deal with Alfred Kren, an art dealer, who claims that Rauschenberg owes him \$5.5 for not paying commissions under Texas jurisdiction.

Lost and Lest We Forget: 5,263 bound manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew and local alhamijado—or adjzmijski—(Serbo-Croat-Bosnian in Arabic script), as well as tens of thousands of Ottoman-era documents. See <http://www.appliciom.com/manu/ingather.htm>

Found: 4 paintings missing since 1945 from the Gemaldegalerie Alte Meister in Dresden.

They appeared in a sales catalog from a German dealer, and negotiations led to the re-acquisition of the paintings, including two Cranachs.

NEW INSTITUTE

Anna Deavere-Smith will lead a new Harvard think tank devoted to socially conscious art. Called the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue, the center will explore "ways in which the arts can enhance public discussion of vital social issues" and will link artists with scholars, civic leaders, journalists and others "to investigate the link between artistic creativity and the civic realm". The institute will convene in the summers, with the aim of developing up to four independent art projects each year. Applications will be accepted from artists working in theater, dance, music, fine arts, film and video.

AWARDS FOR EXHIBITS

Exiles & Emigres, the Flight of European Artists from Hitler, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art's landmark traveling show organized by curator Stephanie Barron, has won two first-place awards from the International Association of Art Critics. The exhibition came out on top in "best show originating at a U.S. museum outside New York City" and "best museum catalog" in the association's 1996-97 competition. The Whitney Museum of American Art's "Making Mischief: Dada Invades New York" was deemed "best show originating in a New York museum" and finished second in the "best museum catalog" division.

CENSORSHIP

Mormon Church-owned Brigham Young University has pulled four nudes from a traveling exhibition of works by Auguste Rodin, including his famous "The Kiss", which shows a nude couple embracing. "We felt that the nature of those works are such that the viewer will be concentrating on them in a way that is not good for us," said the director of the school's Museum of Art.

□ A grand jury indicted the U.S.' largest bookseller, **Barnes & Noble**, on child pornography charges involving the sale of books by noted photographers whose work includes pictures of nude children. Involved are two books: "The Age of Innocence" by French photographer David Hamilton and "Radiant Identities" by San Francisco photographer Jock Sturges. Barnes & Noble will continue to sell the books, depending upon the decisions of the buyers whether they wish to buy or not.

MUSEUM NEWS

The Huntington Library Art Galleries will increase in size, due to the renovation of a carriage house built in 1911 to house the Huntington family's automobiles. This two-

story, 7200 sq. foot building with high ceilings and wide open spaces will house large temporary exhibitions in one place, instead of dividing them. It will also have a conference room, a preparer's work space, a room for crating artworks and a small retail shop.

The Long Beach Museum of Art will expand by moving the carriage house to the opposite side of the campus, behind the existing museum, and will be converted to a media arts center. The new building, designed by Los Angeles-based architect Frederick Fisher, will become the museum's primary exhibition space.

Museum of Modern Art in New York City has chosen Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi to design its new expansion and renovation, moving the main entrance around to 54th Street, restoring the museum's famous garden to its original proportions and adding a new grand stairway and entrance atrium. There will be an addition of a seven-story annex structure for painting and sculpture galleries on the present site of the Dorset Hotel.

The Museum has also acquired the largest collection of Garry Winogrand's work in private hands, more than 200 black-and-white vintage prints from the collection of Barbara and Eugene M. Schwartz.

The Miho Museum near Kyoto opened on 8 November. Designed by I.M. Pei, the Miho Museum lies in a nature preserve. Nearly 80 percent of the building is underground. An asymmetrical, 120-meter-long cable-suspension bridge, which connects the reception pavilion and the main museum building, is like a sophisticated contemporary sculpture. The new spiritual organization that underwrote the \$216 million project is Shinji Shumeikai. The collection is of more than 1,000 antiquities, with strong collections in Chinese, Iranian and Egyptian objects.

The Craft and Folk Art Museum in Los Angeles has closed after a nine-year struggle to rejuvenate itself with expansion plans, and rejecting a last effort to merge with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

70 Van Gogh works will be loaned to the National Gallery of Art in Washington this fall in "Van Gogh's Van Goghs: Masterpieces from the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam", a full retrospective which will run through 3 January in Washington and then travel only to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, where it will be on view from 17 January - 4 April 1999.

The tiny **Museum of Jurassic Technology**, a chronically under-funded institute of pseudoscience in Culver City, California, recently threatened with closure, has received

a \$250,000 matching grant from the Lannan Foundation. The money goes into the Hester Pooks Tradescant Fund in honor of an avid collector of curiosities, who, according to museum director David Wilson, drowned in her own shallow pond in 1698. Wilson hopes to buy the million-dollar, four-building complex that houses the museum, for which he needs a \$200,000 - \$300,000 down payment.

The Louvre just added more than 90,000 sq. ft. of exhibition space devoted to the museum's collection of Egyptian antiquities.

The Dia Center for the Arts in Chelsea, New York City, has been given Richard Serra's group of three monumental steel works called "Torqued Ellipses". The works, three sculptures more than 13 feet tall, are made of two-inch thick bent steel. Each piece weighs more than 25 tons. They have been on view at Dia's 545 West 22nd St., and will be there until June.

The sculpture will travel to Los Angeles in the fall of 1998, where it will be shown at the Geffen Contemporary as part of a retrospective of Mr. Serra's work.

The Romanian Museum of History in Bucharest is having a yard sale, and up for grabs are busts of Nicolae and Elena Ceaucescu, the Communist dictator and his wife, as well as the gifts given to the party leader and his wife during the Ceaucescu era, including models of mooncraft from NASA, a key from the City of New York, a ten-gallon hat from Texas, blue-and-gold Sevres urns with portraits of the couple painted on the sides, red-and-white tea and coffee services from Brezhnev, amounting to nearly 100 pieces, and lots of other kitsch, including imitation Tiffany glass vases, a pair of porcelain birds presented by the Rolls-Royce plant in England, and sandals from Morocco. These will all be auctioned off, except for several Ceaucescu statues which will serve as a reminder in the Museum of the cult of personality.

The Museum of Technology and Work, a new museum in Mannheim, Germany has put the industrial city on the map, showing human anatomy in life-sized figures posed in familiar human activities, especially in "Human Body World". Preserved through a process called "plastination," the bodies, donated by volunteers, have been transformed into what the inventor of the process calls "anatomical artwork." The three hits are the Runner, the Muscleman and the Expanded Body. The discussion from church leaders and the madding crowd deals with the boundaries of morality, art and science, but it looks like art is winning!

The Director of the **U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum**, **Walter Reich**, has

been removed as director, because he refused to take Arafat around the museum during a recent visit to Washington, DC. In the end, Arafat's staff said he did not have time to visit the museum but left the possibility of doing so on a future trip.

The Whitney Museum will rename its entire newly renovated fifth floor for its long-time supporters, Leonard & Evelyn Lauder. And what next, the bathrooms?

The Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art has opened in London, which features Italian Futurists, including 100 paintings, drawings and sculptures and a 2,000 volume library.

WARHOL FILMS & VIDEOS

Warhol's moving-image oeuvre is being divided among the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the UCLA Film and Television Archive in Los Angeles and the Museum of Television and Radio, which has branches in New York and Los Angeles. In addition, the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York will be given a \$754,000 grant toward research and publication of a catalog raisonné of Warhol's films, and the Modern will receive a similar grant to continue its work in preserving the original films, which it began in the 1980s. This is a gift from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

PERFORMANCE

Billy Curmano's extended performance and environmental statement spanning over 10 years and 2,367.4 miles was documented in *Selections from Objects Collected and Created in the Course of a Swim* from 26 September - 31 October 1997 at the Winona Arts Center in Winona, Minnesota.

Beyond the Pink Performance Festival, to accompany a blockbuster exhibition called Out of Actions exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles included live performances by Carolee Schneemann, John White, an ensemble performance of Yves Klein's *Symphonie Monotone*, Stuart Brisley, Dick Higgins played by Delores Stevens, Extended Organ including Paul McCarthy, Tom Recchion, Fredrik Nilssen and Joe Potts, Barbara T. Smith, Eleanor Antin, Paul Cotton, George Brecht performed by Stephen Prina, Emmett Williams, with panel discussion with Allan Kaprow, David Antin, and historians talking about Tadeusz Kantor and Actionist Russia, as well as performances by Charlemagne Palestine and dance by Simone Forti and much more. What a week it was, organized by Denise Spampinato and Cortical Foundation (Gary Todd) in February for about twelve days.

Karen Finley launched her national public performance piece in February, which will go on every day through August 1998. She is telephone accessible at 1-900-ALL-KAREN (1-900-255-5273) at \$1.75 the first minute and \$1.25 each additional minute. Everyday she will be responding to a range of topics including social injustices, personal reflections on intimacy, motherhood and whatever else she feels like talking about. Sponsored by Creative Time.

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The Loudoun County Library has been sued by Mainstream Loudoun, a community organization in Loudoun County, VA, attacking the constitutionality of a new county library policy that renders certain areas of the Internet off-limits. The library has been using blocking software that filters out pornography and other material deemed objectionable. The policy also requires that Internet terminals be placed in full view of the watchful library staff. If patrons persist in trying to get around the software, the policy prescribes that the "police may be called to remove them."

DON CELENDER

For an artist whose wry art takes the form of documentation, Don Ceclender always rises to the occasion and makes us laugh at ourselves. Recently at his O.K.Harris exhibition in New York, he asked soap opera actors and military officials to name what art they liked. The show consisted of letters by these people in response. Buddy Hackett said he would like to step into a Brueghel. Buddy Ebsen said Seurat's "Grande Jatte". Military people who were asked what art should decorate their quarters were cowards, while soap opera actors, who were asked which artists they would most like to have make a guest appearance on their shows showed a fascination with Leonardo da Vinci and Van Gogh.

FLUXUS NEWS

Vintage Themes: Alison Knowles from 22 January - 14 February 1998 at Gracie Mansion Gallery in New York City, includes three themes that have not been exhibited since they were created: The Sissor Bros. Warehouse (1963), Identical Lunch (1969-73) and bean works (1963-1997). This exhibited was curated by Robert Murdock, an independent curator who was responsible for the recent *Richard Tuttle: Books and Prints* exhibition in collaboration with the New York Public Library.

A Flux-Forum occurred on 20 December 1997 at the Queensland Art Gallery in Brisbane, Australia to celebrate the gift of Fluxus works by Francesco Conz, including a slide talk and performance by Alison Knowles, a performance by Eric Andersen, an interview/discussion with Francesco Conz

and Nicholas Zurbrugg, and a lecture by Douglas Khan on Happenings and Fluxus. Featured was a 50 metre screenprinted banner by Eric Andersen.

Ben: Publications & Ephemera is an exhibition at the Neues Museum Weserburg Bremen curated by Guy Schraenen.

A Tribute to Charlotte Moorman on 21 March at the Brooklyn Museum of Art at 6:30 p.m. Included is a newsreel of John Cage and Charlotte Moorman from the 1960s, an excerpt from the Merv Griffin Show, a marvelous documentary by Nam June Paik and Howard Weinberg, and Charlotte *Resounding*, directed by Larry Miller. Famed for her sensational performances as a topless cellist!

DATELINE: Budapest. 1998 is the Year of Installation at Artpool P60 Art Space in Budapest.

DATELINE: Boston

It is recently reported that the hunt for masterpieces stolen from the Isabella Stuart Gardner Museum is apparently at square one again after federal officials disclosed that chips said to be taken from two of the paintings are fakes. There were also phony photographs purporting to depict two of the works that have been missing for the past 7 years.

DATELINE: New York City

"The Wall" at 599 Broadway has been a sculpture created by Forrest W. Myers since 1973, but the owner of the building has allowed other artists to paint on the lower portion of the wall, and one of the iron bars had also been removed. A law suit has been put by the artist and his lawyer, Richard A. Altman, who contends that any modification of "The Wall" would violate the Federal Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990, which gives artists the right to prevent the destruction of an artwork of recognized stature, and the New York Artists' Authorship Rights Act, a state law passed in 1983 that also protects artworks against mutilation.

DATELINE: Denver

The only known work of 4th century B.C. sculptor Lysippus, purchased by the Getty Museum for more than \$3 million, is on display in a Denver museum to avoid California "use" taxes.

• At the Denver International Airport, deep in the underground train tunnels, one can see New York artist Leni Schwendinger's *Deep Time/Deep Space*, a \$350,000 light and sculpture piece as part of the \$7.7 million in public art at the new airport. Projectors flash words and phrases on the wall. Words such as "mine" or "I have a dream" or "Silent Friend" appear on the walls.

DATELINE: San Francisco

The planned move of the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco to the Old Main Library may be a given, except for the library's large murals by Gottardo Piazzoni, an American of Italian-Swiss background, which would be removed leaving empty openings in their place. At the top of the grand staircase, these two murals from 1931 and 1932 have been integral to the architectural setting. Protected by national, state and city landmark laws as part of the Civic Center Historic Landmark District, the murals if removed would be destroyed as works of art. Conservators cite that the murals would suffer irreparable damage if such an attempt were made. The case has not yet been settled.

DATELINE: Iraq

The cultured Iraqis have been forced to sell their private library collections on the sidewalks or on cars, in order to get them through hard times. Since there is a shortage of paper, magazines and government publications are much reduced, and glossy art magazines are a thing of the past. Writers have disappeared, emigrating to Jordan, Egypt, North Africa, Europe & North America.

DATELINE: Hong Kong

The New Museum of History is being criticized for not giving enough prominence to significant events such as the Opium Wars, the Tianamen Square massacre and the handover ceremony. Opening in mid-1999, it has even been suggested that perhaps a tank should be displayed to make Tianamen Square vivid in the minds of the viewers.

DATELINE: Israel

Arturo Schwarz, the scholar, poet, art dealer and passionate collector from Milan, has given the Israel Museum more than 700 Dada and Surrealist artworks that experts say are worth more than \$20 million. The gift includes paintings, drawings, collages, sculptures, objects, photographs and prints. According to James S. Snyder, director of the Israel Museum, the collection now is a center for Dada and Surrealist art, but also enables the Museum to have a full-service study center with a large library of archival material. There are more than 30 works by Duchamp, 50 works by Man Ray, as well as works by Breton, Calder, Cornell, Ernst, Gorky, Dora Maar, Miró, Schwitters and Tanguy. There are also 150 works by artists Mr. Schwarz considers forerunners of Dada and Surrealism, such as Bosch, William Blake, Goya and Max Klinger. There will be an exhibition of 60 works from the collection which will go on display in the museum in May and a show of the entire collection is scheduled for the year 2000.

DATELINE: Pisa

Sometime this spring, the "Leaning Tower of Pisa" will be girded with a heavy steel strap about one-third the way up its 187-foot height. From the strap, two steel cables will be strung, then anchored to the ground nearly 350 feet away. This "strapping" is the first step in an elaborate plan to prevent it from tumbling over altogether. And it is necessary if the tower is to be reopened to visitors someday.

DATELINE: Japan

In Hokkaido, there is an annual tombstone-design contest for the public cemetery internees. Most applicants are parents who lost children. As Japanese people become wealthier and have more time for themselves, art and culture have become more important. Visiting family graves and having individualized tombstones are part of that.

Since cremation is the general trend in Japan, ashes of various members of a family have been buried in the same grave. So most tombstones are family tombstones. But as families are breaking down, individual tombstones are fashionable now. And since women's position in society has risen, it's the women who have the final choice in design. Some tombstones are designed as a game board, a sake lover ordered his tombstone to reflect his pleasure in life. Some of the stonecutters are looking for designers to make these very expensive tombstones.

DATELINE: Paris

The proposed location of the National Institute of Art History in Paris is the historic Bibliothèque Nationale which will include graduate-level academic programs in art history from several universities, archives and a research center dedicated to art and architecture.

PUBLIC ART

Rachel Whiteread, the English sculptor, is working on her first public project in New York, casting a water tower on the rooftop of 60 Grand Street, just off West Broadway in SoHo, in translucent resin. She is sponsored by the Public Art Fund, a nonprofit institution that organizes art projects. At \$200,000, the tower will be one of the most ambitious projects the fund has ever sponsored, also because of its complicated logistics. The water tower has to be taken apart and kiln-dried because any moisture will ruin it. The piece is scheduled to be completed by 12 May and to be up for a year. Funding comes from the Warhol Foundation, Beck's Beer, Agnes Gund, and Charles Engelhard Foundation. The tank itself was donated by the American Tank Company. Whiteread will also create a

limited edition of 35 lithographs, which will be sold through the P.A.F. in order to raise additional money for the project.

University of Massachusetts-Boston campus has a new public sculpture program, including Mark di Suvero, Luis Jimenez, a trio of human-scale bronzes by William Tucker, with hopes for work by Richard Serra, Sol LeWitt, Ursula von Rydingsvard, and others.

DATELINE: Moscow

Since State support has been drying up in Russia, artists are doing just what their counterparts in the United States are doing, and many other places too: courting capitalists. Directors are even raising private funding, setting up "friends of the Hermitage" and other museums, and traveling to the United States for support. Forgeries are also being avoided by requiring authentication of pieces of art before they are up for sale.

LOOTED ART

The directors of four prestigious American museums told Congress in February that they were confident few of the tens of thousands of artworks stolen by Nazis during World War II were in their collections. The directors of New York's Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, Washington's National Gallery, and the Art Institute of Chicago appeared as part of a series of congressional hearings on the restitution of assets seized or extorted by the Nazis from Holocaust victims. Although the problem of looted art is more common in European museums, the directors promised that if such art is found within their holdings, it would be returned if rightful ownership could be documented. Met director Philippe de Montebello told the panel that only two claims involving war-era looted art had been filed against the Met; none of the other three museums had ever been hit with such claims, the directors said.

NEW MEDIA

An artist in Los Angeles has done a series of paintings with her menstrual blood, while an AIDS activist in British Columbia intends to mix his HIV-infected blood with paint for a series of paintings to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS.

•Bloomington's in New York City has bought the flamboyant collection of wildly colored clothes for men and women by Walter van Beirendonck, with suggestions of bondage, space travel, and, often, humor. And to give the collection a send-off, they are using interactive windows and advertisements on the roofs of taxis. The collection is

called *Wild and Lethal Trash*. Besides seeing the clothes, the potential customers can hear the soundtrack of the designer's spring show and touch the windows to use the designer's CD-Rom and to influence the actions of the mannequins.

CRAYOLAS IN THE SMITHSONIAN

The only vintage box of 64 Crayolas from 1958 when they were invented is now in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian Institution. The Built-in Sharpener has now been historified. The replica of this box is going to be marketed for \$4.00, while the original sold for \$1.00!

MONA LEWINSKY

The Internet has more than 200 sites devoted to Monica Lewinsky. One of the oddest is at <http://www.pcmagic.net/cpinckney/fauxart2.htm> where computer users can find her face superimposed onto various art masterpieces, such as the Mona Lisa.

NEW WEBSITE ADDRESSES

Index of Christian Art with over 26,000 possible subject terms is now available: <http://www.princeton.edu/~ica/database.html>

ISCA (International Society of Copy Artists) has a new Home Page: <http://members.aol.com/isca4art2b/I.S.C.A.Home Page.html>

ArtNet Italia newsletter can be reached at <http://www.thru.com/art/>

OPPORTUNITIES & RESOURCES

The Cunningham Dance Foundation is selling 29 of the Cunningham films, made from 1964 - 1996, including "Beach Birds for Camera" and "Cage/Cunningham," at reduced prices from \$20 to \$30, due to the closing of its media department. Information and orders: (212)255-8240, ext. 26.

The Museum of Modern Art has published a *1997-1998 Books in Print* including books ranging from *Complexity and Contradiction* by Robert Venturi to *The History of Photography: From 1839 to the Present* by Beaumont Newhall and Chuck Close, a mid-career retrospective monograph on the artist. The list is also available at www.moma.org, the Museum's Web site.

Light Impressions has a new catalog for February 1998. This is the leading resource for archival supplies. Write to P.O. Box 940, Rochester, NY 14603-0940.