



The Artists Archives of the Western Reserve
1834 East 123rd Street • Cleveland • OH • 44106

Panel Discussion on Looking Inward

Introduction: Kenneth George, AAWR Executive Director

Moderator: Ed Oszewski

Participating members of the panel:

- Dr. Marianne Berardi
- Lee Heinen, artist
- Randall Tiedman, artist
- Douglas Max Utter, art critic, artist.



In his introduction Professor Ed Oszewski mentioned that on his return from a recent trip to New York City he was able to discern that the Cleveland art scene is as vital as anything New York has to offer. He specifically mentioned the new William Busta Gallery and this art show. Although Cleveland is smaller in population, number of private collectors of contemporary art, media, and gallery scene is still vital and innovative and scores high in "diversity, quality and intensity." He mentioned that he saw the current art scene moving away from the gravitational pull of Manhattan. The current art scene in this country is splintered between cities like L.A., Chicago, Denver, Cleveland, Boston, Dallas etc. Ed viewed the present show as divided between abstraction and figurative art, he called the show a "postmodernist Hybrid", pluralistic and multicultural, "there is no longer one way to make art."

Dr. Marianne Berardi referred to this show as a "high quality exhibition" in which landscapes are more intimate than figures, perhaps it signifies our location in the "rust belt." The landscapes showed a variety of moods, color and distinctive point of view; some were even above ground perspectives.

Lee Heinen referred to art as "personal." She intimated that viewers want a story and that the art is not enough by itself. As an artist she aims to create work that is open ended and the work speaks for itself. The art work is the artist's inner vision; interpretations are intriguing but not necessary. Art needs to be viewed through time, it must be loved and a relationship established.



Randall Tiedman talked about the necessity of leaving the ego behind. It is a recent phenomenon that the artist eclipses his art, the emergence of the cult of the Personality. It started with Picasso and the commercialization of art and artists. Artists becoming brand names like most commercial goods. Randall believes that the artist must free himself from his ego and his critic to do his best work. The act of painting leaves self involvement by the curb. "Personality is a bore", I try to stay out of my own way.

Douglas Max Utter stated that for him art is a dance between the artist and his media. The media makes demand on the artist and he responds. The finished painting is a record of the artist's relationship over time with the paint and the canvas. "I do not have preconceived ideas. That is not how I work. I use tar and shellac and I let the paint drip or flow."

Ed summarized the panel's comments by quoting an Italian quote from an art critic of the Renaissance, "Every painter paints himself". Lee Heinen believes the artist makes a statement and Randall that the artist withdraws from the self. "The artist is both manifest and missing at the same time." He further mentioned that style is a prison. He quoted Gustav Holzer the composer- "Pray for failure" so you can be free to experiment. Picasso "some artists wear the same suit all the time." Doug stated that he becomes what he does and he values the sense of surprise of the creative process.



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At this point the audience was invited to ask questions or make comments. Anita Rogoff, an exhibiting artist, questioned the panel about the current values that exist today verses those that existed in the past and how these values determine the outlook of the art that is made. Roger Welchans another exhibiting artist commented on how times have changed with irritation. He mentioned the anti-art movement, how it no longer stresses craft, knowledge or the dirty word "beauty." Ed mentioned that art today is learned differently.

Douglas is excited about contemporary art because it struggles with creating metaphors as well as putting divergent ideas together. Lee felt that this show gave her a new direction to investigate her history and her past. Mario Kujawski talked about outsider art and how mental patients' art sometimes is able to come up with original solutions of their own without training. He also believes that we are all creative when we dream and create stories and images every night for our own understanding.

The discussion ended with quick analysis of thirty pieces in the exhibit by Ed. Everyone left excited and invigorated by a lively discussion and a great show.