PROMETHEUS’ GIFT WAS NOT AS WELL RECEIVED AS HE HAD HOPE.
NEXT YEAR, HE THOUGHT, IT’S ART STUDIO MEMBERSHIPS FOR EVERYONE.

I will not say ‘another year has come and gone’ — oops! too late.

Through the toughest economic downturn since the Great Depression, two hurricanes and consequent collateral damage to an already beleaguered facility, we carry on with shows and concerts still bringing down the house.

Our ceramics program has been seriously limited by damage, but the diligent, dedicated ‘Ladies in Back’ continue to alter, rearrange and adjust to the changing availability of firing techniques and supplies.

We continue to present great art exhibitions and have had wonderful participation.

The Hallowe’en Band Nite drew 180+, plus celebrations, all with smiles. They missed us.

It has been our worst year for outreach programs, workshops and most educational programming. Our apologies for the film programs, but over the last few years it has been very hard to schedule classes that will fill up.

I think it has something to do with the second or third job we all had to take, me included, that limits any opportunity to exercise our creative needs and aspirations. For many of us, quality of life is suddenly exchanged for making a living.

The Studio has been trying to address the problem with smaller, shorter, more intense workshop formats to fit in to a sporadic and overtaxed work schedule. Andy Coughlan and Cyndi Grimes are offering classes in January that are designed to be short and intensive to fit around people’s tight schedules. See the back page for details.

Any suggestions concerning classes would be greatly appreciated.

That being said, we are still doing the occasional educational program, tour, demo, etc., but it is with nowhere near the intensity of years past.

I should be grateful if we stop getting slammed by storms and economic disasters, these mainstays of The Studio will come back in force.

One thing is for sure — do not write us off!

Whatever the problems we might have right now, it is just an opportunity for growth and diversity. We don’t need lemons to make lemonade — we can make lemonade out of anything.


covers: Karen Click

by Andy Coughlan.

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Cover: Karen Click by Andy Coughlan.

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See VIEW on page 15

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ART STUDIO

Membership in The Art Studio, Inc., provides invitations to all exhibitions and one year of ISSUE, the monthly arts magazine of The Art Studio. It also gives free eligibility for members to enter the annual membership art exhibition (STUDIOMADE) and participate in various exhibitions throughout the year.

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**MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: THE ART STUDIO, INC.**

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STUDENTS TO RECONSTRUCT

Artist Common to rebuild hurricane-damaged kilns

As hurricane season comes to a close, Lamar Artist Common is helping The Art Studio, Inc. pick up the pieces left by the destructive Hurricane Ike.

Among the damages endured by The Studio sit the remains of the kilns used for metal pours and firing ceramics. Beaumont senior and Artist Common president Jamie Havard said Ike finished off damages done to the firing kilns caused by Rita several years ago.

“There is a lot of damage here — roof damage, gallery damage, barn damage,” she said. “The door to the site was knocked off its hinges. We have a lost a hand of tools and supplies.”

The door that covers the gallery area was pushed up by a tornado and totaled the barn. Havard said all funding and labor for TASI comes from grants and volunteers.

“TASI is well funded and the studio is well maintained,” she said. “I don’t think any repairs were done to the kilns after Rita and then Ike totally toppled them.”

Members of Artist Common described the organization as a club dedicated to arts in the community.

Havard said the organization is helping with the clean-up at The Studio as part of a community out-reach effort.

“We felt like it was time to do something outside of the organization,” she said. “We have been taking a lot of time to grow as a group and getting everyone tight and active. Now it’s time to start reaching out to do some community projects and let people know we are here and interested in being a part of the community.”

Havard said the Artist Common students have chosen to head this endeavor but encourage others to participate.

“It will be a full day’s work, but luckily we have a lot of hands helping out,” she said. “Whereas something like this would normally take a few days, it should only take us about a full day’s work.

“December 12, the officers will be there getting the site ready and December 13 will be the actual clean-up.

“It’s strictly Artist Common doing this. Some people from The Studio may come by to help. They are, of course, invited to come by and pitch in if they would like to.”

Nederland senior and Artist Common member Jord Hebert said TASI directly affects not only their students, but other artists in the area as well. She said her emphasis is in ceramics, and she has a particular interest in seeing the kilns repairs completed.

Havard said all funding and labor for TASI comes from grants and volunteers. She said the clean-ups a way for the students to pitch in and give back to a facility that has opened doors for local artists.

“This is a place that has given a lot of artists their first show,” she said. “It has been very prominent in our community as far as helping young artists.”

Havard said the clean-up is also an opportunity to create something new from the rubble.

“A lot of us are going to take pieces of things — scraps, pieces of brick or metal and recycle them for a show,” she said. “Using those parts to make something new I think is really interesting.

“I hope Artist Common will have more involvement with The Studio. We have already had an increase in interest. I hope this will be a continuing relationship.”

For more information, contact Havard at www.myspace.com/artistcommon

ERNST’S FLIGHTS OF FANCY

Max Ernst’s work is for the birds

Max Ernst’s work is for the birds. OK, not for the birds, but of the birds. His work consistently features bird-like figures that occupy a space between human and avian, between real and surreal.

The German artist’s extensive avian iconography is on display in “Histoire Naturelle,” 34 prints that reproduce a series of drawings that use the technique to form animals and birds.

“Forest” is Ernst at his best. With a sun barely illuminating the tall timbers, the forest is foreboding and stiltling. But hidden among the deep red and black trees is a barely visible small bird, its blue eye the only solid color in its dotted outline. But it is the solid blue eye that seems to indicate that the bird has life, that it refuses to yield to the darkness. When the dots that define its shape are connected it will be whole and free.

A companion piece is “Eloge de la liberté” (“In Praise of Freedom”), painted in 1926. Ernst once again gives us dark forest with a small bird. Only this time there is no sun to illuminate the darkness.

The bird is much more clearly rendered, its white eye standing out stark against the trees. But its eye is black and the bird is imprisoned in a cage. This time there is no escape from the oppressive forces that encircle it.

In both images, Ernst creates the trees using the frottage technique, which means the bark of the tree is rubbed onto the canvas to create a textured surface. Ernst then paints over the textures, creating images that are both realistic and surreal.

Menil exhibition shines spotlight on 20th century master

Max Ernst, above, in 1934 at work on the mural “Petites et jardin de la nymphe Ancolie,” main photo. Pictures courtesy of the Menil Collection

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The artist seeks to reflect the inner self on to the canvas and reveal it to the world. Karen Sanchez is quieter. She lets Click speak for her name, "Sanchez said. "Click is my 'Paint' name."

Click's art reflects the thoughts and emotions of Beaumonter Lynn Sanchez. Click has a unique ability to interpret Sanchez’s hopes and fears, pains and sorrows. It helps that they are the same person.

"Karen is my real name and Click is my mother's name," Sanchez said. "Click is my 'Paint' name."

It is Click who speaks with vigor about painting. Sanchez is quieter. She lets Click speak for her through her painting.

Click's expressions will be on display in the show, "Reflections of My Life," at The Art Studio in January.

Sanchez said she was drawn to paintings when she was about eight years old on visits to art museums and thought it was something she would like to do. Over the years, she studied art history books and was drawn to the work of Van Gogh and the French impressionists. She was also strongly influenced by German Expressionism, "because of the raw emotions and the honesty. The straightforwardness and boldness."

"It's something I've looked for all my life — expressing," she said.

Sanchez took private classes with Beaumont art teacher Al Gaytan for several years.

Click's work consistently returns to themes of duality of life. The art allows her to come to terms with her grief in her work, an anger at the hand she has been dealt. The experiences of the past four years are reflected in Click's work, in the way that the German Expressionists were influenced by World War I and the loss of a way of life. Prior to her illness, Click was a housekeeper and laborer, both of which require physical activity. Click's expressionism reflects the end of that way of life. She said the paintings she did when she was healthy are as different as night and day from the ones she is doing now.

"The work is stronger now," she said. "Before (the illness), I lived in that particular world and that was taken away. Now I look at the world differently."

Rather than looking at the world as a healthy person, she looks at it as someone — she pauses to find the right words — who is disabled, she said. She is no longer allowed to drive — she laughs as she says, "They frown upon it, something about not being able to feel your feet."

Where people can just pick up and go somewhere, Sanchez has to make arrangements a day ahead to just be picked up to go to the store.

"My whole routine had changed, how I do things in life had changed — and the way I look at my art has changed," she said.

Click acknowledges that there is an element of grief in her work, an anger at the hand she has been dealt. The art allows her to come to terms with her situation.

"I have one piece titled 'Raped,'" she said. "It's powerful and strangely still. The violence and loss is implied without being graphic in its depiction. The influence of expressionism is evident in both the color and the linear quality of the figures. "Click's figures are often slightly gaunt and drawn. In much of her work, one gets a sense of melancholy. But the work is not depressive. There is a sense of understanding and acceptance that draws the viewer in.

The duality of colorful, visual harmony and serious themes mirrors the duality in the Click/Sanchez symbiosis. The work is confrontation-al, but also welcoming. Click has also been exploring paintings in the style of the American Abstract Expressionists. A
’TIS THE SEASON FOR THE ANNUAL GEEK’S GIFT GUIDE

LET’S FACE IT, THEY’RE GOING TO RUIN THE PARTY,

SO HERE’S SOMETHING TO KEEP THEM BUSY

The cold winds have blown through the Lone Star State and you know what that means. Soon we’ll all be fighting and clawing at each other to get our hands on the newest/coolest/cheapest electronics so we can show our loved ones how much they truly mean to us. Well let’s not waste any time and get right to it. This economy needs a shot of vitamin C that’s for damn sure.

And away we go!

Gonzo: The Life and Work of Dr. Hunter S. Thompson — Arguably one of the most influential journalists to ever write in the political arena, this documentary tells the life story of Thompson. Narrated by Johnny Depp, and also by Hunter himself via tape recordings of his work, this may be the most complete study of the man ever to see the light in any medium. A brilliant film about a life lived well and strange.

Paradise Lost: Collectors Edition — Containing the original Paradise Lost as well as the sequel. These two crime documentaries tell a tale of children murdering children in frightening detail. Chronicling the tale of the West Memphis 3, this award-winning film will take you by surprise. This is not for the faint of heart but it is worth seeing and owning. A must for true crime aficionados.

The X-Files: I Want to Believe — It’s in my top 5 films of 2007 and if that doesn’t sway you then I don’t know why you’re reading this in the first place.

DORIS DAY CHRISTMAS MEMORIES — I’m always up for making an entire room full of people uncomfortable. Nothing compares to the fear and terror in the eyes of a dear friend when they sit down and try to get through these episodes of the Dr. Phil Show. The show itself, as you may well know, was plagued with format and cast changes from season to season. Watching every episode in a row you hardly get a sense of the normal, but seeing only the Christmas episodes you can fully grasp the kind of lunacy that was running prime-time TV in the late ’50s.

Southland Tales — I honestly don’t know where to start. I’m going to throw a few words at you and see how it goes: monsoon, apocalyptic, dog, ice cream truck, Mormon, dystopic future, porn star, satire and Sarah Michelle Gellar. If any of these piqued your interest you have to get the new Blu Ray edition or the regular edition of this film. You will either love it or hate it but guaranteed it will produce a strong reaction. It’s in my top 5 films of 2007 and if that was and still remains the best comedian to every grace the stage and he will be missed dearly.

BONES SEASON 3 — Normally, I hate shows like this. All these crime investigations show are the same or at least that’s what I thought until I saw Bones. The things that set Bones apart are the kinds of cases the team investigates and the like-ability of the cast. In order to make crime dramas work you have to make the audience care about the characters, otherwise there is no suspense or dread. The people on this show are just damn likeable and Emily Deschanel is almost as adorable as her sister Zooey which is something I didn’t even think was possible.

RED LETTER YEAR BY ANI DIFRANCO — I know I don’t normally throw albums into the Christmas guide but seriously this record is spectacular. For anyone who loves good, honest folk music, this is one that shouldn’t be missed. I really can’t say enough good things about this album.

GEORGE CARLIN: IT’S BAD FOR YA — This wins the prize for saddest entry in the gift guide. The last HBO special recorded before Carlin passed away it was also the mecca, which is exactly why I loved it. Carlin, more than any other comedian, grew as an artist over the years. His early bits were lightweight and autobiographical. From there he moved to more situational humor and then finally a big, bad ball of angry. He

By Jeff Dixon

Commentary

writer, critic and

self-proclaimed

geek
Rhonda McNally laughed as she explained what it is about an iron pour that is so appealing. “It’s the fire!” she said. “The cupola wouldn’t cooperate,” she said. “The mosquitoes were so bad as to tell you they are,” she said. “We said a lot of misogynistic sprays.” McNally said there were a lot of women involved in the pour, both professors and students. One artist, Marilyn Cooksey works with multi-media sculptures and iron. Her pieces look like giant fish. McNally said the best way to get involved in the iron pour community is to take a class at Lamar. McNally said The technical aspects of pouring iron mean that there are limited places that are equipped for it. Since she started working with metal, she has poured bronze, aluminum and iron. “I like any of them,” she said, “but I really like the bronze. I just think it looks so nice when you get it finished with it. And I like starting with wax and doing wax casting.” McNally said she is looking forward to a return trip, although it is not cheap. “Oh yeah, I’m going back,” she said. “But it’s going to have to be a couple of years.” Iron pour artists are a unique breed. But they share a bond that comes from a love of the material and the process. McNally said anyone is welcome — “If they’re not afraid of the heat.” It just realized that this is the third crime based piece of entertainment or entertainment that I produce next year will have more kittens or whatever it is you people like.

**WAR IS HEEL THE FIRST**

**WRITTEN BY GARTH ENNIS**

When a writer begins a piece, words, similar to a torch, in the form of a word. This is one of the few surprises I found at the iron pour, Jack Keen was there, a traditional three-legged vessel designed to avoid hot pots from setting on a table, or to keep hot clothes irons from touching a surface. McNally said she prepared five trivets to be poured during the trip. A trivet is a traditional three-legged metal tray designed to avoid hot pots from setting on a table, or to keep hot clothes irons from touching a surface. “The cupola wouldn’t cooperate,” she said. A cupola in the container is the iron which is heated by a forge. McNally said that there were 15–20 people involved in the pour, but everyone in the community was involved to participate. The group left the iron pour that had poured in the village as a gift, she said. “It was made in sections and anyone from the village could come and carve into the face of the obelisk,” she said. “Once that was completed, the obelisk was finished at Pat’s Saloon and we lived it for a day or two. Then Donnie and Pat took the finished piece back to Wiseman and left it there with a plaque that says, ‘Iron Pour to the Arctic,’ which was the theme of the trip.” McNally said she found out about the trip through Donnie Keen who has a commercial foundry in Anchorage, Alaska. She met Donnie in New Mexico and combined them with deer horns from this area to make a base for the trivet. McNally said she would have no reservations about encouraging anyone to make a similar trip.

It was just being able to do something that I had never done before, to make this long Lamont Blanton began the tour on top of that, being with these other artists and these people I had never met before in their communities and places — incredible friendly and knowledgeable. I learned about the places as well as learning from the artists about pouring iron.

“The scenery was just incredible. That’s worth the trip right there.”

McNally said there was only one drawback. “The mosquitoes are as bad as they tell you they are,” she said. “We said a lot of misogynistic sprays.” McNally said there were a lot of women involved in the pour, both professors and students. One artist, Marilyn Cooksey works with multi-media sculptures and iron. Her pieces look like giant fish. McNally said the best way to get involved in the iron pour community is to take a class at Lamar. McNally said The technical aspects of pouring iron mean that there are limited places that are equipped for it. Since she started working with metal, she has poured bronze, aluminum and iron. “I like any of them,” she said, “but I really like the bronze. I just think it looks so nice when you get it finished with it. And I like starting with wax and doing wax casting.” McNally said she is looking forward to a return trip, although it is not cheap. “Oh yeah, I’m going back,” she said. “But it’s going to have to be a couple of years.” Iron pour artists are a unique breed. But they share a bond that comes from a love of the material and the process. McNally said anyone is welcome — “If they’re not afraid of the heat.”

**CONCLUSION**

Fire and ice, an annual exhibit featuring art works by students and ceramic artists from Southeast Texas will be presented Dec. 20–Jan. 9 at the Ice House Museum in Silsbee. The title of the show reflects the combination of fire as the process and inspiration while the watery represents a physical and emotional location to view the works. Lamar University Industrial University League and Supports will host a lecture and show in cooperation with The Silsbee Ice House Museum five years ago.

Blanton, a veteran educator and poet said he expects this show to shine above all others. “This year will be better than ever,” he said. “The show will include some beautiful small porcelain pieces by Clint Jones, Forest Goodchild and Henry Henry. McNally, who included are some wonderful handmade built pieces by Philip and Briarwood Judy Keber and others. “We will also have some guest artists in the exhibition as well as some exiting beginners.”

The show has both figurative works as well as some abstract pieces that are sculpted in nature. “We have planned to do alternative firings including pit firing, salt firing, along with raku,” he said. “Later this month, of pieces which will be included in the exhibition.”

Artist Donnie Keen, said the classroom has a special feeling about it this year. “Because of Hurricane Ike, the students Mr. Blanton and myself share a creative energy that is quite rare, not to mention making up for lost time working long, late hours to create the pieces.” he said. “I really think this class and its atmosphere has contributed to the creation of some exceptional work.”

“I haven’t been this excited about a show in a long, long time.”

The exhibition begins with a free opening reception 2–4 p.m., Dec. 20. The Ice House Museum is located at 818 Ernest Avenue in Silsbee. For more information contact Blanton at 904-960-1620, Dana Dorman at 904-833-4719 or the Museum at 904-305-2444.
**STARK MUSEUM OF ART: A REMEMBRANCE**

...This show becomes part of the learning process and, much like the created art itself, it 'brings out' many contrasting elements that "are so wrong as right." This exhibition is unique and frightening, but if we are to give an emotional response to his work. Those emotions, however, are what set him apart..." Mrs. Sherman, the artist's wife, said. "I've made, and I feel like I am in a special place." Sherman is reaching beyond regional and even national borders. His approach to art is not based on its audience, and the tremendous amount of support he has received from galleries and art collector's worldwide has set the stage for a promoting career. "It means a lot to me that the Art Museum of Southwest Texas has stepped up to support me and host this show," Sherman said. "I have such a strong start in my career due to this museum and all the collectors who have helped create such a buzz for my work."

Sherman holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of North Texas. He was a finalist in both the 2007 and 2008 Hunting Art Prize in Beaumont. The exhibition is on display through Jan. 4 with a reception and gallery talk with the artist 6-8 p.m. Nov. 8.

The museum is also presenting "Eating Your Friction," a solo exhibition by Howard designer of the year which is included in both the 2007 and 2008 Hunting Art Prize in Beaumont. For more information, call 409-832-3452 or visit www.amset.org.

**Remember Me**

I wish to leave you with these parting words Simply that, everything will be all right.

"One night at four in the morning I knew, I was still in every gigantic story I told you. I knew you. The real sense of life’s living glory..." I am still a little wild and silent. You may know me if you want to. No, I cannot, until I get full. I know that you do not need to spend one more day with all of you. So speak of me. So speak of me.

I always be that cold chill that’s in the air The wind that sometimes whispers in your ear But for me time to time some soon things will get close to back to fine If you know the comfort of my love You hear me when you least expect it Keep me close, don’t let me lose me keep me near you where I long to be Then you'll always have my very best..."

- Andy Coughlan

**Color Theory #3: Blue**

Blue is the sky, limitless and clear.

Blue is the music of the delta, bay and the Mississippi Fraud and traveling on Chicago winds.

Blue is cold, shivering in the darkness, the blue and pink trolls in the Boulevard.

Blue is the mood of lost, loneliness and lost hope standing on the sidewalk in the Boulevard.

Blue balls: Please, baby balls, baby blue.

Oyster Cult, whose cowbell is forever co-opted.

Blue is the color of ice reflecting the end of time.

Blue is the moon which, meteorologically appears full twice in the month, and metaphorically never comes at all. Once in a blue moon I see her, we dream dreams."

- George Wentz

**The ART MUSEUM OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS presents EATING YOUR FRICITION**

The exhibition is on display through Jan. 4 with reception and gallery talk with the artist 6-8 p.m. Nov. 8.

The exhibition of work by drawing students from Bev Karr, boards of reference material such as bumble bees, glowing teeth and other identifiable grizzly objects. He works with a charged visual range of powerful forms and fascinating texture. He draws from his microscopic view of modernism, cartooning, color field painting and assimilates these styles to create his signature artwork.

Sherman acknowledges that his pieces include objects, this exhibition demonstrates that such classifications do not hold for power figures. They are at once political and religious.

The exhibition features art from four different African cultures the Chokwe the Luwusa, the Songye, and the Luba. In all four cultures, social, political and economic changes became more centralized, sculptures acquired new meanings associated with status, authority, and power. In Songye, and the Luba. In all four cultures, social, political and economic changes became more centralized, sculptures acquired new meanings associated with status, authority, and power.

**In the Cobalt**

"And there in the cobalt is the memory..." is not a broken family, as a broken family, as a need for the listeners, the sensation to give to a vision, and thus the final outcome of a personal wish, but that this act I gave us our freedom, our food, for parents, and children or for none at all. Thank each other for doing each other. Reserve precious time for ourselves, to know to me. The treasure our own lives even down or up to and discover and to own the life of the anderen."

**The Baumont Art League presents DRAWN & QUARTERED IN ONE SEMESTER**

The student's work styles, which were often more abstract and aggressive in their aesthetic, and later ones, which are more figurative do not hold for power figures. They are at once political and religious.

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**In the Cobalt**

There is a tradition that on March 21 each of the zodiacal signs passes through the middle of the twelve constellations, which is known as their "decadence."

**Adjacent to the Day**

Welcome bright orb of lovelight shining down on me. A little gift for you, a little gift for worlds; collide, they move!"

She vowed to divorce herself from this beast. Instead of slumber, she began her binge. She never could stop the hunger within. But archives of lust turned into a crime. She supported monasticism, cartooning, color field painting and assimilates these styles to create his signature artwork.

Sherman acknowledges that his pieces include objects, this exhibition demonstrates that such classifications do not hold for power figures. They are at once political and religious.

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**The ART MUSEUM OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS presents EATING YOUR FRICITION**

The exhibition is on display through Jan. 4 with reception and gallery talk with the artist 6-8 p.m. Nov. 8.

The exhibition of work by drawing students from Bev Karr, boards of reference material such as bumble bees, glowing teeth and other identifiable grizzly objects. He works with a charged visual range of powerful forms and fascinating texture. He draws from his microscopic view of modernism, cartooning, color field painting and assimilates these styles to create his signature artwork.

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trees is disproportionate with their size. This adds to the sense of oppression of forces that seem too large to face. The forest is the face of darkness. It is important to let our voices be heard, to face the dangers of the world — to sing out — or existence. The young people must be prepared to face danger every time we leave the house, be it in our daily errands or in the face of danger and attack. It is important to keep our voices. In 1943’s “Painting for Young People,” Ernst again shows us a bird. This time it is yellow against a yellow background, is safe from danger? Possibly. But the bird is caged in by its passivity. Ernst still considers himself a surrealist. To say I am a surrealist is to mean I am a critic of the rational and the scientific, and an exponent of the genre, it is handy to bring a sense of humor with you. One often gets the sense that Ernst, through satire and with no small sense of mind, is poking fun at all of us. If we cannot get the joke, maybe we are the joke. Visitors for the Menil should check out “Max Ernst Hanging,” a documentary showing Domenique de Menil installing an exhibition titled “Inside the Light,” at Rice University in 1973. She talks about the art and her initial reactions to Ernst’s work as she carefully designs the layout of the exhibition, many of the pieces of which are represented in the current show. There is interesting footage of Ernst and de Menil in conversation as they put the finishing touches to the exhibition. At one point in the film, a young woman asks if Ernst still considers himself a surrealist. To say I am a surrealist, what does that mean? he answers. Surrealism is sometimes overshadowed by the flashy personas of Salvador Dali and Ernst may be over-shadowed by these. To expand programming and activities with volunteers helping out around The Studio, Inc. We are seeing more volunteers helping out around The Studio, Inc. We truly appreciate your help. Don’t get left out of the fun. Let’s rebuild this sucker!

ERNST from page 5

trees is disproportionate with their size. This adds to the sense of oppression of forces that seem too large to face. But the little birds sings regardless. We can only wonder of its voice will find a way out. Ernst suggests that the act of singing is the important thing. It is not enough to sit quietly in the face of darkness. It is important to let our voices be heard. Surely there are parallels to be found in these times. In the face of danger and attack, it is important that we do not suppress our voices.

In 1943’s “Painting for Young People,” Ernst again gives us a bird. This time it is yellow against a yellow wall. Epitome of the parent Ernst’s customary forest, although this time greener and more lush than before. In the left panel, birds are imprisoned by plants and are struggling to break free. In the right panel, monstrous birds are protecting and keeping evil thoughts away. Another wonderful sculpture is “La Belle Allemande” (The Beautiful German Woman). At first glance, the sculpture is breathtaking in its visual economy. But closer inspection reveals a bird-like tale. She is quite an attractive “chick.”

When viewing surrealist work, and Ernst is a brilliant exponent of the genre, it is handy to bring a sense of humor with you. One often gets the sense that Ernst, through satire and with no small sense of mind, is poking fun at all of us. If we cannot get the joke, maybe we are the joke.

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“Max Ernst in the Garden of Nymph Ancolie” is on display Wednesday-Sunday through Feb. 15. A public lecture featuring Menil director Josef Helfenstein and art historian William A. Cumfield will be held at 7 p.m., Jan. 16.

The film, “Max Ernst Hanging,” shows 4 p.m., Wednesday-Friday, and at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday for the duration of the show.

The Menil Collection is located at 1515 Sul Ross in Houston. For more information, call 713-525-9400, or visit www.menil.org.

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