ED BAYNARD

Selected Press

The New York Times

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2023

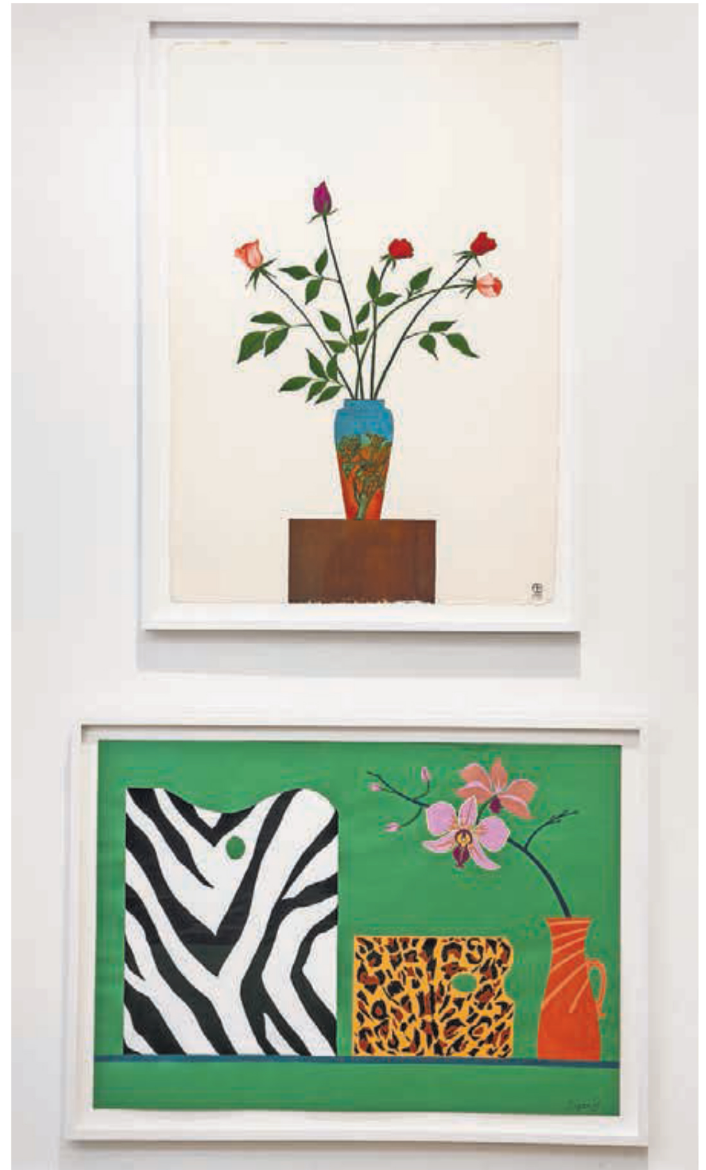
WILL HEINRICH | ART FAIR REVIEW

Unseen Masterpieces

In its second edition, a boutique fair brings more than the usual offerings to New York.

FOR ITS SECOND EDITION, again at the Battery Maritime Building at 10 South Street in Manhattan, the Independent 20th Century art fair   a spinoff of the contemporary-art-focused Independent   offers as dense a selection of top-shelf art as you ll find this week. There are Warhol portraits **(Vito Schnabel Gallery)** and Picasso drawings **(Perrotin)**, sure. But there are also tooled and dyed leather paintings by Winfred Rembert **(James Barron Art)**, a solo presentation by the painter Peter Nadin overlooking the harbor **(Off Paradise)** and a number of historical artists rarely shown in New York or in the United States. As you d expect from a high-end fair this rigorously curated and this small   just 50 artists showing in 33 booths   the exhibits are long on painting, the easiest medium to sell. But there are also sublime Southern Washoe style baskets by Louisa Keyser **(Donald Ellis Gallery)** and a group of spectacular early-20th-century totems from Vanuatu **(Venus Over Manhattan)**, among other sculpture. What follow are the booths that particularly caught my eye, but the decisions weren t easy. Getting in will cost you $45 at the door, but the information-chocked Online Viewing Room is free.

Independent 20th Century
Through Sunday at Cipriani South Street in Manhattan; independenthq.com.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

At the James Fuentes booth: 5 Roses/Painted Rookwood Pottery (1978), top, and Untitled (1990), by Ed Baynard.

James Fuentes

It s not surprising that Ed Baynard (1940-2016), a painter experiencing a posthumous career upswing, was also a graphic designer. The acrylics and watercolors in this decade-spanning presentation make vases, bowls and gracefully springy flowers look as sharp as paper cuts. But they aren t quite flat. Detailed rose petals, in one untitled 1978 piece, float atop dark green stems with such precisely observed droops that they re almost still quivering. As much as they recall wallpaper or woodblock prints, their effect is most like a silent garden seen through a pane of glass.

ARTnews Est. 1902

Art History Gets (Another) Rewrite at the Second-Ever Independent 20th Century

BY TESSA SOLOMON September 8, 2023 1:06pm

The second-ever Independent 20th Century art fair in New York, dedicated to artists and during that timeframe, has returned in reliably elegant form.

This edition is again held at the Battery Maritime Building at the southern tip of Manhattan, steps from the Staten Island ferry send-off. It runs through September 10, coinciding with the Armory Show, which looms like an extravaganza of excess compared to this svelte affair. Like the inaugural edition, 32 exhibitors are spread across a single floor, from Vito Schnabel Gallery, to Venus Over Manhattan, and the Hauser & Wirth Institute, the nonprofit arm of the same-name mega-gallery.

It was difficult to choose the best booths, as most offer an opportunity to get acquainted with lesser-known avant-garde movements, or talented individuals who didn't make the final cut of art history. For every Warhol and Picasso, there is a cheery, sideways still life by the undersung German-born Edith Schloss (Alexandre), or a slick silhouette by the Italian artist Sergio Lombardo (1/9unosunove). If you're willing to pay the $45 admission fee, below are a few other booths to seek out.

James Fuentes

Ed Baynard, Untitled, 2013.
Photo : Ed Baynard, 'Untitled', 2013.

American artist Ed Baynard (1940-2016) is experiencing a market resurgence, and a quick glance at the decades-spanning group of acrylics and watercolors gathered here makes the *why* obvious. Baynard, who daylit as a graphic designer, made floral still lifes in the flat, graphic style of Japanese Ukiyo-e prints, which stress bold blocks of color to convey depth. In the striking "Untitled," from 1990, the delicate pink petals of an orchid pop against a green background. You almost expect them to rustle in the breeze.

artnet news

Art Fairs

At Independent 20th Century, a Rewarding Roster of Self-Taught Artists Share the Spotlight With a Conceptual Coffee Klatch

The fair's second edition trains a sustained eye over the recent past and offers a corrective to historical blind spots.

Annie Armstrong, September 7, 2023

On the preview day of Independent 20th Century, the frenzied energy of this week's packed schedule of openings, parties, and art fairs hadn't yet permeated the steel beams of the Battery Maritime Building (a.k.a. Casa Cipriani South Street), where dealer James Fuentes was drinking a cold beer early in the afternoon, looking relaxed.

It had been a satisfying start for the New York-based gallerist. "I love showing in this space the most," he said of the fair's spacious, stylish location. "The space is beautiful, and even though we have to compete with the Armory Show this year, there's still been a lot of good people who have shown up today."

Behind him, a booth brimming with buoyant watercolors by the late Ed Baynard evoked still lifes by Matisse and Cézanne, though the artist is best known as a designer who worked closely with musicians like the Beatles and Jimi Hendrix.

Ed Baynard's presentation at James Fuentes's booth at the Independent 20th Century art fair. Photo courtesy of James Fuentes.

artnet news

Gallery Network partner

Independent 20th Century Returns to New York This September With an Eye-Opening Focus on Self-Taught Artists

The much anticipated, invite-only fair continues its mission of championing artists and movements from the last century.

Artnet Gallery Network, August 4, 2023

Returning for its second edition this September 7–10, 2023, Independent 20th Century has announced a wide-ranging artistic program, complementing the fair's presentations. Established as a bastion of 20th-century art, the fair brings to light important reevaluations, perspectives, and discussions around the century's movements and artists. The artistic program promises to provide even more in-depth contextualization and insight into the period's history, how it is understood, and highlight the gallery's championing 20th-century art.

Ed Baynard, *Untitled* (1990). Photo: Jason Mandella. Courtesy of James Fuentes and Independent New York.

The New York Times

ART REVIEWS

New York Galleries: What to See Right Now

Ceramic sculptures; warped photographs; floral still lifes; treasures in a trash collection; and swoops of acrylic indigo.

Published Aug. 21, 2019

Ed Baynard

Through Sept. 7. White Columns, 91 Horatio Street, Manhattan; 212-924-4212, whitecolumns.org.

"Untitled," by Ed Baynard, from 1999. via White Columns

Ed Baynard's biography is exponentially flashier than his floral still-life paintings. He was a graphic designer for the Beatles, a clothing designer for Jimi Hendrix, worked for Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, and appeared in Jack Smith's incendiary underground film, "Flaming Creatures" (1963). Nonetheless, this exhibition at White Columns, which encompasses five decades of Mr. Baynard's work, ripples with visual wit and occasional sedition.

Mr. Baynard's mainstay was a vase of flowers painted with watercolor in a flat, design-like manner that recalls Japanese Ukiyo-e prints, Alex Katz paintings or Andy Warhol paint-by-numbers compositions. The vases themselves are like trapdoors into other worlds, featuring detailed landscapes or smaller mise en abyme, still lifes within the still life.

The contrast between his exciting lifestyle and the staid genre of still-life painting wasn't lost on Mr. Baynard. A framed poster for a 1971 gallery show of his work, which is here, includes a short text by Mr. Baynard in which he ruminates on order versus chaos and structure versus freedom. His paintings swing between these poles: They are tightly structured and yet tiny sparks of chaos — promiscuous blossoms, rogue washes of paint or a flamboyant frog flying toward the edge of a composition — erupt within otherwise placidly ordered canvases, suggesting the way subversion or even revolution might emerge from the quietest of quarters. *MARTHA SCHWENDENER*

New York
August 19 - September 1, 2019
Print

ART

Ed Baynard

By Jerry Saltz

ART

2. Hear Ed Baynard

Dizzying minimalism.

White Columns, 91 Horatio Street, through September 7.

The entire city owes a continuous thanks to White Columns for never failing to astound. See the late Ed Baynard's elegantly rhapsodic, kaleidoscopically colored paintings of simple still lifes. In a Zen-like dedication to depicting flowers in vases in open spaces, every line is just so, every millimeter of surface considered. JERRY SALTZ

The New York Times

August 23, 2019
Print

The New York Times

Ed Baynard

By Martha Schwendener

VIA WHITE COLUMNS; MARC TATTI

wrinkles, the cracks, the discoloration — with identity and meaning.

Ms. Yamaoka's "Untitled Photograph 1," on the other hand, which shows Ms. Episalla stretched out naked in bed, demonstrates how to be honest about your own limitations: By aiming her camera at a warped piece of reflective Mylar, instead of directly at her partner, Ms. Yamaoka manages to include herself, and her own position, in the picture. She also distorts the whole with handsome wobbles that remind you of the medium's incompleteness and ambiguity without actually interfering with what the piece communicates — love, trust, obsession and bravado.

WILL HEINRICH

ED BAYNARD

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MARTHA SCHWENDENER

'WHAT IS HERE IS OPEN: SELECTIONS FROM THE TREASURES IN THE TRASH COLLECTION'

Through Sept. 14. Hunter East Harlem Gallery, 2180 Third Avenue, Manhattan; 212-396-7819, huntereastharlemgallery.org.

One of New York's hallmarks is its curbside culture — the way people leave all manner of items on the street for the taking, such as toasters, baby bathtubs and magazines. Nelson Molina knows this side of the city well. For more than 30 years, the Department of Sanitation worker, now retired, picked up objects left along his route in East Harlem. As his collection grew to fill a whole

Time Out
August 16, 2019
Online

Time Out says

Ed Baynard

Photograph: Courtesy White Columns

A denizen of NYC's downtown scene of the 1970s, Baynard (1940–2016) was known for painting still-lifes in flat, minimalistic shapes that borrowed from Japanese woodblock prints and other genres of decorative art. His work was also informed by his experience as a graphic designer for The Beatles, and as the designer for Jimi Hendrix's stage clothes. Perhaps because of it unapologetic pursuit of beauty, Baynard's work has been underrated, but as this show organized by critic Vince Aletti attests, it deserves another look.

ART NEWS
APRIL 1971

Reviews and Previews

Cheryl Aaron* [Panoras] exhibits child-like genre scenes and plaintive portraits. She controls her etchings better. J.G.

Leo Amino [Sculpture Center], who has been experimenting in plastics since 1945, showed early work along with some of his latest polyester resin and dye pieces. The new works come in all shapes. Some are suspended, some are on turntables, others are set off by blinking lights. Looking something like blocks of ice with color frozen inside, these pieces are varied both in style and quality. Most notable is the accomplished technical handling of a difficult medium. L.A.

Karel Appel [Jackson; to April 24] shows recent, large lithographs, whose subject matter and mood are familiar, and whose color is predictably high-keyed. Appel has given up the depicted equivalents of impasto and the snarls and scribbles of his earlier graphic work, and now uses only an occasional black or dark blue outline or the linear result at the edges of two over-printed areas. These figures and oversize heads are put together with flat, often overlapping areas, whose color, shape and elliptical layout are interestingly and consistently aligned with one another and the rectangular formats. J.B.

Elise Asher [Gotham; to April 3] for a number of years has constructed handsome mixed-medium pieces using the language of her husband Stanley Kunitz' poems as both a structural building block and as an inspirational jumping-off point. This exhibition marks the publication of Kunitz' new book, *The Testing Tree*, and that particular poem is the basis for several of the compositions. Asher paints words on colored Plexiglas in a kind of overlay that gives the work an illusion of depth. Often she combines several pieces of Plexiglas into a collage that has real as well as illusionary depth. Her work is rhythmic, concentrated and unique. J.G.B.

Tadashi Asoma [Findlay; to April 17], Japanese artist, divides his canvases to suggest a folding screen or giant fan; they are inhabited by a woman in a kimono, many fans, patterned fabrics, bits of landscape. R.B.

Mildred Ayling*, Anastasia Mamuyac Roca*, Carmine Vecchio* [Kottler; April 4-17] respectively show mundane, romanticized portraits in oil, pastel and charcoal; cheerfully child-like woodcuts and gouaches using combinations of faces and birds; decorative, sometimes witty silk-screen prints. J.G.

Alice Baber [Sachs; to April 20] confines sky colors within whirling discs and then adds reflections of air, earth and water into tumbling cascades. In some paintings motion proceeds from disc to disc in a staccato rat-tat-tat—funneling to a point, then spiraling out. More recent ones supplant staccato motion with continuous modulations. The disc shapes are still discernible but their lambent colors overlap and coalesce into related hues. Miss Baber has deepened her painting and surprises with ever-freshening colors. N.E.

Waldo Balart, Amilcar de Castro, Rubens Gerchman, Alejandro Puente [N.Y.U. Loeb Center], exhibiting together under the auspices of the Brazilian Institute of N.Y.U., all live in New York and reflect local trends. Puente (Argentina) explores color systems. Both literally and figuratively he draws on color wheels, paint samples and value scales, which he relates to words, music and information. He also translates them into sculptures. The material on paper seems most rewarding, but I also responded to the wetness and dryness of the primary colors he encased in Plexiglas boxes. Balart (Cuba) explores another aspect of color systems, that is, how colors affect the weight of related forms. He set up a color environment which the viewer could enter where large cubes were suspended from the ceiling and aligned with others that stood on the floor. It was an interesting experiment although hampered by the fact that forces extraneous to color kept intruding themselves, like the pressing down of the forms or the disengagement of the color surface from the form itself. Ruben Gerchman's (Brazil) graphics, close to concrete poetry, relate the size, spacing, shapes and fragments of words to air, earth, space. He also concretizes them in sculptures, but in his case, as with the others, the less ambitious works were the strongest. J.S.

Ed Baynard [Willard] enshrined the words of Vincent van Gogh in a Plexiglas box along with a curled-up Vermeer reproduction and small plastic lambs. "It does me good to do dirficut things. That does not prevent me having a terrible need of—shall I say the word—of religion. Then I go out at night to paint the stars." Baynard attempts the difficult task of conveying a sense of meditation through prayer in drawings and paintings that have more to do with altars than art. If the viewer is able to switch his consciousness enough to accept the oxymoron of a Zen altar, he will be close to evaluating whether the artist succeeds at his task. String weighted by rocks brought back from Aegean travels hang from the paintings. Branches tightly wrapped in thin knotted string are placed about the gallery and two grey pillows, a candle, book and stones set up a site for meditation. A telescope is aimed out on Madison Avenue. But making insight public is not easy on Madison Avenue and only the viewer can judge what Baynard's work has done to assuage "the terrible need of . . . religion." L.A.

Bruce Beasley [Emmerich] showed sculpture, large irregular geometric solids cast in lucite, clear but given to violent refractions (see A.n., May '70). Each facet of a work contains a deep half-spherical indentation. One can look into them or at them from another angle. Each vantage point cancels or parodies the others. The works are like gems whose transparency knows how to hide what it contains. C.R.

Virginia Berresford [Seligmann] returns with watercolors whose simplified natural motifs and exaggerated local color seemed subordinate to an interest in technical prowess. J.B.

John Bradford* [Bowery; April 16-May 2], student of Leland Bell, is involved with a private vision of Woodstock, when nudes actually lived in the landscape. Looking to the old masters, he finds compositional solutions for his landscapes, cityscapes, still-lifes, portraits and nudes. *War Wounds*, a trenchant portrait of the artist, perhaps the best piece, reveals someone aware of himself and his materials. B.S.

Herman Braun [Misrachi; April 17-May 29] has painted 60 pictures combining figures and motives from works by Velasquez, Manet, Cézanne and Picasso. Cézanne's apples appear in the foreground and his bathers in the background of Manet's *Luncheon on the Grass*. Braun asserts, "I would like to take the mystery out of the sacred relics of pictorial art" and he does so by reducing subject manner to the common denominator of a magazine-illustration style in bright colors, clever cropping and whimsical cartoon sequences. Braun's museum pilferings are suspect on every level but the superficially decorative. Magazine illustrations are hardly the long-promised feast for the innocent eye, though they may adequately and democratically dispose of the visual elitism that Braun despises. L.A.

Carol Brown* [Roko] frequents the Arizona reserves of Hopi and Navajo Indians; her tiny pictographic figures enact, in a romantic space of vast desert scale, their myths, history and customs, in allegories sometimes driven by irony, sometimes by ideology. R.D.

David Burt [Sculpture Center; to April 10], who has previously worked in sheet metal, has evolved an *"Aurora"* series out of sculptured acrylic which he places on bases with rotating colored lights. The glass-like constructions foam like waves or hover like suspended domes. G.T.M.

Kenneth Callahan [Kraushaar; to April 3] has always been associated with Mark Tobey and Morris Graves as one of the Northwest masters. He uses lovely earth tones for aerial landscapes which have a mystical quality. His paintings move slowly as though suspended in space. S.S.

Jacques Callot [AAA; to April 17] was an exceedingly prolific master in spite of living only from 1592 to 1635. Here is a vast exhibition of over

*First one-man show in New York

NEW YORK

Art/Kay Larson

THE REAL THINGS

"...'American Still Life' is about first principles—the presence of the natural world in the life of the imagination..."

AT THE NEUBERGER MUSEUM, IN PURchase, an hour north of Manhattan, is a comfortable, easygoing summer show that is also an ideal teaching exhibition. "American Still Life: 1945–1983" has 100-odd works by artists as various as Charles Sheeler and Hans Hofmann, Eric Fischl and Jane Freilicher, Roy Lichtenstein and Jack Beal. But the show is less a cross section of the still-life genre than a confrontation with the "first problem" of the artist: how to arrange images of real things on a plane of illusions.

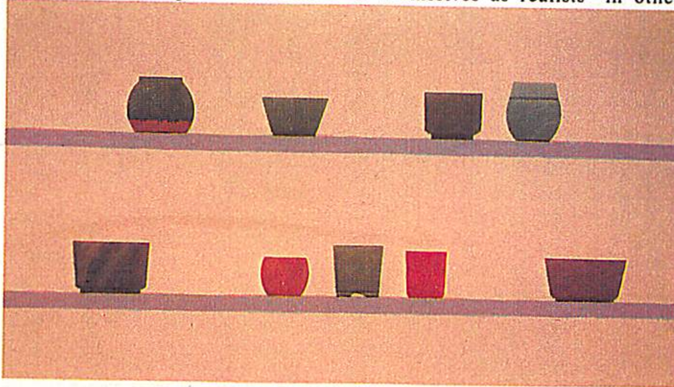
The artists arrive here from realism, Pop, Abstract Expressionism, and so on, but this is not a show that subsists on categories. In fact, the labels peel off rather easily, leaving you with pure, unfettered, serene sensation. After a season characterized by excesses of analysis, this reacquaintance with the simplest tasks of eye and mind is a balm, a calming influence. You find yourself admiring the most fundamental visual tactics: Ed Baynard's sublimely nonchalant way of lining up two rows of pots in an abstract window of white space, like a Japanese watercolor master taking inventory. Or Fischl's ability to wring pulp-romance melodrama out of a lamp, a crossword puzzle, and the cheap, faded furniture of a 1940s hotel. Or Vija Celmins's steamy *Soup*, from 1964, a little oil study of a bowl of chicken broth and matzo balls that is as much social commentary as Donald Roller Wilson's overglazed, Old Masterish scrutiny of the artist's breakfast table, crowded with pancakes, ketchup, and stubbed cigarettes.

Still life is the art world's secular arm—as the Middle Ages waned, the genre waxed. Now it's usually the first assignment given to art students—probably because the task of rearranging the things of the world is seemingly simple and ultimately world-encompassing. The assignment always produces the sorts of quandaries exhibited by young writers asked to describe a scene. Which scene? (The anguish rises in their voices.) What to describe? How to describe it? And how on earth to make art out of it?

"American Still Life" doesn't press for answers; it is content to gaze at the questions with an air of mild astonishment at the diversity of the artists' responses. The show was conceived by Linda Cathcart, director of Houston's Contemporary Arts Museum, a small, nonprofit institution in a metal-clad, triangulated building that thrusts brashly out into its genteel neighborhood. Cathcart devised the show as a way of introducing the CAM's novice Texas audiences to the strategies of modern art. She has mostly stuck to established names; nearly every artist will be familiar to anyone making regular forays into the New York galleries.

But the work looks wonderfully fresh, in great part because of a superbly sensitive installation by Suzanne Delehanty, the Neuberger's director. Cathcart and Delehanty are two of the best small-museum directors in contemporary art, and watching them in action is a pleasure in itself. Their association has produced a show that instructs but never condescends. At the beginning of the exhibition, for instance, Delehanty has set up a comparison: on the wall, Mary Ann Currier's meticulously attentive rendering of a bunch of onions; on the floor, Tom Wesselmann's *Tulip and Smoking Cigarette*, a glossy Pop-art extrapolation in metal. It would be very hard to approach these two works without concluding that close observation and abstract invention come from the same source.

The point could easily be explained to children, but it is also one that the most sophisticated adults should be reminded of now and again. The show has many levels, but at its most immediate, it becomes an itemized list of the infinite forms of experience—as though we all originally understand the same language of perception and intuition, but when we try to speak it, the result is a Tower of Babel. Even artists who think of themselves as realists—in other words, as faithful attendants on nature—are as divergent as can be. How much fiction is present in truth, and truth in fiction?



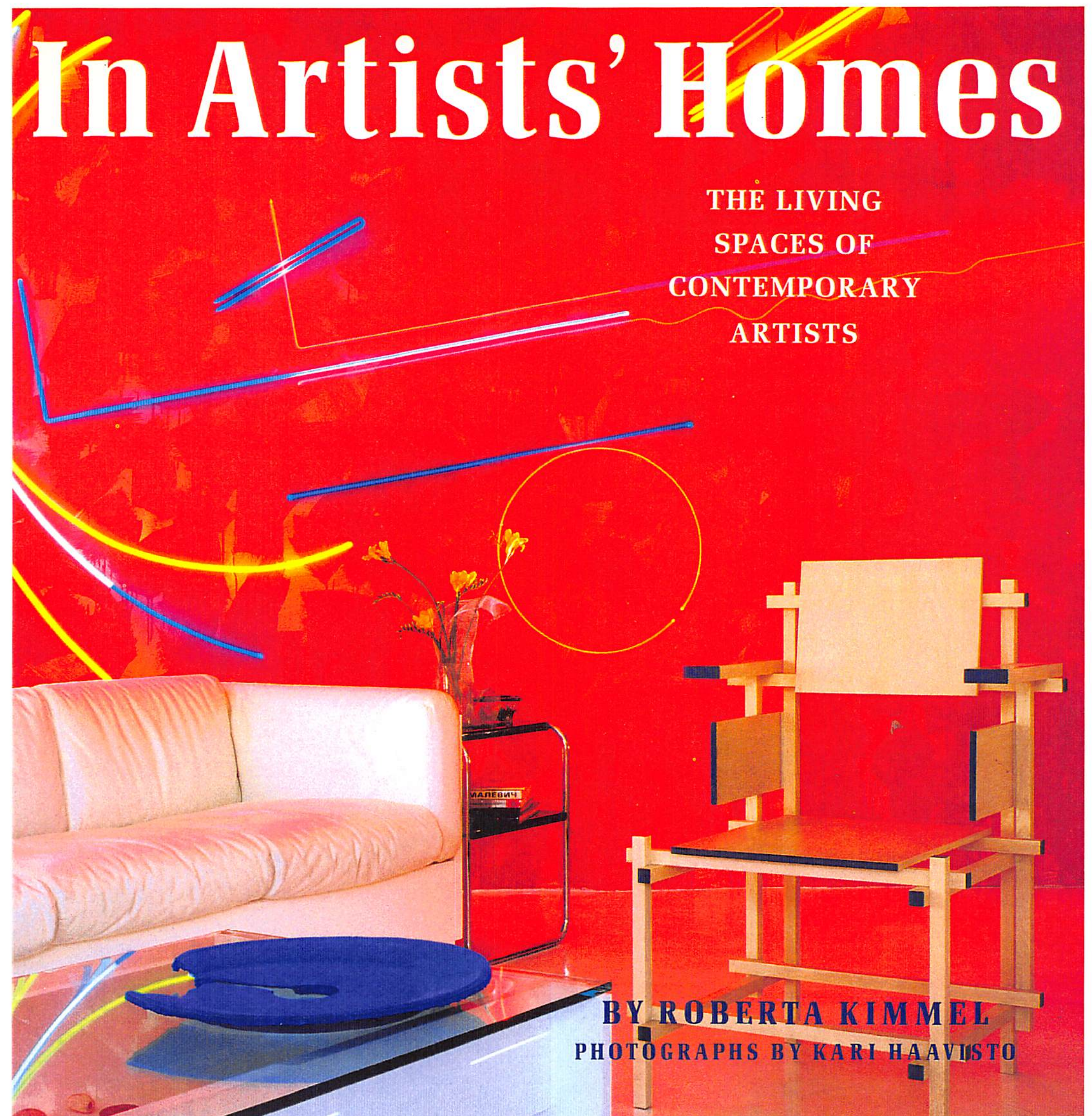
Levels of reality: *Ed Baynard's* Mechanic Street #8, *1976.*

So we learn to what degree simple description is not simple. From Baynard's Oriental reserve to Alice Neel's earthy painterliness to Jane Freilicher's absorption in the quality and texture of light, it's evident that the act of description can contain every possible point of view and style. Sidney Tillim is the only artist here who seems to have eliminated all style—he paints a wall, radio, sofa, and other props without giving them any overtones whatsoever—but it helps to know that Tillim has created an ideology out of literal naturalism. Realism should be realistic, he insists, as he makes a style out of stylelessness.

The few gargantuan exhibitions on the theme of realism in recent years have all foundered on an inability to define what the term means. Curators confuse Realism (capitalized, to give it the force of doctrine), a movement brought into existence by the polarizing arrival of Abstract Expressionism 40 years ago, with the more generalized (and uncapitalized) word, which can be applied to almost anybody. In other words, they have awarded Realism a moral force that comes from such definitions as Tillim's, which—I'm paraphrasing—would like us to accept the proposition that nature is art's master as well as its teacher. But how do you put such a definition into practice? Is Saul Steinberg a Realist because he includes real objects in his tabletop collages? Is Alfred Leslie a Realist because he paints portraits of real people, even though the deep chiaroscuro and hyper-attentive draftsmanship in his paintings owe fealty in part to Caravaggio and Mannerism? Conventional wisdom says yes to Leslie and no to Steinberg—primarily on political grounds—but the distinction is not drawn without great confusion.

Cathcart, by returning us to first principles, has neatly sliced this Gordian knot. Her show is about realism with a small *r*—in other words, it's about the presence of the natural world in the life of the imagination. Meanwhile, Cathcart has strengthened the case for Freilicher, Neel, Catherine Murphy, Louisa Matthiasdottir, Gabriel Laderman, Nancy Mitchnick, and other painters from life, because the success of their attentiveness to worldly things can be judged for the miracle it is. The artist's "first problem" is based on one of the great mysteries: How does meaning reveal itself in things? Why is Fischl's painting of a lamp and crossword puzzle evocative and romantic, but Tillim's picture of a sofa and electrical cord flat and affectless? The objects assembled in these still lifes are nearly the same, but the artist's intent is not. Fischl's picture—hung near Tillim's as though to force a comparison—is laced with allusions to soap-opera banality. Tillim's, lacking all allusions, is banality enshrined.

In drawing out such distinctions, Delehanty's installation approaches brilliance. She has put one of Jasper Johns's cast plaques—a light bulb, a socket, and a twist of wire embalmed in bronze on a slab—next to a place setting by Lucas Samaras. The two works are nearly the same size and have some of the same contents—Samaras drops a twist of wire onto the plate, adds a shred of nylon stocking, and covers the place mat with metal BBs. The Johns sculpture is as sober as a death's-head and as clever as black humor. The Samaras's sense of macabre frailty comes from an overindulgence in things, a gluttonous, riotous fetishism; its wit is psychological, where Johns's is epistemological. (The Neuberger Museum is on the campus of the State University of New York at Purchase; call 914-253-5087 9 A.M. to 5 P.M for directions, 914-253-5133 at other times. Through September 16.) ▬


In Artists' Homes
THE LIVING
SPACES OF
CONTEMPORARY
ARTISTS
BY ROBERTA KIMMEL
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARI HAAVISTO

the rightness of objects

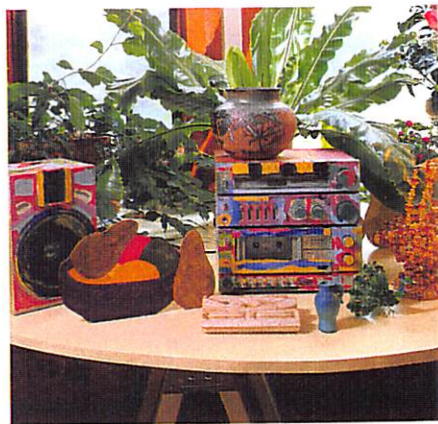
Ed Baynard was a passionate collector of American art pottery long before the compelling shapes of the ceramics emerged in his classical watercolor still lifes. In fact, Baynard didn't begin to paint until he was thirty-one years old. Up to that time, he experimented with various occupations, from sketching for *Women's Wear Daily* to designing posters and costumes for rock stars. "I did not want to be an artist closed off in one room for the rest of my life," says Baynard, whose home, filled to capacity with his pots, is high above the Hudson River, one hundred miles north of New York City. "This seventeen-room house is the result of that experience." • Built as a summer home in 1905 by Walter van der Bent, chief engineer for the nearby Ashokan Reservoir and engineer for the architecture firm of McKim, Mead, and White, Baynard's house is

Ed Baynard

PREVIOUS PAGE: *The relationship of Baynard's 1986 corroded steel sculpture,* Dig, *to the land behind his 1905 Arts and Crafts home is emblematic of his desire to link "the pastoral to the architectonic."* LEFT: *Houses of this vintage generally do not have bookcases (or closets), so Baynard, not wishing to disturb its integrity, stacks his gardening catalogues and art books on the floor, adding Tom McKenna's candlesticks on top. He mixes Merrimac, Flameware, and salt-glaze pottery with classic Eileen Gray and Russel Wright furniture in the living room, plus a 1930s screen by Woodstock artist Louise Howard and a 1976 acrylic-on-paper work by Susan Rothenberg.* ABOVE: *This tabletop arrangement of small animal forms is as carefully composed as the artist's watercolors; the lamp and vase are by Fulper.*

a simpler, much taller version of the traditional Arts and Crafts design. The proportions are perfect, but the house is plain, which suits Baynard's minimalist aesthetic. "They didn't gussy it up, as we say in Washington," he remarks. "The house is set to the site; the rooms have the kind of proportion you don't find nowadays. This house feels like a big old house should feel." The rooms are all painted a neutral white to set off his collection of paintings, bric-a-brac, furniture, and, of course, his ceramics. The only exceptions are the blue or subtle gray-mauve guest bedrooms, a concession that complements photographs or paintings hung in these rooms.

A treasured place is the looming tower, accessible only by ladder. From the tower's chestnut-framed windows (the house boasts forty-eight overall), Baynard can see the entire valley and the Ashokan Reservoir. "It is like living in a big tree house," he says. Below are sloping, terraced gardens, and one can see the special placement Baynard has given to his collection of weeping specimen trees: birch, beech, mulberry, pussy willow, and Norwegian spruce. Baynard's large, open studio takes up the entire top floor, once a warren



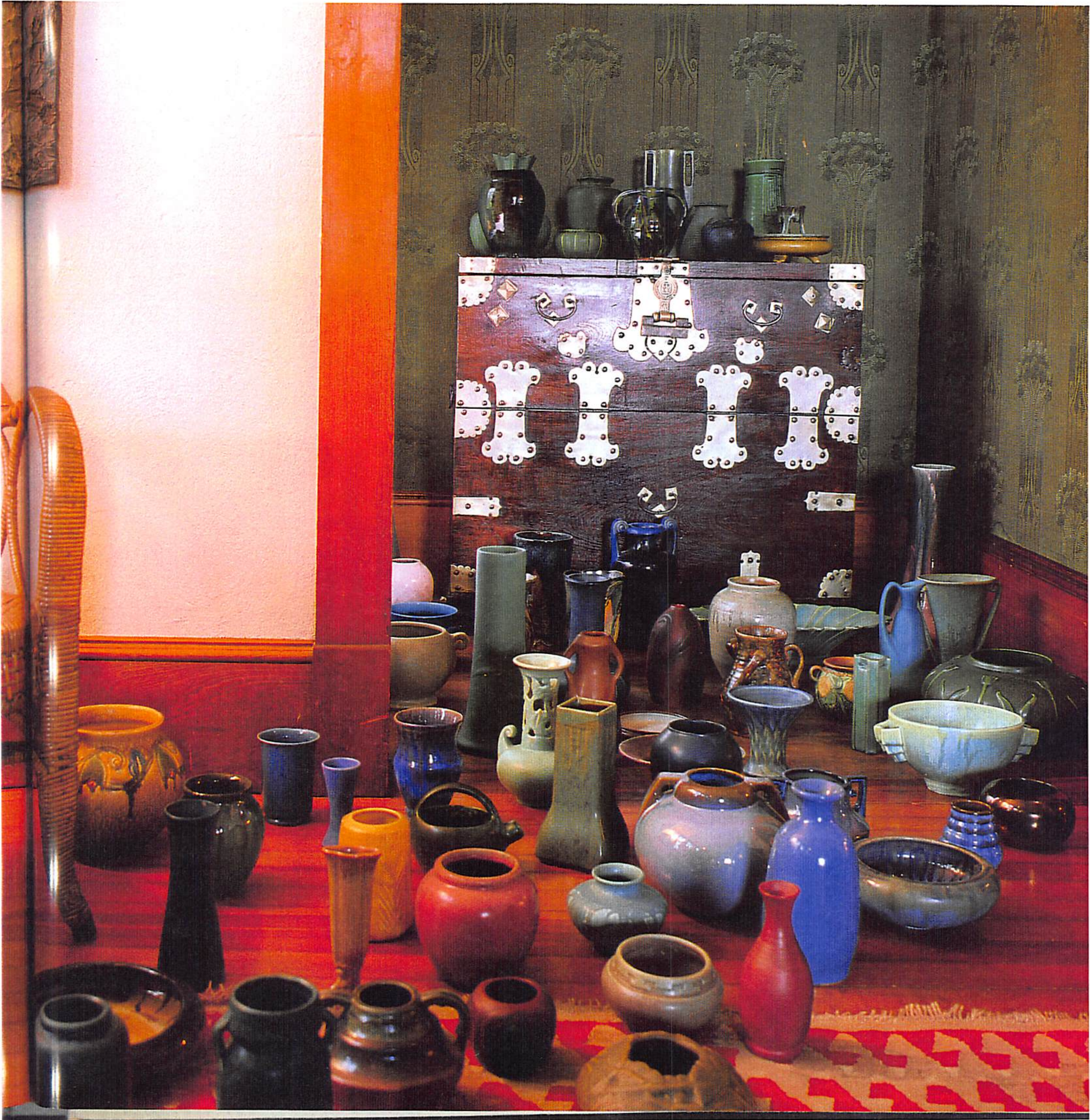
ABOVE: *A 1982 James Hanson hangs above Rietveld's 1934 Zig Zag Chair and a 1904 Van Briggle vase.* RIGHT: *The artist's carved wood* Bowls of Fruit, *a painted cassette player and speakers, and glass-beaded crafts make a tabletop fantasy garden.* OPPOSITE: *William Morris–style wallpaper, original to the house, backdrops a metal-decorated Korean chest-on-chest in the "snuggery," a term borrowed from the cozy Hyde Park room where Eleanor Roosevelt paid bills.*

of servants' rooms, the only signs of which are marks on the floors where walls once stood.

The house is also a repository for Baynard's collection of art and furniture, which, like his own watercolors of flowers, fruit, and vessels, are representations of timeless classicism. Works on paper by Susan Rothenberg, Morris Graves, and Keith Haring exist in harmony with an Eileen Gray table, a Herman Miller table from the fifties, a deep-red lacquered Gerrit Rietveld chair, and one by Russel Wright. Baynard also has furniture of his own design, the most colorful being a glossy yellow plywood long-table supported by sawhorses.

Everywhere, on floors, on tables, on mantels, is his collection of signed pottery: Brauer Flameware, Rookwood, and Niloak to name a few. Baynard points out that his cat, Eliot, has yet to break one. "He's a Maine coon cat. They're not climbers. They walk."

Despite the sheer number of objects, a sense of order prevails: a feeling that the placement of every piece was a decision as important and personal as the arrangements in Baynard's still lifes. "I arrange things this way so that when I walk around in my house, I see what it is all about.

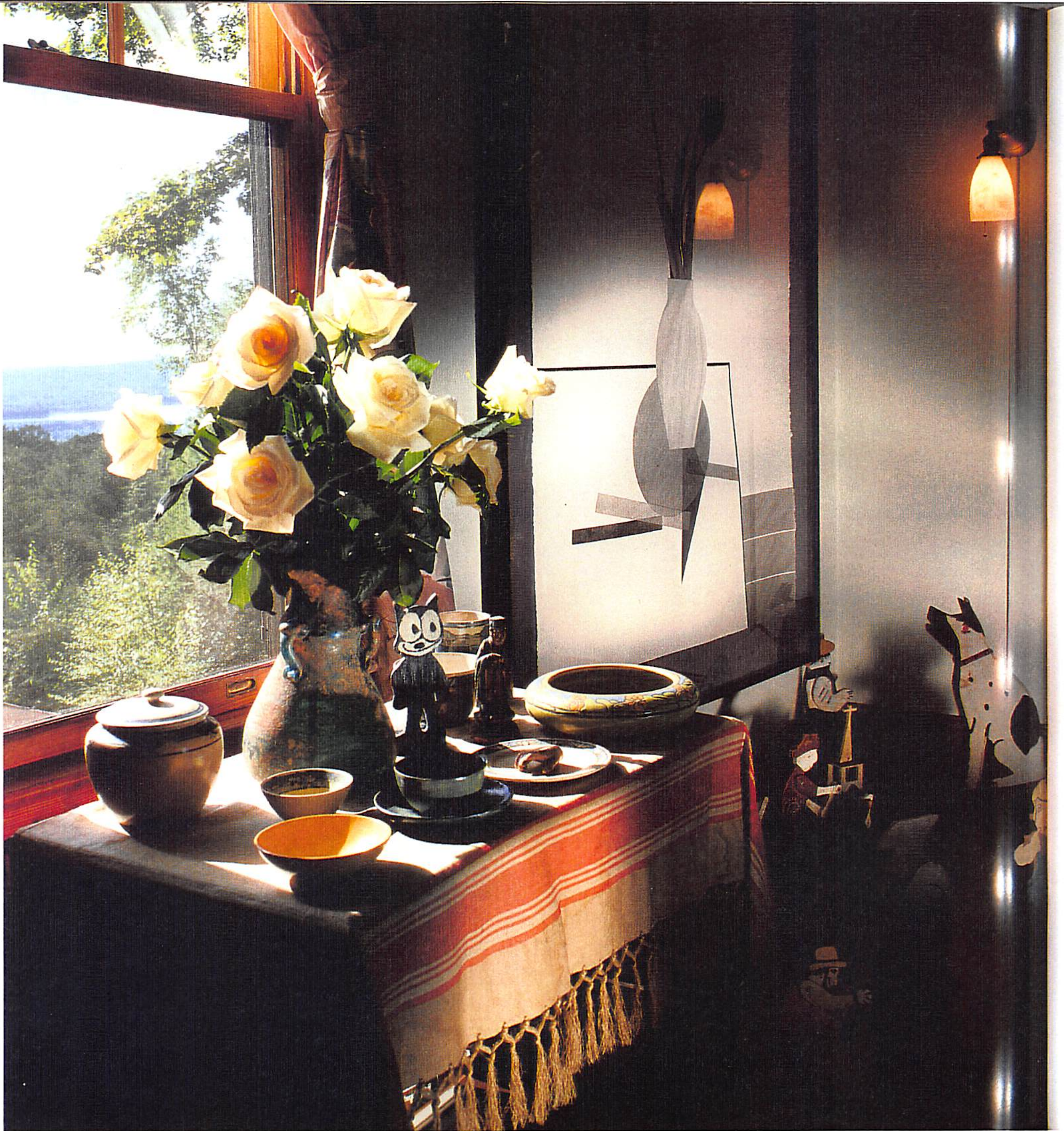


It is very rare that I paint from life; I believe that good objects have a silent life, and I abstract from the object what is really interesting. The idea of the pottery is incorporated into the work, the objects themselves are not. The same with flowers. Composition is inherent. There is a right way to make something that centers you, and centers the people who look at it. It is the rightness of form, and I think that is why most creative people surround themselves with things that remind them of the rightness of objects."

Baynard's life has had many turning points, and he says, "I thought that if I lived long enough, something would happen that met my enthusiasm halfway. Now it seems that life has speeded up, and I've calmed down; it's a good meeting." Nevertheless, this artist never relaxes for very long. "When I was sixteen, I read Delacroix's journals, and he said that to be an artist, you have to be a little one-man band. And I said, 'That's me: That makes sense to me.' "

LEFT: ***Whether Baynard walks down the back stairs from his studio to the kitchen, or climbs the ladder to the tower, the fine wood detailing of another era is always present.***

LEFT: ***"If I wasn't an artist, I could always get a job as a chef," jokes Baynard about his professionally equipped kitchen.***
ABOVE: ***Like Monet's, Baynard's dining room is filled with Japanese prints. "This is a very civilized, grown-up room; a place to dine leisurely in comfortable chairs."***



LEFT: *Baynard let the original blue linen wall covering set the tone for the guest room, in which an oak Mission rocker, his painted wood sculpture, Janet Cooling's 1974 painting, and a Steven Morrison photograph greet overnight visitors.* ABOVE: *Flower-splashed "Bloomsbury-style" curtains frame the master bedroom windows, and the artist's 1987 paint-on-paint scratchwork mirror reflects a friend and her pets hanging over the bed.* BELOW LEFT: *Adjoining Baynard's bedroom is a luxurious, old-fashioned bath, large enough to serve as a dressing room as well.*

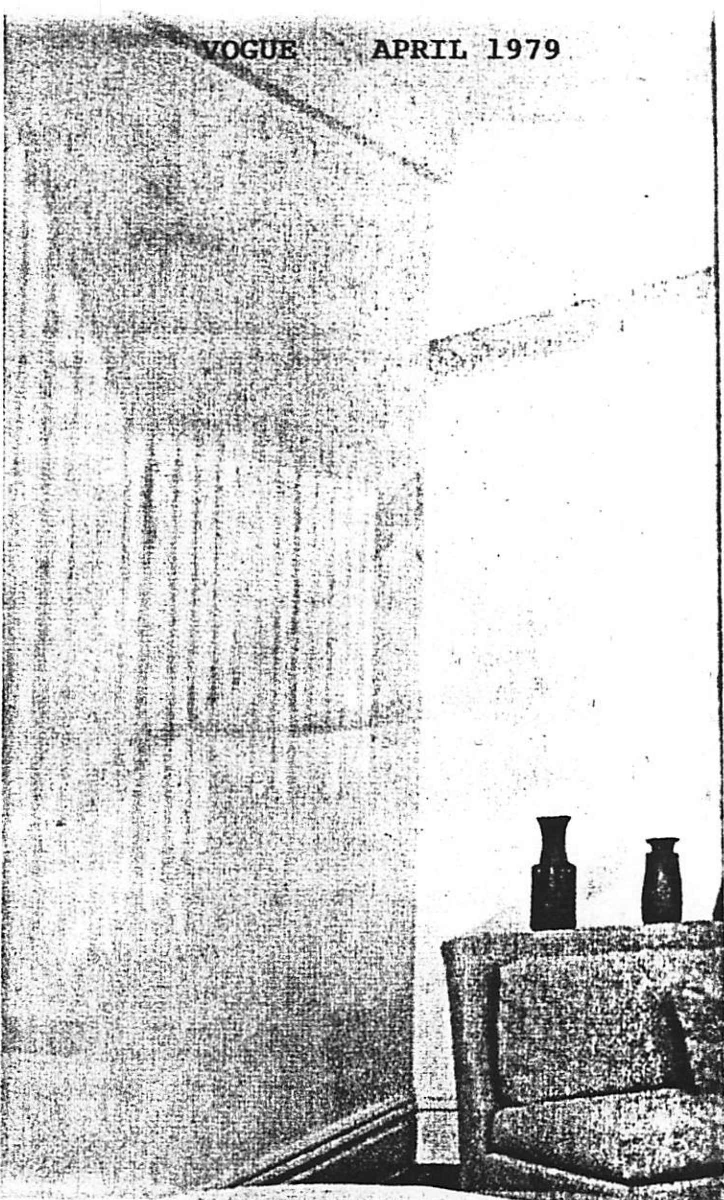
LEFT: *Baynard's 1984 watercolor,* Tulips, *oversees an amusing menagerie of lawn ornaments, while Krazy Kat and Boston-made Saturday Evening Girls pottery (1910–17) join the view of the Ashokan Reservoir below.*

Environmental art: Barbara and Eugene Schwartz's adventurous idea in temporary decoration for their New York apartment

Living art: live-in art. Art collectors Barbara and Eugene M. Schwartz commissioned four young artists, Susumu Sakaguchi, Ed Baynard, Arlene Slavin, and Lydia Okumura to paint the walls of their living room, bedroom, foyer, and dining room. The Schwartzes' walls were previously hung with a prestigious collection of "color-field" paintings by such artists as Kenneth Noland, Frank Stella, Jules Olitski, Morris Louis, Barnett Newman, Hans Hofmann. Last summer, when a plumbing leak in the apartment threatened to do permanent damage to the paintings, they all had to be removed.

"Within forty-eight hours the walls were bare. After we got over the shock, we decided that this was an opportunity for another expansion in our lives," Barbara explains. "We wanted something very different from our color-field collection, which had accrued in value, become very famous—something we never expected when, back in the early 'sixties, we started to buy the works of young unknown artists. Our passion is *living* artists, artists whom we can talk with, who become our friends.

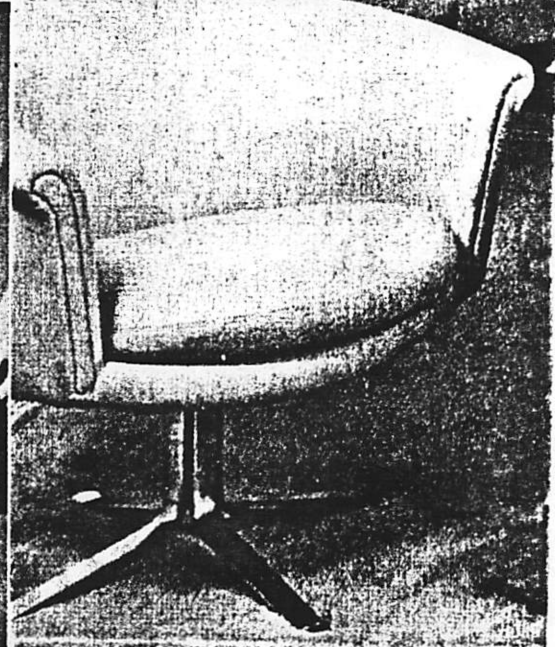
"This time we wanted to experiment with the ephemeral—with art that would have value in itself, but would never grow in monetary value because it would *(Continued on page 311)*



SUSUMU SAKAGUCHI: THE LIVING ROOM

"I sat in the room for one day, then I worked on it for a week. My work is influenced by the time I spent on the desert in California—by the softness, the quietness, the sensibility, the space of the desert. I use very soft, monochromatic colors in dots, in many layers." *(Continued)*

Sylvia Plachy/Norman McGrath



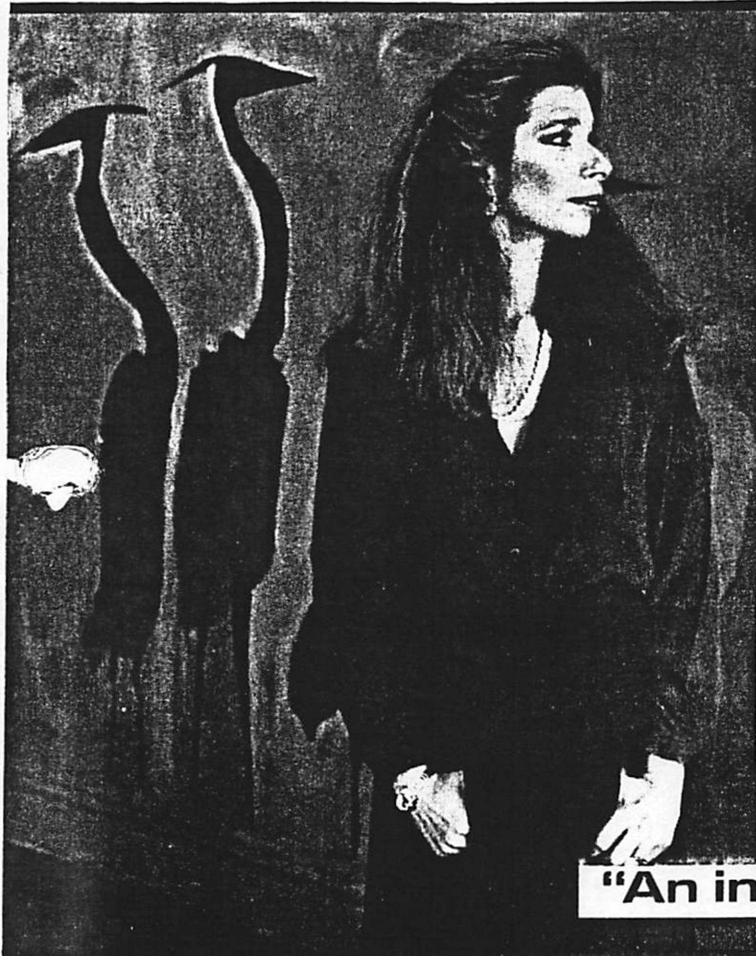
LIVING INSIDE

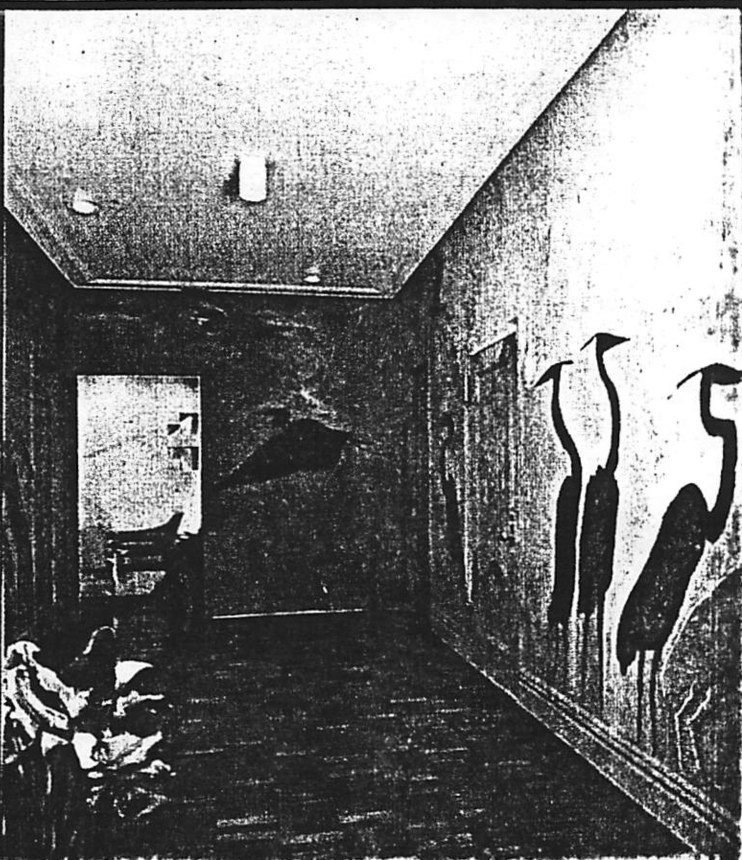
ED BAYNARD: THE BEDROOM

"This isn't a mural; it's really a big painting, and it's about friendship—my friendship with Barbara and Eugene—more than about a work of art. All art is about human independence, and this idea of the Schwartzes' is very independent. It's a particularly American thing to do at this moment; I can't imagine a European's doing this now when works of art are valued because they are portable and salable."

ARLENE SLAVIN: THE FOYER

"Doing my first mural was an incredible experience. The exciting and challenging part was creating a whole environment. I think art should be decorative, enjoyable, and relate





"An incredible sense of energy"

to human experience without being didactic. What came out of this project for me was an incredible sense of energy. There's something new in the air about decoration—I think people are bored with Minimalism, of making intellectual exercises of art. Environmental art is exciting."

LYDIA OKUMURA: THE DINING ROOM

"I deal with flat surfaces and three-dimensional images by painting walls and floors. I lose the boundary between painting and sculpture—it's like a living sculpture in the room—a new way of looking at sculpture. Maybe it's just my way. I try to be very clear about what I'm doing so that anybody walking into the room can feel what it is."

Sylvia Plachy/Norman McGrath

particularly American thing to do"

"Like a living sculpture"

STILL LIFE

THE OBJECT IN AMERICAN ART, 1915–1995

SELECTIONS FROM THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

23 ED BAYNARD *An American Painting—For Rose Paul*, 1979

If this picture seems familiar, it is. It belongs to a series of some hundred still lifes—all depicting similar pots and vessels—that were so popular the artist created a best-selling poster of one of them. Nearly half a million copies sold, and the image was so ubiquitous in the late 1970s and early 1980s that even the artist grew "tired of seeing it, and hearing about myself everywhere. People kept knocking me off."[1] He retreated to the country to paint landscapes, quiet views seen through a window.

Still lifes remain Baynard's bread-and-butter subject, however. They come "naturally" to Baynard, a self-taught artist who first picked up a brush at the age of ten. After spending the decade of the 1960s in Europe, mainly Spain, France, and England, where he painted and did some commercial graphic work, Baynard settled permanently in New York in 1970.

All the works in Baynard's still-life series share the pale, monochrome background traversed by a thick horizontal line that serves as a ledge for an infinite variety of simple pots and vases. These vessels, seen only in silhouette and frontally, evoke birds sitting on telegraph wires. Their stark simplicity is offset by the rare flowers they often contain, either irises or orchids. In this work, the real iris on the right is echoed in the patterning of the vase on the left. While the bowls and vases are rendered as two-dimensional and frontal, a hint of modeling and perspective is visible in the flowers themselves.

Baynard sees himself in the tradition of the precisionists, heir to such American modernist painters as Charles Demuth and Georgia O'Keeffe. However, unlike the extreme close-up views of blossoms often rendered in O'Keeffe's paintings and some work by Demuth, Baynard keeps his flowers at bay. This distance and the overall emptiness of his compositions relate them to minimalism, a comparison the artist favors. As to why he titled this work *American Painting* given its Eastern sparseness and Zen stillness, the artist observes, "It's not fussy, it's quiet, it's very plain."[2] He considers plainness to be what is best in the American tradition, evoking wholesomeness and simplicity, qualities that he admires in Shaker furniture. When the painting was given to the Metropolitan Museum in 1980, the artist added to the dedication "For Rose Paul," to honor his late Russian grandmother. SR

1 Ed Baynard, conversation with author, August 8, 1995.
2 Ibid.

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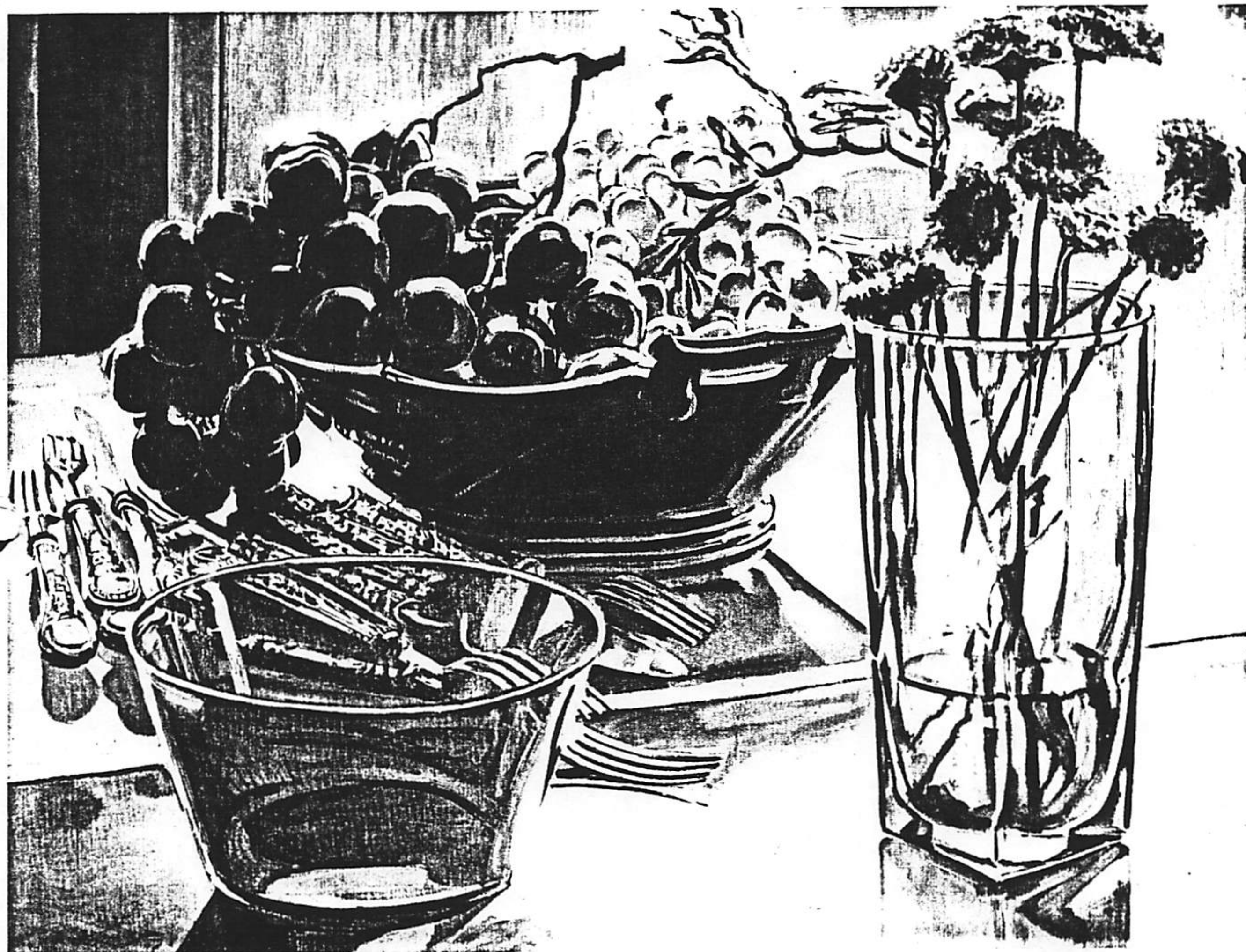
Portfolio

The magazine of the visual arts

November / December 1980 $3.50



Contemporary Still Life, by David Bourdon
German Expressionism, by Alessandra Comini
Florence's Baptistery Doors, by Kenneth Clark

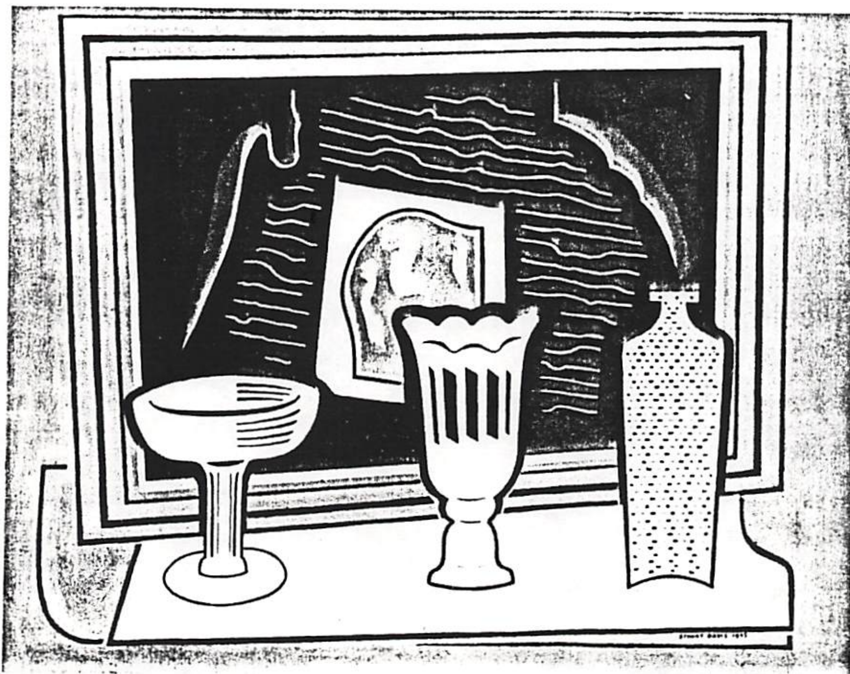
Linda Nochlin on Courbet / Pueblo Pottery
Joseph Cornell / Philadelphia Art & Architecture

Made in U.S.A.

Contemporary American painters have transformed the still life genre, creating exuberant, often ironic commentaries on packaged culture and past art

by David Bourdon

A new kind of still life has emerged during the past twenty years, upsetting traditional notions about this time-honored, if seldom topical, theme. Part of a resurgence of realist painting, the new interest in still life painting demonstrated by contemporary artists takes many forms. While many painters continue to execute traditional, academically structured still life pictures, a few American painters are not content merely to record everyday household objects in a naturalistic style—a procedure which no longer strikes them as a challenging artistic goal. Instead, they experiment with new visual ideas and techniques, often borrowed from commercial art, creating still lifes that are exuberantly artificial, often mannered, sometimes witty, and strictly contemporary in perception. For such painters, the still life has become a pretext for examining the conventions of representation.



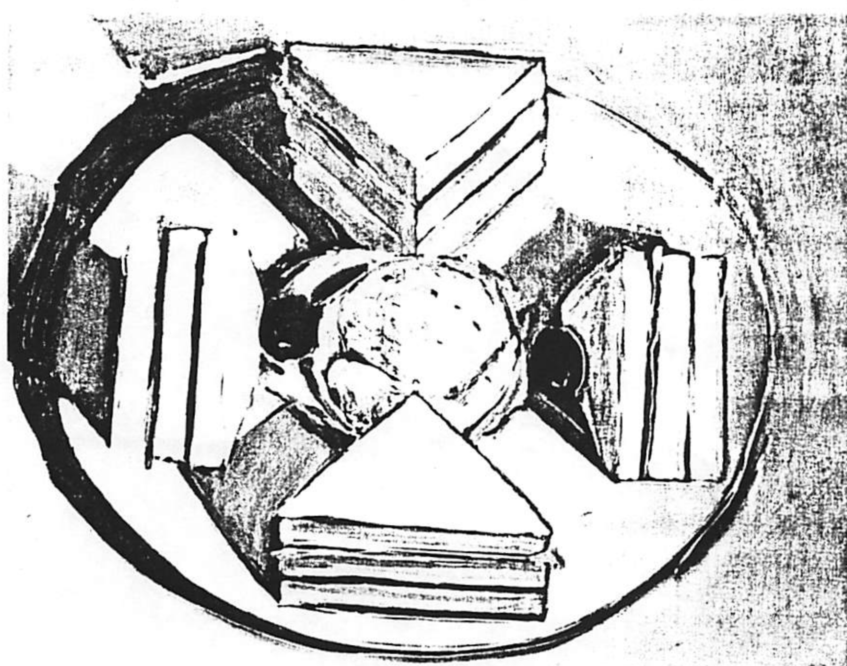
During the early sixties, Andy Warhol's emplematic renderings of dollar bills, Campbell's soup cans, and Coke bottles helped to return recognizable content to modernist painting. Other Pop masters like James Rosenquist, Roy Lichtenstein, and Tom Wesselmann also incorporated unorthodox and commercial subject matter into their paintings.

Still life was further revitalized in the late 1960s and early 1970s by a new wave of New York artists, including A[illegible] Flack, Janet Fish, Ed Baynard, and Hunt Slonem. While these painters do not constitute a school or movement, they do share certain overlapping concerns, and they appear to have more in common with one another than with traditional realists. Both Flack and Fish, for instance, have a taste for souped-up colors and exaggerated scale that connects them with Lichtenstein and Wesselmann rather than with such highly regarded but relatively conventional contemporary still life painters as William Bailey or Nell Blaine who, respectively, demonstrate a serene classicism and an impressionistic vivacity.

Traditional still life, which has its origins in seventeenth-century northern European painting, made a virtue of dealing veristically with mundane subject matter set in convincing, three-dimensional space. Painters placed their objects to enhance the illusion of a space contiguous with the spectator's own. Thus the vantage point is often above a tabletop, looking down at an angle, encouraging the viewer to feel

Above: The line between fine art and mass culture, Tom Wesselmann observes, is none too clear. In Still Life #31, *the artist juxtaposes a Gilbert Stuart reproduction and quotations from Cézanne—faceted fruit on a rumpled cloth— with apples from the supermarket and a functioning television set. 1963. Mixed media, 48x60". Private collection.*

Opposite left: Cubist-influenced works, such as Stuart Davis's 1925 Still Life, *challenged the idea that still life must be naturalistic. Oil on canvas, 26x33¾". Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford.*



Right: The methodical repetition of elementary geometric forms creates a sense of almost classical order in Wayne Thiebaud's Club Sandwich. *1969. Oil on canvas, 7x10". Private collection.*

that he is in front of a miniature stage set, and needs only to reach in to touch the objects. Historically, artists portrayed objects at actual size, occasionally accentuating the illusion with skillfully rendered trompe l'oeil devices —a fly on fruit, a few drops of water, a knife handle cantilevered over the table's edge, inviting the viewer to pick it up.

Now, to speak of "traditional" and "new" still lifes is to risk creating huge and unwieldy generalities, for, in fact, that vast acreage of painting which we blithely characterize as "still life" covers an enormous spectrum of subjects, styles, sensibilities, and art history. Despite regional and period differences, all still life paintings—until about a century ago—had one thing in common: the quest for verisimilitude. But with the advent of Post-Impressionism, still life entered a new and confounding phase. Cézanne tilted his tabletops to an unprecedented degree in his restructuring of space, inspiring the Cubists to upend their tables, fragment their objects, and let them slide into nearly indecipherable arrangements. Picasso, Braque, and their Cubist colleagues totally reinvented the still life, disassembling its components and reconstituting them in ways that shattered spatial conventions and emphasized the unity and flatness of the picture plane.

Cubist still lifes flourished in Europe, but only a handful of pioneer American modernists who spent time in Paris, such as Stuart Davis, Patrick Henry Bruce, and Gerald Murphy, attempted to adapt the style to an American idiom. Although the American artists now manipulating the still life genre display little direct connection with Cubist style, they do share with the Cubists an emphasis upon the artificial conventions of representation.

Contemporary, nonnaturalistic still lifes are notable for having one or more of the following features: a close-up view, large-scale format, schematic rendering, spatial flatness, a sense of irony, and iconoclastic subject matter. Instead of painting balanced arrangements of kitchenware, flowers, or food presented realistically in illusionistic, three-dimensional space, the new still life painter often chooses to portray mass-produced goods in flat, boldly patterned designs. It's "Good-bye

Above: *The detritus of a poker game crowds Audrey Flack's* Royal Flush, *spilling across a plane distorted as if by a wide-angle lens. 1973. Oil on canvas, 70x96". Private collection.*
Below: *The patterns and heightened color of Hunt Slonem's* Pillow Jungle *recall the exoticism of Paul Gauguin. 1979. Oil on canvas, 60x72". Stefanotti Gallery.*

Left: Still Life with Coffee Pot, Grapes, Apple *is an incisive example of Roy Lichtenstein's practice of playing off a· historical references against painting techniques that suggest mechanical printing processes. 1973. Oil and magna on canvas. 52x35". James Goodman Gallery.*

homemade bread, fresh eggs, and porcelain pitchers," and "Hello hot-dogs, candy bars and Seven-Up."

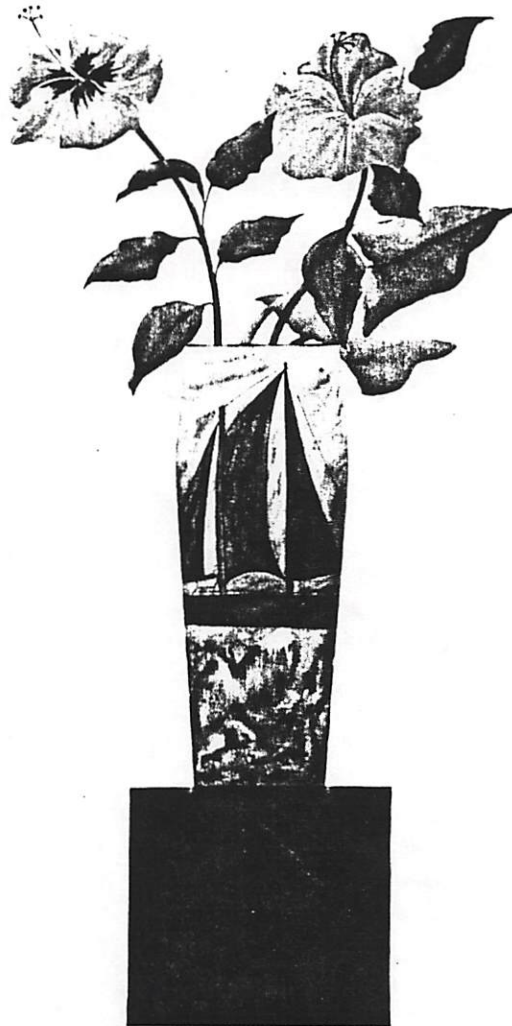
Style, scale, and sensibility are also drastically changed in these works, for the artists are involved with sophisticated, highly self-conscious concepts, new materials and processes, with emblems and schematic distortion. They are seldom concerned with making pictorial transcriptions of an actual still life setup. Gestural brushwork and other painterly characteristics are suppressed, the images sometimes look mechanically printed. Many of these attributes are typical of Pop art, though not all of the painters who display them can be categorized as Pop artists.

When California painter Wayne Thiebaud exhibited his lushly painted still lifes in New York in the early 1960s he was identified with Pop art; subsequently he has come to be perceived as a painterly realist who has as much in common with Edward Hopper as with Andy Warhol. Thiebaud's pictures of bakery goods sent shock waves throug the art world when they first went o view. Pies and cakes had seldom playe a major role in still life painting, an Thiebaud's pictures differ from any tra ditional rendering of food; his plates (pie slices are regimented, and starkly i luminated, as if on display at a cafeteri counter. Although sensuously ren dered—with creamy strokes of pai that mimic the surface textures of le mon meringue, chocolate cream, an pumpkin pies and generously froste cakes—their ritualistic display in stric ly ordered rows suggests the chill of th assembly-line. They relate less to tradi tional still life subjects than to the uni tary compositions of the 1960s, to Fran Stella's stripe paintings or Carl Andre' row of bricks. Thiebaud's subsequen work explores other themes, dealin mainly with the figure and with land scape, but periodically he returns to stil life, as in his recent pastels and wate colors of cakes.

Tom Wesselmann, in his bold stil lifes from the same period, the earl 1960s, combined areas of pure paintin with collaged advertising art and thre dimensional objects. He incorporate blatantly commercial posters advertis ing brand-name beer, bread an cigarettes into a fine-art context, an outfitted his wall-like reliefs with actua domestic objects—a kitchen sink, a ra diator, a toilet seat. Wesselmann's stil lifes sometimes include reproduction of famous works of art (a Matisse nude a Mondrian abstraction, the Mon Lisa, even Gilbert Stuart's portrait o George Washington), implying tha such pictures are commodities, pack aged products like the groceries or car touted in glossy advertisements.

While Wesselmann was appropriat ing cutout elements and subjects fron posters and commercial advertising, h also exploited their scale, making stil lifes as vast as billboards. The spac portrayed in the pictures is unusuall

Left: In Hibiscus Boat (for Joseph Conrad) *and other large watercolors, Ed Baynard silhouettes shapes against expanses of white paper. His works are more closely aligned with recent color field and minimal painting than with traditional still life. 1980. 60x40". Private collection.*

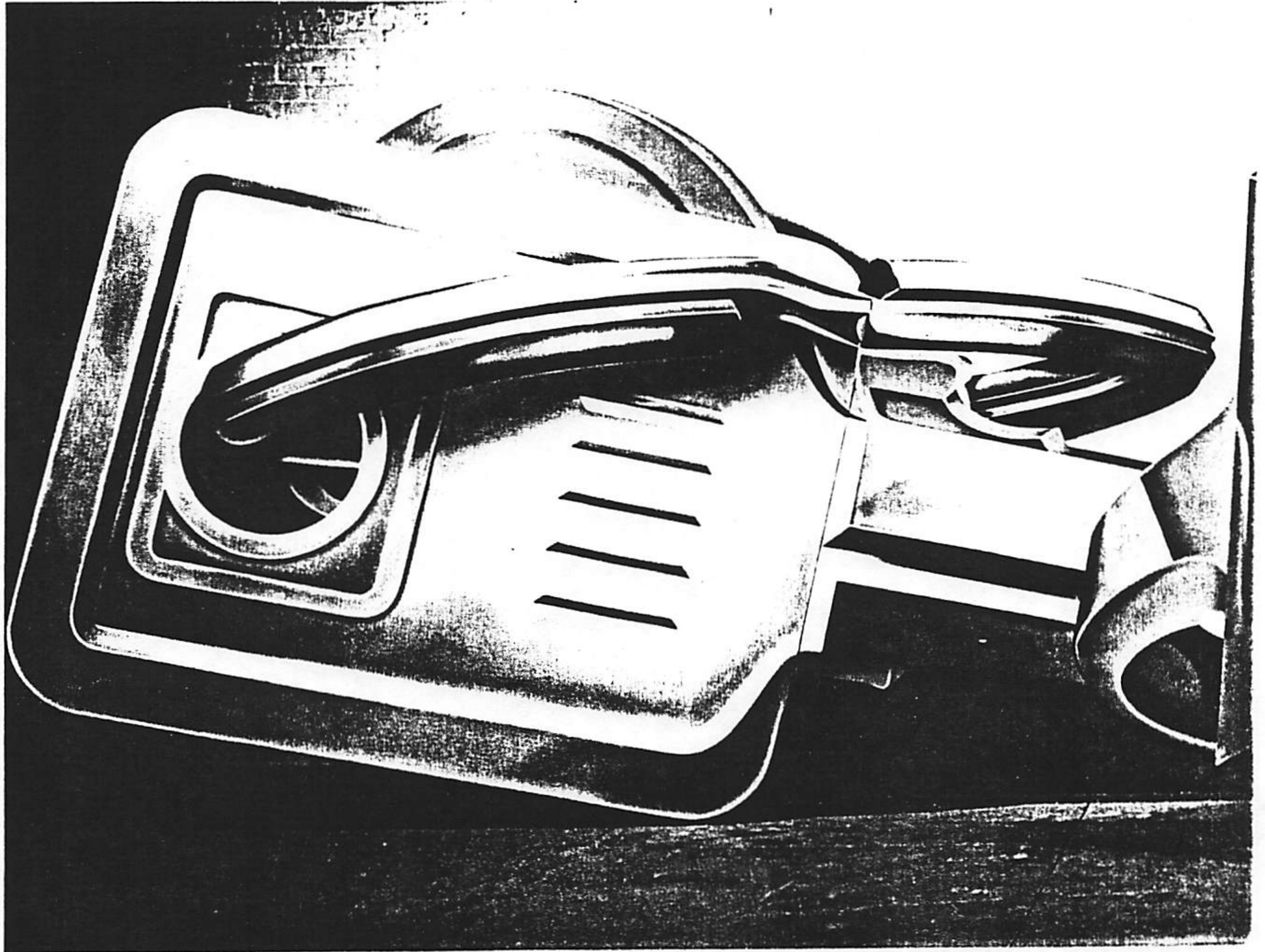


flat: Wesselmann drastically compresses foregrounds and backgrounds. His most physically intimidating example is *Still Life #61* (1976), a gigantic work occupying several pieces of canvas, individually stretched on irregular frames and propped directly on the floor in the manner of stage flats. These canvas cutouts depict house and car keys on a key ring, a man's ruby ring, a toothbrush, and a filter-tipped cigarette—all familiar items that fit easily into the hand, here represented in such large scale that they make the viewer feel Lilliputian. No longer a miniature stage set, the modern still life is enlarged to the point where it could fill the stage of Radio City Music Hall.

Large scale also helps to account for the shock of Janet Fish's still lifes, for although her canvases are not unusually large, she often makes her jars, bottles, and glasses several feet high. Like Thiebaud, Fish prefers groups of one kind of object to a variety of objects (though her most recent works add flowers and fruit to compositions of scintillating glass). Fish's pictures from the early 1970s often portray several examples of a single brand-name product—jars of honey, bottles of vinegar or gin. Instead of regimenting her jars and bottles, she makes crowded, seemingly random arrangements, creating complex, fragmented interactions of shapes, reflections, and highlights. Labels are turned every which way, magnified and distorted into fragmented abstraction by both glass and liquid. With her uncommonly sensitive perception of light and color, Fish converts her subject matter into shimmering, near hallucinatory visions of transparent surfaces and sparkling glass.

Audrey Flack, a leading Photo-realist painter whose canvases are often six or seven feet square, chooses subjects which are both commonplace and personal—fruits and playing cards, costume jewelry—and renders them in such sharp and succulent detail that they resemble cinematic close-ups. Her congested compositions are plainly contrived: *Royal Flush,* for example, is not a candid view of a poker game in progress, but a calculated arrangement of cards, money, ashtray, beer mug, and whiskey glass, all pushed toward the center of the composition and so dramatically emphasized that the painting gains a metaphorical intensity.

There are no conventional central images or focal points in Flack's still lifes. The elements are deliberately dispersed across the canvas, challenging the spectator to find a single place to rest his or her gaze. Since it is the artist's intent to create spatial ambiguity, she sometimes uses a sheet of glass in her still life setups, placing some objects on top of the glass and others below it. The setup is photographed in color, then the transparency is projected onto the canvas to be translated into airbrushed pigment. Projection simplifies the hues and exaggerates the luminosity of the



Above: Many contemporary non-naturalistic still lifes are exaggerated in scale, such as Wesselmann's huge Still Life #61, *which is an apotheosis of Pop imagery magnified to the dimensions of a stage set. Dwarfing the viewer, the work is a brutal but funny satire on modern life, 1976. Oil on canvas, 104 ½x391x79". Janis Gallery.*

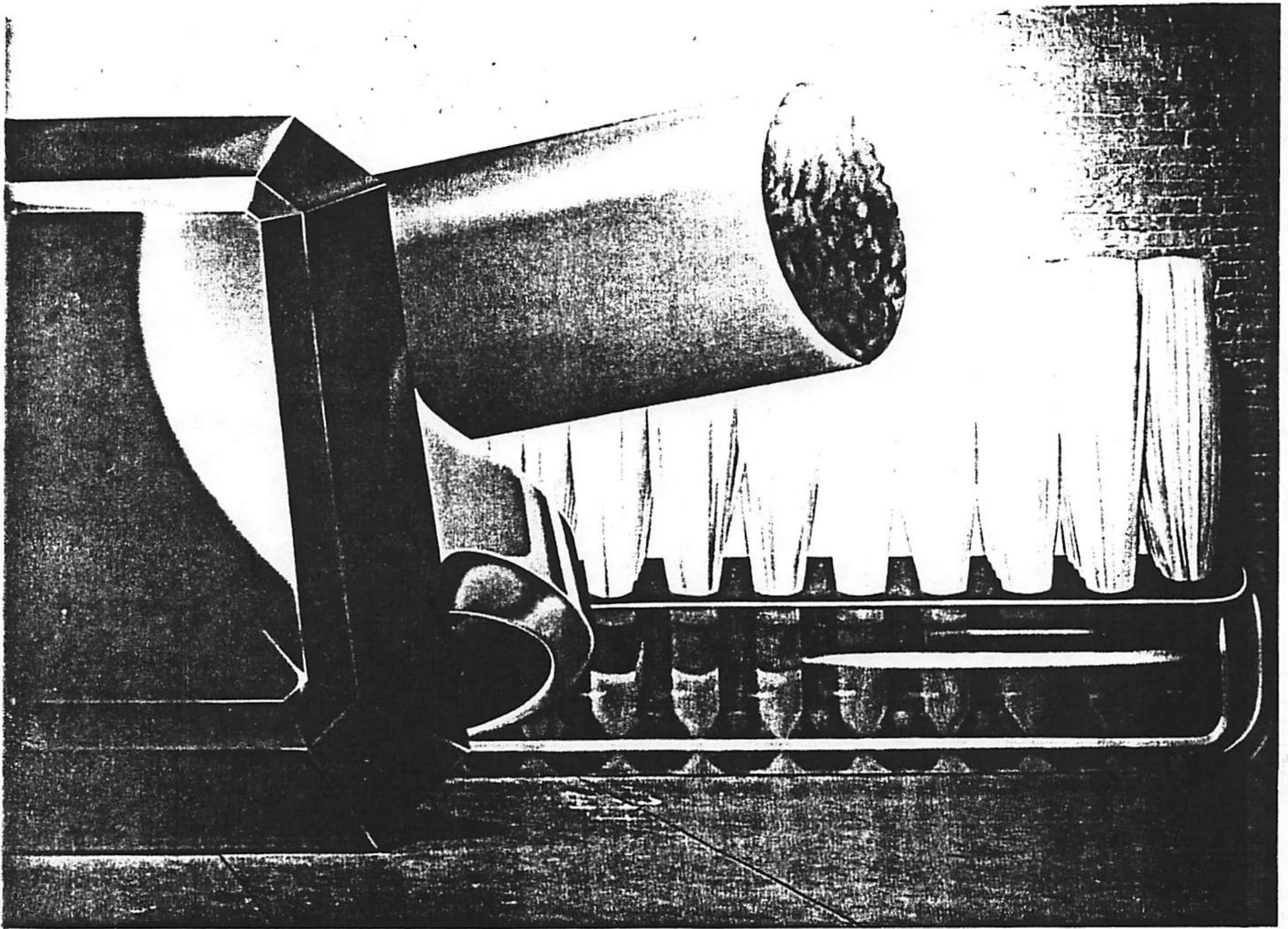
transparency, an effect Flack manages to retain in paint.

Despite the large size of Flack's paintings, the images frequently seem cropped, since the close-up view sabotages any conventional clues to spatial orientation—there are no background walls and seldom a recognizable tabletop. Moreover, the sheet of glass makes a puzzle of why certain objects overlap while others hang in space, and accentuates the shallowness of the space within which the setup exists. Ultimately, the photographic clarity of Flack's paintings heightens rather than minimizes their romantic, mystifying moodiness.

Florid, tropical color and romantic imagery also distinguish the still lifes of Hunt Slonem. In place of conventional tone and modeling, Slonem substitutes flat planes of exaggerated color, abridging and codifying illusionistic space. Shades and shadows are eliminated entirely or schematically rendered. In these canvases, crowded with pillows, houseplants, animal trophies, patterned fabrics, and art reproductions, the shadow exists only as an occasional black outline to distinguish one object from its neighbor. Slonem's cryptic juxtapositions have symbolic overtones as well as a rich sense of pattern.

Ed Baynard's floral still lifes are radically simplified without forfeiting sensuous appeal. Working in watercolors or in oil, Baynard silhouettes flowerin[g] sprays of orchids, lilies, and othe[r] plants in American art pottery vases the expanses of white backgroun[d] accentuate Baynard's refined drafts manship and subtle color. Thes[e] shadowless compositions with their cen tral floral images suggest the stiff, styl ized still lifes (called theorems) tha[t] were stenciled by young America[n] women in the nineteenth century While Baynard's pictures seem to shar[e] the simplicity and directness of suc[h] folk painting, their distilled composi tions and precise color juxtaposition[s] demonstrate great sophistication. The[y] are clearly the work of an artist who ha[s] taken a close look at Color Field paint ing as well as at folk art, the flowe[r] painting on American art pottery, an[d] the watercolors of such American artist[s] as Charles Demuth.

When it comes to schematizing th[e]



still life, nobody does it with more panache than Roy Lichtenstein, who chooses traditional subjects (pitchers, fruit, etc.), puts them on conventional tabletops, and then proceeds to twit the entire, venerable history of still life. Reducing everything to black contour lines, primary colors, dots and stripes, Lichtenstein mocks all the conventions and methods of representation, turning his still lifes into witty essays brimming with ironic references to cartoons, advertising art, printing techniques, and artistic giants like Matisse—a wry cultural commentary.

It is irony, perhaps more than any other factor, that distinguishes the non-naturalistic still life from its traditional counterpart, which typically conveys a somber, meditative quality. The Pop-oriented still life is full of punning references to other artworks and modes of representation. Wesselmann includes fine-art reproductions in his kitsch interiors; Thiebaud regiments his almost over-appetizing sweets; Slonem ransacks images and objects from all over the world and insists that all elements of this incongruous cultural mix be contained on equal terms in his paintings. Flack's irony lies in her elevation of trashy objects to emblems of mortality. Her canvases, glutted with sensual things, (cheese, crackers, fruit, wine, perfume bottles, flowers) and with personal effects, are updated versions of *vanitas* pictures, reminding the viewer of the transience of earthly pleasures.

After a couple of decades in which innovative "serious" art seemed to consist entirely of hard-edge and color-field abstractions, it now appears that the most provocative and stimulating painting being done today is almost exclusively figurative. (I use the word "figurative" in its most inclusive sense, to encompass a multitude of differentiated styles of representation, from the loose painterly landscapes of Neil Welliver and the tight urban vignettes of Richard Estes to the simplified or "primary" images of Neil Jenney.) The current renaissance in figurative painting has provided a tremendous boost to still life, which has benefited from the infusion of new ideas and energies. As a result, still life can no longer be dismissed as an introspective, minor mode. Instead, for the first time since Cubism, still life reemerges as a vehicle for ambitious, important, even "serious" painting. Far from being an obsolete genre, still life is revitalized and newly exciting. □

New York critic David Bourdon writes regularly on art for Vogue *and has recently published a biography of Alexander Calder.*

US MAY 27, 1980

HOW ONE ARTIST SEES THE CAMBODIAN TRAGEDY

"I believe that the refugee problem is going to be the world's major problem in the next ten years. Vietnam, Cambodia, and now Afghanistan, are the shape of things to come. This is why I find it hard to understand why there's so little interest in the horrible plight of the Cambodian people."

No, the speaker is not Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Surprisingly, it is Ed Baynard, one of America's most successful young artists.

Since 1970, Baynard—a self-taught artist whose interest in painting was triggered as a child by the work of his immigrant father, a signpainter—has had his work shown every year, in major New York galleries as well as in galleries around the country.

In addition, his work is represented in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, and Whitney Museum, and in the Philadelphia Museum.

But on this occasion, as he sits on a high stool in his neat, spare—almost spartan—third-floor apartment over the Lower East Side's Jefferson Theater on Manhattan's East 14th Street, Ed Baynard's thoughts are far from the glittering New York art scene.

Why Cambodia? Why should Baynard, an impulsive gadabout whose clients are wealthy corporate movers-and-shakers, and whose friends include such celebrities as the Beatles, Elizabeth Taylor, and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar care that some 600,000 Cambodians have been driven from their homeland with nowhere to go?

Baynard stabs the air with the flat of one hand. "Because of my own background, which is Russian-Baltic, I feel very close to the Cambodian refugees. My mother, who fled Russia as a child, has a huge scar on her forehead, where she was struck by a soldier during a riot.

"As a first-generation American, I grew up surrounded by people who had fled from any number of European countries. Even though they've lived in this country for years, they've never forgotten the pain of their past.

"Look," he says earnestly, "if the Cambodians were Cubans, or South Americans, or Europeans, the West would be mobilized to help them. But because they're Asians, few people seem to care."

As a way of dramatizing the tragedy of the Cambodian refugees, Baynard conceived the idea of painting a special series of "Twelve Orchids for Cambodia," to be sold on behalf of the refugees, the proceeds to be channeled

Ed Baynard shares a lighthearted moment with Anthony Perkins and Mia Farrow, two of his celebrity clients.

through the International Rescue Committee.

A busy painter, Baynard completed his watercolors in March by working virtually around the clock. On April 19 his "Twelve Orchids for Cambodia" opened at the Alexander Milliken Gallery in New York's downtown Soho district, as part of a dual exhibition, along with another series of 12 works entitled "Classical Still Life Watercolors."

The Cambodia watercolors measure 30" X 42", and their current price is $2,700 each. Why didn't Baynard simply ask his wealthy clients to donate money to the Cambodian refugee fund, instead of using his watercolors as a vehicle for their contributions?

"Of course, I *could* have 'hit' my clients for hefty contributions," says Baynard. "It's easy for the rich to contribute cash to a worthy cause. But there's no personal involvement that way."

On the other hand, he believes that when someone buys a work of art—or anything for that matter—on behalf of a suffering people, that person is making a symbolic commitment to the *idea* of brotherly love.

"What I'm doing is not fundraising," Baynard points out. "It is a way of making people aware. Waking people up is an abrupt process. You have to be patient; you have to work quietly."

Is that, perhaps, why he chose orchids as his theme?

"No," Baynard explains with a quick grin. "The refugee problem happens to be mixed up with politics—and I simply decided that nobody would find any political significance in such beautiful objects."

—*Marc Rangel*