

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

Our Last Entry From Judith McGrath

We first offered a guest commentary by Judith McGrath, an American who had moved to Perth in Western Australia, in our Nov. 2000 issue. I was turned on to McGrath's writings by Scottie Hodge, owner of the now closed Tempo Gallery in Greenville, SC. She e-mailed me McGrath's article, *Visual Art vs. Entertainment*, which was being featured on a site called "Art Thought Journal".

After reading her article I wondered if I didn't have a sister who had been separated at birth. On a whim I started to track down the author and convinced her to write commentary for our publication - not about things going on here in the Carolinas, but about things going on in the visual art community of Western Australia. Over time it was apparent that things really were not that different - so many miles apart. And McGrath's commentary became very popular to our Carolina readers.

When we went totally to an online publication in 2010, I decided to re-publish those commentaries we offered on our website, which were very popular on our website. Her commentaries rated as some of the highest pages viewed on our site - month after month. They'll always be there in our archives, but this month is the last time we'll run them in our publication. (See Page 9).

I actually got to meet Judith when she and her husband came to the States for one last family visit. I got to show her around Charleston and we visited a few of the art galleries. I think she had a good time seeing some of the places she had been reading about in our issues.

Thanks Judith for all you gave us over these 16 years - even if the last ones were

only repeats. Your words still carried an amazing amount of truth about the visual art world in general.

2017 - How Time Flies

In July 1987, I picked up several thousand copies of the first issue of *Charleston Arts*, a publication Linda and I started to cover the arts in Charleston, SC. There was a lot going on that never saw any press coverage in the local newspaper. I'd name that publication but since they don't acknowledge our existence, I'm going to return the favor. Some know it as the *Newsless Courier*.

I worked several months on that first issue and chose to wait until after the Spoleto Festival USA that year was over as I thought it would be too much of a task to cover that event and all that was happening in Charleston in our first issue. That was a good idea. The Spoleto Festival and its companion festival Piccolo are a lot to cover at once - even for the big boy publishers.

My first thought after delivering that issue to everywhere I could leave a stack of papers was - dang I only have a month to produce the next one. I remember a few comments from friends who wondered how I would come up with enough items about the arts to fill an issue every month. That was never the problem. In fact from the start we never came close to covering everything going on and as it turned out eventually we just covered the visual arts and even then we never could include all that was going on - some because of cost and some because some folks still think it's good to keep their exhibits a secret from the public.

From time to time this year I'll be going over the history of our publication.

City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs Offers Works by Henry G. Michaux

The City of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs, in Charleston, SC, will present *Sculpt Mettle: Redux! A Henry G. Michaux Retrospective*, on view at the City Gallery at Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Waterfront Park, from Jan. 21 through Feb. 26, 2017. A reception will be held on Jan. 20, from 5-7pm. A panel discussion will be held on Jan. 21 at 2pm which will include the curator, associate curator and catalog designer, catalog essayist, a venue coordinator and members of The Crate Factory, a group of community individuals selected specifically for the Sculpt Mettle Project. They will discuss both the artist's work and the execution of this traveling exhibition.

This retrospective, which has traveled to galleries and museums across the Carolinas, showcases sculpture, ceramic, and graphic works created by Henry G. Michaux between the years of 1967 and 1997. This presentation is an eclectic collection which includes art pieces fabricated and sculpted with clay, wood, metals, fibers and found objects, as well as paintings, drawings and mixed media works. Dr. Michaux, former associate professor of Art at South Carolina State University, appropriates objects from one context and transposes them through creative tinkering into art objects that challenge the viewer to pause in reflective thought.

About his work, Dr. Michaux says, "A large portion of my creative energy... was given to impulses to create without any aesthetic purposes, but instead the need to build things. This motivation was comfortably enriching and generally enough to sustain an interest that would allow me to finish my projects."

Exhibition curator, Dr. Terry K. Hunter, describes the work of Henry G. Michaux as "part of a neo-pop/junk/funk/figurative/non-objective narrative that can fit firmly into a Page 4 - Carolina Arts, January 2017



"Axiel Collage" by Henry G. Michaux

number of artistic generational contexts." Michaux's works derive their power from his keen observation of socio-cultural nuance filtered through a lens of intellectual vigor that translates complex subjects into whimsically acceptable art forms. Michaux remains true to himself as he touches those among us who are willing to buy into his aesthetic sojourn.

The 33 works presented in *Sculpt Mettle: Redux!* provide a fascinating breadth of technical skill and depth of design knowledge. The works include ceramic pottery, mixed media sculptural works, as well as drawings and paintings. In this array of art objects, Michaux combines wood, rope, found and appropriated objects, assorted metals, materials and media. He experiments with and develops an aesthetic language that touches upon several modern and post-modern movements. In some instances the works are difficult to align with a specific stylistic idiom. Taken as a whole, they are solidly the products of their own time, yet they exist in a hybrid art milieu that pays tribute to the history of American art and the Arts and Crafts movement.

Henry Gaston Michaux, a native of Morganton, NC, is a graduate of Texas Southern

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University where he studied with noted artists and educators Dr. John Biggers and professor Carroll Simms. Michaux is also a graduate of Penn State University, where he studied and earned master's and doctorate degrees during the seminal period that shaped Art Education reform and served as the foundation for the discipline-based arts education movement.

Dr. Michaux is a former associate professor of Art at South Carolina State University in Orangeburg, SC, where he taught ceramics, sculpture, three dimensional design and art history. Professor Michaux was also one of the original founders of the Sculpture Celebration in his hometown of Lenoir, NC. This event is the longest-running outdoor sculpture experience in the southeast and features the largest collection of public sculpture per capita in the United States. During a career that spans nearly 45 years, Dr. Michaux has crafted a solid record of excellence in art production, arts instruction and community arts programming.

City Gallery, located at Joseph P. Riley, Jr. Waterfront Park, is owned by the City of Charleston and operated by the City



"The Joker is Wild" by Henry G. Michaux

of Charleston Office of Cultural Affairs, presenting an annual program of exhibitions and events featuring the finest contemporary art from local, regional, national and international artists, with a focus on the Lowcountry. City Gallery provides access to the visual arts for everyone in Charleston, visitors and residents alike, by offering exhibits that are all admission-free. City Gallery is located on Prioleau St. in downtown Charleston.

For further information check our SC Institutional Gallery listings, call the gallery at 843-958-6484 or visit (www.charleston-sc.gov/citygallery).

College of Charleston in Charleston, SC, Features Two New Exhibitions

The College of Charleston in Charleston, SC, will present two new exhibitions in the new year including: *EXIT / ALIVE: The Art of Anthony Dominguez* and *Ahead of the Wrecking Ball: Ronald Ramsey and the Preservation of Charleston*, both on view at the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art, from Jan. 20 through Mar. 4, 2017. A public reception will be held for both exhibits on Jan. 20, from 6:30-8pm.

EXIT / ALIVE: The Art of Anthony Dominguez gathers a substantial body of art produced by Anthony Dominguez over 20 years leading up to his untimely death in 2014. Curated by Guest Curator Tom Patterson and conceived as a definitive overview, the exhibition brings together a representative sampling of works by this philosophically uncompromising, intention-

ally homeless artist, an idiosyncratic figure on the margins of society and the art world.

Around the beginning of 1993 Dominguez made a carefully considered decision to walk away from his day job and abandon his apartment in Lower Manhattan in exchange for a new life out in the open, seeking free sources of food and improvising compact, makeshift shelters when he needed sleep or protection from harsh weather.

Discarding the artwork he had previously made and all of his other worldly possessions, he abandoned the trappings of employment and domestic life in exchange for the streets, sidewalks, parks, derelict buildings, and subterranean tunnels of New York. He was in his early thirties at the

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