

ISSUE

THE ARTS MAGAZINE OF THE ART STUDIO, INC.

DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012

**FUNKY WINTER
WONDERLAND
COMES TO TASI**

PAGE 4



**INSIDE:
HOLIDAY
SHOP-O-RAMA
EXTRAVAGANZA,
GEEK'S GIFT GUIDE,
ARTIST COMMON
OUTREACH,
THEATER COMES
TO TASI.
AND MORE**



From: @wenceslaus1

feast of st. stephen. looked out.
 poor man came into sight.
 on his way to 'occupy' demonstration.
 cool!

need to renew studio membership



SEE MEMBERSHIP FORM ON PAGE 3.



ISSUE Vol. 18, No. 4

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The ISSUE is a monthly publication of The Art Studio, Inc. Its mission is to publicize The Art Studio and its tenants, and to promote the growth of the arts in Southeast Texas. ISSUE is also charged with informing TASI members of projects, progress, achievements and setbacks in TASI's well-being. Further, ISSUE strives to promote and distribute the writings of local authors in its "Thoughtcrime" feature.

ISSUE is provided free of charge to members of TASI and is also available, free of charge, at more than 30 locations in Southeast Texas.

Regular features include local artists of note and reputation who are not currently exhibiting at TASI; artists currently or soon to be exhibiting at TASI; Instructional articles for artists; news stories regarding the state of TASI's organization; and arts news features dealing with general philosophical issues of interest to artists.

Contents

Beaux Arts Ball Page 4
 The Holiday Spirit Page 6
 "Brilliant" Young Thespians Page 7
 Artist Common Reaches Out Page 8
 Holiday Shop-O-Rama Extravaganza Page 9
 Annual Geek's Gift Guide Page 10
 Icons at Menil Page 12
 Seeing is Believing? Page 14
 Menil Frescoes Going Home Page 15
 Around & About Page 16
 Thoughtcrime Page 17

Cover design by Andy Coughlan

A View From The Top

Greg Busceme, TASI Director



I HOPE YOUR HOLIDAY is an exceptional time of friends, family and the hope of a new year and all the amazing things that will transpire through time.

At The Studio we are prepping for the upcoming Shop-O-Rama Extravaganza with a new twist. On opening day, from noon until 10 p.m., we will be joined by the creative minds of the Merchant Soiree. We are excited about this collaboration and feel it will benefit both organizations and the public.

Lorena Head who organizes the Merchant Soiree will also work with us in putting together a fashion show as a part of The Beaux Arts Ball: The Abominable Snow Ball, Jan. 28. White with a hint of blue are the theme colors this year but we look forward to seeing how you interpret this year's de Rigueur event.

For the first time since Hurricane Rita, we have responses to our call for students. With some rethinking and adapting to the new world of multiple jobs and tight budgets, we have responded by moving some of our classes to Saturday afternoons and changing to a workshop environment of longer classes and fewer of them. A complete

class will take three weeks instead of six. It is my hope that more people can fit this into their schedules, enabling them to enjoy a new experience and learn something about art.

Art expands the mind, opens the heart and keeps those brain synapses working. An idle mind tends to mush and whether you take classes in art or hula hoop, play basketball or learn to fix a car, the point is to keep the mind working, bring new experiences to your life and repel the impulse to do nothing. It is called "quality of life" and I think there is very little of it going around right now, not only in our lives, but in the schools as well, where we see reductions in art programs, music programs and theater. These are the first to fall in economically tough times and these are exactly the wrong disciplines to cut from a school curriculum. It's not just the enjoyment they bring, but the arts are the building blocks for complex problem solving and creative thinking.

Without the arts, all other subjects diminish, and it is becoming more apparent as political issues override aca-

See VIEW on page 18

UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS AT THE ART STUDIO

DECEMBER

Holiday Shop-O-Rama Extravaganza
 Opening December 3

JANUARY

"Abominable Snow Ball" Beaux Arts Ball fundraiser
 Opening January 28

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 (TASIMJAE) and participate in various exhibitions throughout the year.



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The Art Studio, Inc. 720 Franklin, Beaumont 77701

THE ABOMINABLE

Beaux Arts Ball, annual TASI fundraiser,

Story and layout by Andy Coughlan

IT IS WINTER IN Southeast Texas. A silence has descended over the frozen landscape, the sounds muffled in the freshly packed snow. The occasional gust of wind causes powder to dance brightly in the chilled breeze....

Ah, who is kidding

whom? This is Beaumont, where every other year or two we might get a sprinkling that will last a few hours until the next warm front comes in.

But that doesn't mean that a winter wonderland isn't just around the corner.

"The Abominable Snow Ball," will be held Jan. 28, and promises all the fun of a snow-capped Himalayan trek— if that trek included grand costumes, cool music, food, beverages and interesting people. The event is the latest incarnation of The Art Studio's "Beaux Arts Ball," annual fundraiser and will be held at the

American Legion Hall, Post #33 on Pennsylvania in Beaumont. Doors open at 6 p.m. and tickets are \$50.

"The theme is on the more modern edge rather than the traditional," Stephan Malick, TASI board member, said. "But it's The Art Studio, so anything goes."

Attendees are encouraged to "costume out," Malick said. The dress theme for this year is white or ice-blue.

"The whole theme is a winter wonderland sort of theme but we are going to take it and deconstruct it to where it's more modern," John Roberts, TASI board chairman, said. "We are using a lot of glass to make it icy."

The event will feature a fashion show, organized by Lorena Head of Re-Creat.

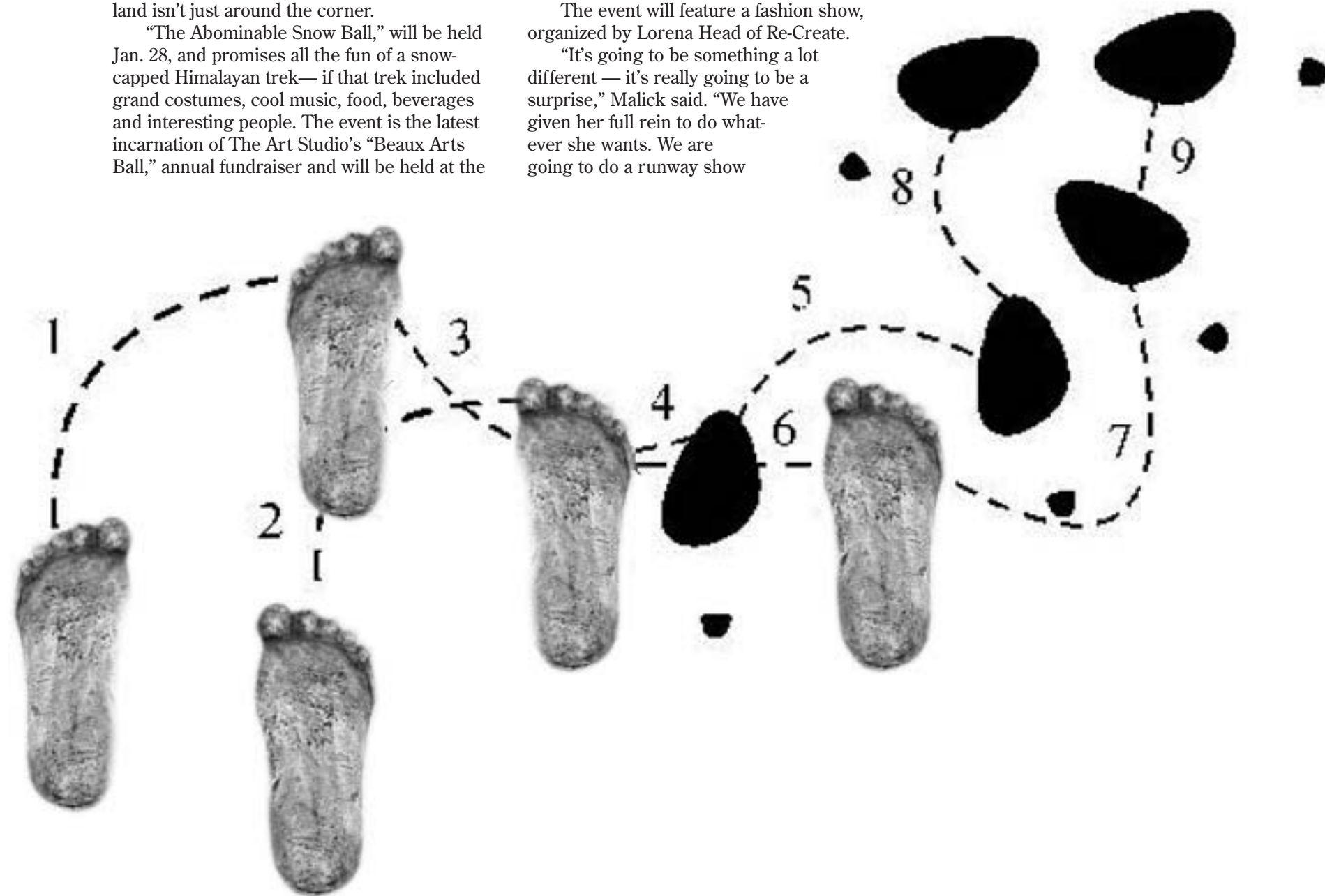
"It's going to be something a lot different — it's really going to be a surprise," Malick said. "We have given her full rein to do whatever she wants. We are going to do a runway show

and that group — and we don't know how many there will be — will put their own imprint on it. There may be items that are not just for show but for sale as well."

Roberts said that the idea for the fashion show was that it would be a good contrast.

"The whole theme is white and blue and real soft colors, and we wanted the fashion show to be bright and bold and colorful," he said.

The event will feature "heavy hors d'ou-vres," Malick said, as well as DJ Electrasaurus, a well-known local DJ who will play a little bit of everything.



SNOW BALL

takes on winter wonderland theme

The event will also feature a silent auction with works by local artists and gifts from area businesses. Unique centerpieces will also be for sale. Brandon Gauthier will also reprise the popular photo booth with proceeds going to TASI.

"And there is the ever-popular donation," Malick said with a laugh.

The committee is actively seeking out sponsors and donors for the event. Anyone interested should contact The Studio at 409-838-5393.

"We are really working hard to get some really good pieces for the auction," Roberts said. "So it's a really good chance to get some great art and some good deals on things around town."

Roberts said that he believes that The Studio is essential to the area.

"There are a bunch of artists in Southeast Texas and they need a place to create," he said. "The Art Studio is the heart of the arts community here."

It is also a way to make the community aware of The Studio, Roberts said.

"There are always people moving in," he said. "And they should know that there is a place to create art in an environment that is healthy, community-oriented, and educational."

Malick said that The Art Studio is looking to rebound from the after effects of two hurricanes and the downturn in the economy over the past few years. Even though exhibitions and performances have continued, the organization is looking to rebuild one of its main programs.

"One of the things that The Studio has got away from — through no fault of its own — it's taken us some time to get to where we can start offering classes again," Malick said. "(The ball) is a means to lay out a foundation to not only be able to bring folk in to teach, but also be able to pay them for their time. It's really to get back to a lot of what The Studio is about — doing very much grass roots art expression, art appreciation and art instruction. Almost all the money The Studio raises from the ball will go into programming.

"No doubt this is a very tough financial time for a lot of people — it's definitely hard for us because we absolutely rely on people for their generosity — yet at the same time we have

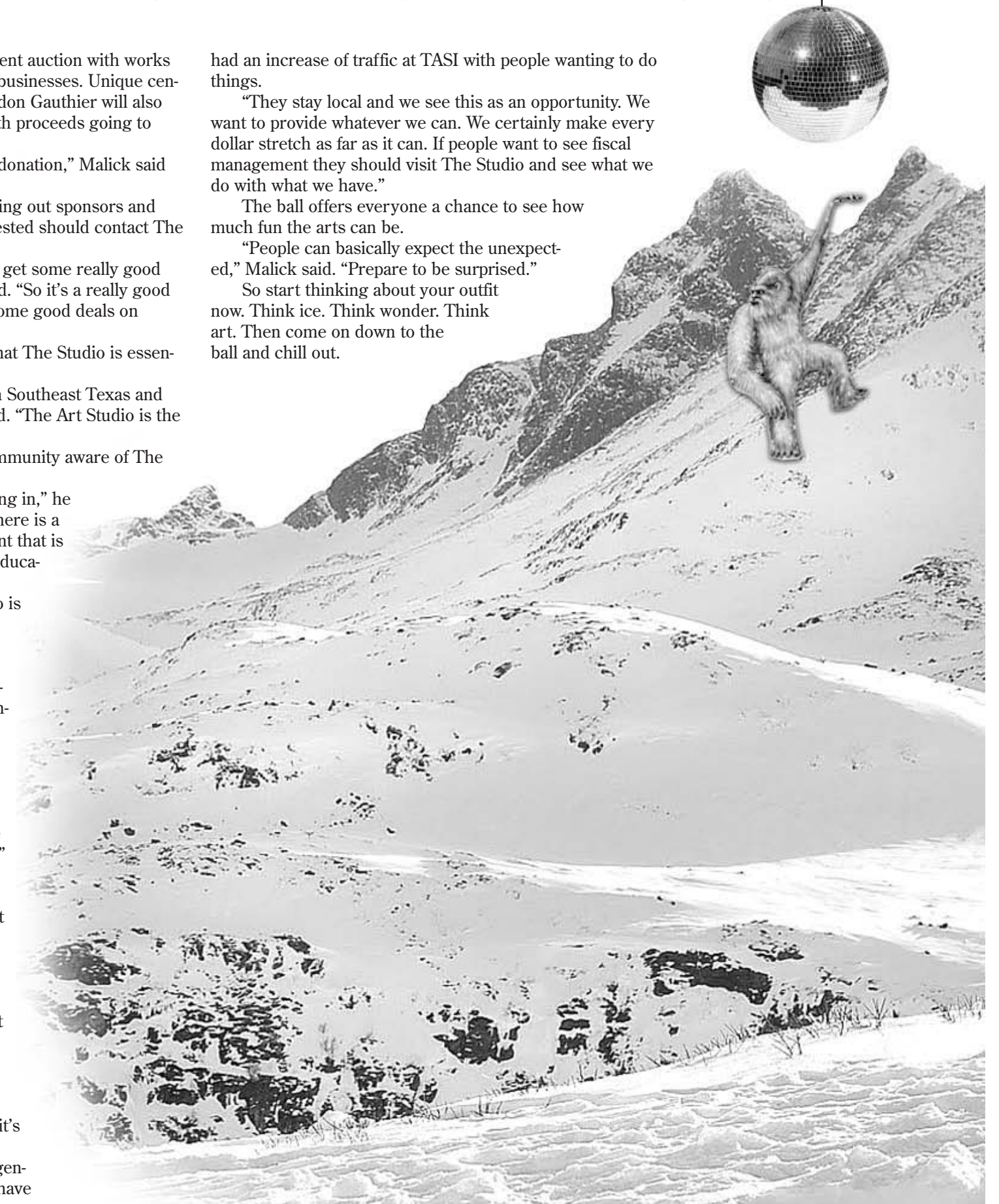
had an increase of traffic at TASI with people wanting to do things.

"They stay local and we see this as an opportunity. We want to provide whatever we can. We certainly make every dollar stretch as far as it can. If people want to see fiscal management they should visit The Studio and see what we do with what we have."

The ball offers everyone a chance to see how much fun the arts can be.

"People can basically expect the unexpected," Malick said. "Prepare to be surprised."

So start thinking about your outfit now. Think ice. Think wonder. Think art. Then come on down to the ball and chill out.



The Holiday Spirit: Are Ancient Gods Still Alive?

The foggy nights of Epiphany,
Evenings which, by ancient rule,
They celebrated in the old time ways:
The servants from the house and yard
All told the fortunes of their mistresses,
Each year they gave them the blissful word:
An army husband and a trip abroad.

*Alexander Pushkin,
Eugene Onegin, Book V, Stanza 4.*

Commentary
by
Elena
Ivanova

IT WAS A GLORIOUS sunny day in Galveston. A gentle breeze caressed the palm tree fronds and flowers dazzled the eye with every possible shape and color. A crowd gathered in Moody Gardens to watch a figure descending on a parachute from the helicopter. In a few moments, a jolly old fellow

wearing a fur-trimmed red coat and a matching hat landed in the middle of the luscious tropical paradise. The holiday season has officially begun.

Having lived most of my life in northern regions of the world, I still find it hard to reconcile the idea of winter holidays with green grass, flowers, palms and temperatures above freezing. Of course, for the people born and raised in this climate, it's totally natural. Notwithstanding the obvious contradiction, reindeer-driven sleighs, icicle-shaped garlands and bundled-up Santas are as much a part of the season's celebration in this part of the country as they are in the colder climate up north. We cling to our traditions and are reluctant to change them even if they are illogical.

There is something very important about Santa's visit during winter holidays. Adults may say that this is just for kids – and indeed, in the modern world Santa's festivities are all about kids (and, one may add, about shopping). However, there may be a deeper reason why Santa's hold on our imagination is so strong.

Lurking in the labyrinths of our subconscious, there still is a caveman who feels powerless in the



face of fearsome nature. For ancient Europeans, whose beliefs laid the foundation of the Santa Claus tradition, winter was the hardest season to survive. Our ancestors believed that around the time of the winter solstice, forces of life and death were engrossed in a mortal combat, the outcome of which was unknown. Therefore, to ensure that spring would eventually arrive, people engaged in diverse rituals to honor and appease these powerful forces.

A prominent character in those rituals was the deity that personified winter. He was known under many names: Cronos (Greek Father Time), Saturn (Roman god of agriculture), the Holly King (Celtic god of the dying year), Thor (Norse god of thunder) or Odin/Wotan (Norse All-Father), and Koleda (Slavic Father Ice or Grandfather Frost.) This deity was far from the image of a gregarious, rosy-cheeked, barrel-bodied Santa Claus, immortalized by Thomas Nast in his 1862 illustration for Harper's Weekly. Nor did he resemble St. Nicholas, the bishop of Myra and Santa's Christian prototype, who miraculously resurrected murdered boys and dropped gold

pieces in the poor girls' stockings. Like other pagan gods, he was not regarded as either benevolent or malevolent. He could be both, and he was as dangerous and unpredictable as the dark and cold winter season.

Many rituals performed in honor of this god often were gruesome and deadly, such as human sacrifices and martial sports. At the same time, other rituals were playful and expressed hope in the continuation of life. For example, Slavic girls practiced various forms of fortune-telling trying to predict whether they were going to be married soon and what the future husband would be like. This tradition survived in folk cultures of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine, despite 1,000 years of Christianity and 75 years of official atheism under the Soviet regime. The fortune-telling games involve throwing shoes behind a fence, looking at a mirror by candlelight and interpreting the shape of wax drippings, or placing jewelry in a water bowl, just to name a few.

As Christianity spread through Europe, the winter solstice rituals gradually became replaced by the celebration of the birth of Christ. However, pagan traditions never completely disappeared. Ancient gods and spirits continued to be a part of the season festivities in carnivals, superstitions and omens.

This blending of paganism and Christianity is obvious in the popular tradition of Christmas caroling. Chanting was an integral part of many winter rituals. Ancient Slavs practiced the tradition called kole-dovanie (from Koleda, the Slavic winter god.) Masked people walked from house to house singing and sifting grain as a form of wishing luck, and received small gifts, typically, food, in return. In many East European countries singing koliadki continues to be a popular pastime among children and young people during the holiday season. The content of these songs changed over time to include references to Christmas. However, the tradition still bears the name of the pagan god.

*Elena Ivanova is chief educator
at the Stark Museum of Art in Orange*

Women from Belarus, right, engage in the koliadki ritual. (Photo courtesy Republic of Belarus Web site)



The type of Russian lacquered box, shown above, has been produced in the village of Palekh since ancient times.

'BRILLIANT' AMBITION

YOUNG THESPIANS BRING 'STAGE LEFT' THEATER COMPANY TO TASI IN JANUARY

Story by
Luvia
Rueda

Photo by
Andy
Coughlan

IT IS A LEAP of faith.

But actors Bonnie Dupuis, Joe Whitaker and Steven E. Hoffman Jr. are taking a chance on the "Brilliant Traces" of their talent to introduce experimental theater to the patrons of the Art Studio.

"We are scared, yes. But very excited about this opportunity," Whitaker said.

The three Lamar University students are branching beyond the campus grounds to produce, direct and act in "Brilliant Traces," by Cindy Lou Johnson, which will take place at the Art Studio Jan. 20-22.

"It's just a great venue. Perfect for this project," Dupuis said.

The Art Studio provides a hothouse environment of growth for the area's local talent. And it is this reputation — as well as the promise of a diverse audience — that has helped facilitate the production process for the three Lamar University students.

"I first read this play my freshman year in college — and I fell in love with it. Bonnie read it, too, and she felt the same way. So we tried to find a good fit and — here we are," Whitaker said.

"Brilliant Traces," revolves around the interactions of two strangers, who are thrown together through a series of calamities. It is composed of abstract dialogue and experimental method acting, which works to draw intense emotions from the audience.

Their first play together helped them plan the structure that they wanted to implement in "Brilliant."

"We had the audience be the walls in the 'room' where we were acting. It's a highly personal approach — it makes us more vulnerable. The audience responds to that," Whitaker said.

Whitaker and Dupuis said The Studio's intimate atmosphere and raw conditions aid in setting the scene for "Brilliant," which will be set in freezing Alaskan temperatures.

"There is a lack of air conditioning in The Studio, so people will be able to truly feel our characters' discomfort. Unless they bring a coat," Hoffman, the play's director, joked.

All kidding aside, the group is serious about the reasons behind their collaboration.

"We felt that there was a lack of experimental theater in this area," Dupuis said. "A lot of people appreciate the traditional, published plays that are more well-known. We would like to extend beyond that field to create original works or work with something that challenges both us and the audience."

Whitaker and Dupuis worked together during the 2010 Lamar play, "A Doll's House," and the three were later involved in "An Inspector Calls," at the Lamar University Theatre in September.

"We got along really well and both had the same ideas about acting, so we decided to pursue a partnership," Dupuis said.

The three collaborators are determined to hone



Steven J. Hoffman, Jr., left, will direct Joseph Whitaker and Bonnie Dupuis in "Brilliant Traces" at The Art Studio, Jan. 20-22.

their skills in all aspects of the theater, so they pooled their resources and talents to build the "Stage Left" company in March 2010. The troupe is composed of several members who can choose to work in any of the plays selected for performances.

"Brilliant" will be their second production; "Ash," their first effort, took place June.

See THEATER on page 18

Reaching Out

ARTIST COMMON TO SHOWCASE LAMAR ART STUDENTS' TALENTS

Story by
Andy
Coughlan

Photos by
John
Rollins

MEMBERS OF LAMAR UNIVERSITY'S Artist Common will bring their work to the community in a series of shows over the next couple of months.

First up is "Apathy's Collapse" at The Art Studio. The show opens Nov. 26 with a reception, 7 to 10 p.m.

"It's the first big exhibition that Artist Common has had in a while," vice president Elissa Monk said. "We are really trying to revive interest in the art department."

Members of Artist Common may submit up to five pieces, with at least one piece guaranteed to be in the show. Jessica Dandona, Dishman Art Museum director, will judge the show, and prizes will be awarded for the first three places.

"The show is open to any art student," Kailee Viator, Artist Common president, said.

"Not everything will be for sale, but the prices will be reflective of the fact that we are students," Monk said. "It's really hard to break into the art world and it can be a little intimidating if someone is expected to go out and find a gallery on their own. This is a way for art students to pad their resumé and get their stuff out into the community."

Viator said the group tries to have at least one exhibition every semester and it is a way to encourage art students to be involved in the arts community of Southeast Texas.

"No one is going to want you if you don't have anything on your resumé," Viator said. "We've all been apathetic and not doing a lot, and it is time that ended."

The reception will feature refreshments and the group will be selling Artist Common tote bags.

"We're jumping on the 'green' shopping bag,"



Monk said, adding that the bags have the Artist Common logo of a green alligator mounted on a plaque with a paintbrush in its mouth.

The artists will extend out to the Beaumont Art League on Dec. 3, as the Artist Common members join with other students and faculty for an exhibition, featuring artists from each discipline in the art department, Viator said. The group will then exhibit at TAM in Port Arthur in January.

The group's numbers have dwindled over the past few years and these shows are a way to draw people to the group, Snowden, Artist Common treasurer, said.

"We would like a bigger family," Viator said.

"They don't seem to realize how important the community is and how we all need to be together."

Artist Common is a student organization, but Viator said that they encourage community members to join. Membership costs \$5, the money going to reserving gallery space.

"We are focused on promoting art in the community and getting people involved outside of the university," Snowden said. "Everyone loves art, that's why we do this. We are there for those who love art and want to be involved with it."

The Art Studio is located at 720 Franklin in downtown Beaumont. The Beaumont Art League is located on Gulf Street in the old fairgrounds.



Artist Common, the Lamar art student organization will sell tote bags with their alligator head logo, left, during their show at TASI, beginning Nov. 26.

Kailee Viator, Michael Snowden and Elissa Monk, top and left, work in their studio spaces in the Lamar art building. The trio are among a group of art students who will exhibit their work at three shows in the next two months.



TASI TEAMS WITH MERCHANT SOIREE FOR ARTS, CRAFTS SALE

THE EUROZONE IS IN turmoil. Congress can't seem to find common ground. The economy is hanging on for dear life. So much for being the "most wonderful time of the year."

But fear not, comfort and joy are just around the corner.

In December, The Art Studio, Inc. will host the annual "Holiday Shop-O-Rama Extravaganza," an art sale that offers one-stop shopping for a variety of unique, funky, artistic and inexpensive gifts created by local artisans.

The sale begins Dec. 3, noon to 5 p.m., followed by a reception from 7-10 p.m. This year's opening will also feature the Merchant Soiree, a monthly traveling arts and crafts sale.

The Shop-O-Rama will continue through Dec. 22 during regular Studio hours, 2 p.m.-5 p.m., Tuesday-Saturday. The Art Studio, Inc. is located at 720 Franklin in downtown Beaumont.

"It's great that we can share this event with Merchant Soiree," Andy Coughlan, TASI spokesperson,

said. "It is a natural fit and it offers shoppers the chance to have the pick of some of the best arts and crafts in Southeast Texas."

The Shop-O-Rama traditionally offers smaller versions of the great art produced by tenants and members of The Art Studio year round.

"This event is always a great opportunity to spread the word about the terrific work produced at The Studio," Coughlan said. "And it is also one of our major fundraisers. It's important that we encourage people to come out and buy a lot of stuff."

"It's a great place to find unique gifts for loved ones. And it is a chance to support local artists and businesses instead of pouring more money on cheap factory-made products."

An eclectic group of artists will ply their wares during the show, including ceramics, paintings, drawings and prints, decorative boxes, photographs, woodcarvings, dolls, jewelry and other knick-knacks.

"Participating artists tend to price their works appropriately for people looking for gifts," Coughlan said.

Participation in the sale is open to TASI members in good standing. Anyone wishing to take part in the event can become a member of The Art Studio when they bring their work in. Memberships begin at \$35. TASI takes a commission of 25 percent on all items sold. All artwork must be brought by in person. Artists are responsible for their own displays. Work may be added at any time during the run of the Holiday Shop-O-Rama Extravaganza.

"The commission is particularly low compared to other arts organizations," Coughlan said. "It is not unusual for galleries to charge as much as 60 percent commission. We have always tried to keep the percentage low to encourage the less experienced artist to become involved in exhibiting and selling their work."

So don't bother fighting the crowds around the usual outlets. Swing by The Studio on Dec. 3, enjoy some good company and pick up some interesting presents. You might find it's the least stressful shopping trip you've ever had.

For more information, call 409-838-5393.

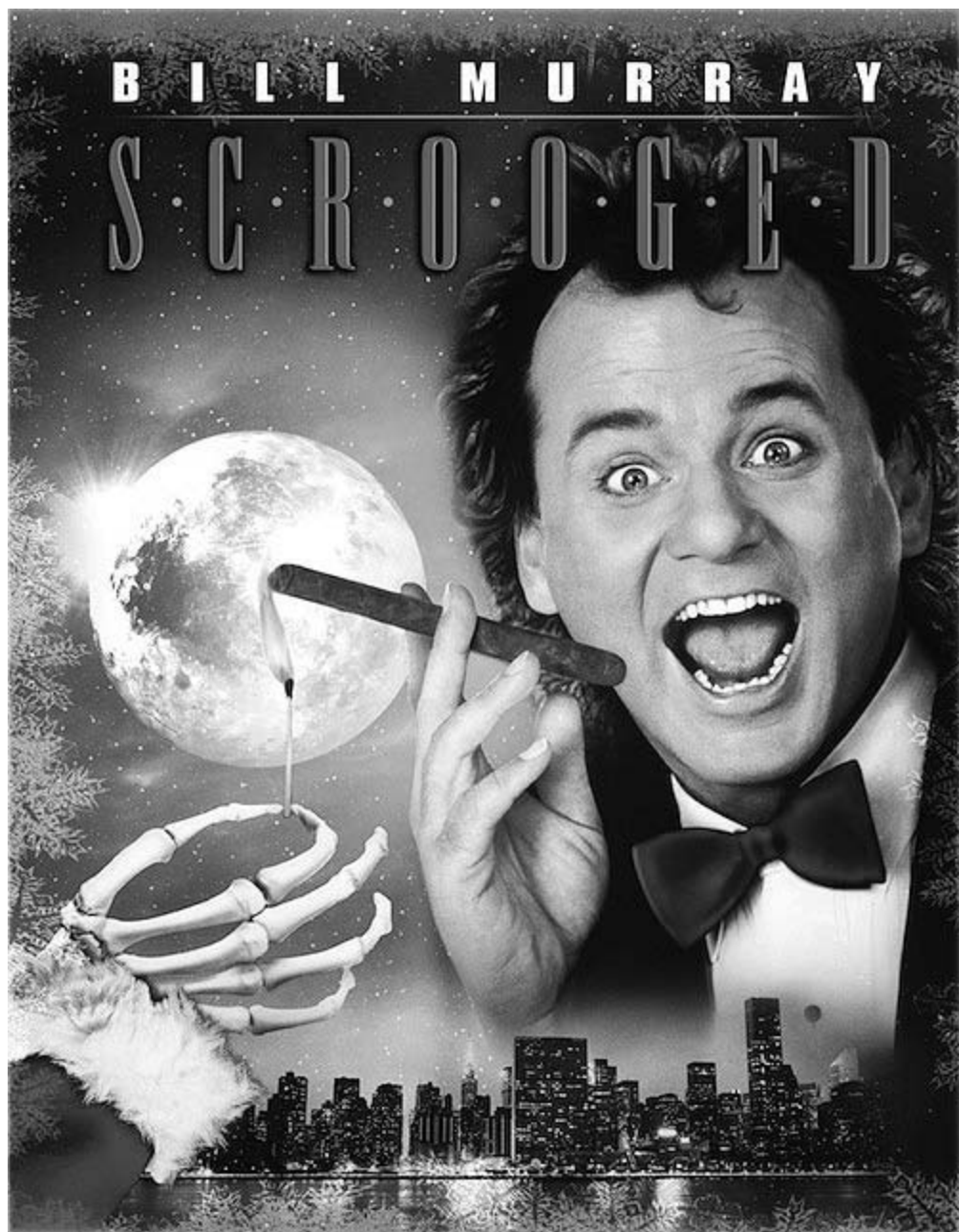


BEWARE GEEKS

BEARING GIFTS

ANNUAL GIFT GUIDE

RETURNS TO PUT A SMILE ON THEIR PALE LITTLE FACES



Commentary by Jeff Dixon

(Dixon has been a geek since his earliest memory of reading Spider-Man comics under the spinner rack at Walgreen's. Yesterday he purchased and read a comic book on his phone. Clearly he lives in the future. Clearly it is awesome there.)

THAT DRY COOL WIND is upon us once again friends and neighbors. Father Christmas is decking himself out in the biggest red coat you've ever laid eyes on, and soon the air will be filled with the smells of apple cider and the sounds of young children screaming their entitlement.

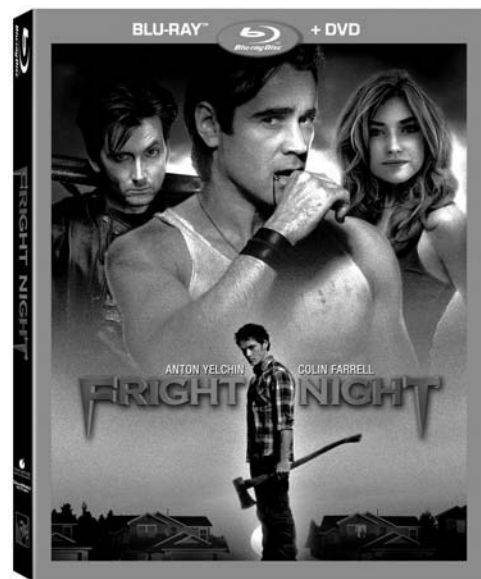
But alas, this holiday isn't just for the tiny ones, and no doubt there are full-grown adults you've saddled yourself with that might do well to find a gift under the tree for them.

Behold my geekery and tremble.

SCROOGED (Blu-ray) — First up is a dark little bit of Christmas cheer. Directed by Richard Donner and starring Bill Murray and Karen Allen, this might be my favorite Christmas movie in retrospect. I can't think of one that I've seen more often or that I'm more in the mood to watch. Even as I type this I am fighting the urge to put it on. It's just magical.

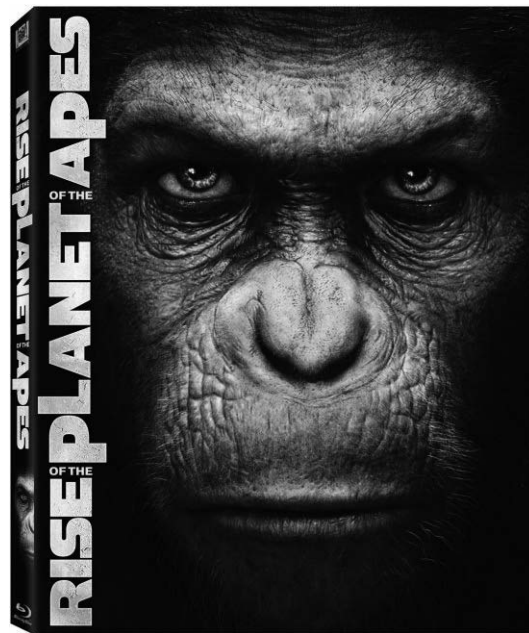
FRIGHT NIGHT (Blu-ray) — Now this is more like it. This is the kind of movie I'm talking about when I talk about my love for vampire movies. No one sparkles in this. This is serious business. This is sunlight

and wooden stakes and the whole shebang. Colin Farrell needs to play a villain more often. He's honestly so nice it and polite it comes off even creepier knowing what he is and what he's capable of. I'm hopeful this will now find the audience it never did in theaters.

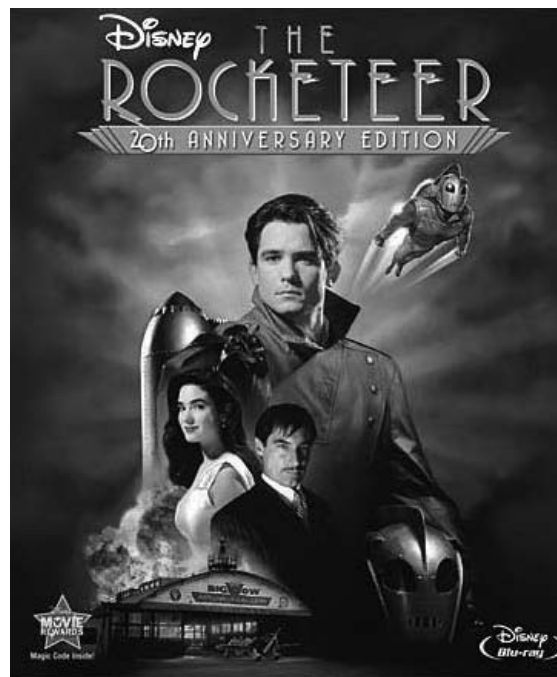


RISE OF THE PLANET OF THE APES

(Blu-ray) — Real talk, this was the best movie of the summer. Hands down. It was leaps and bounds better than it had any right to be. Look at that title and tell me that movie didn't have the odds stacked against it. If you're a fan of old school, suspenseful sci-fi then this is your movie. If you're a fan of civil rights analogues that are done well, then this is your movie. If you're a fan of civil rights analogues that are done well, then this is your movie. If you're a fan of John Lithgow absolutely killing it every single second he is on screen, then this is your movie.



THE ROCKETEER (Blu-ray) — Nothing quite captures my childhood the way "The Rocketeer" does. When I was a kid all movies looked this way. Bigger than life and ready to punch evil right in the kisser. Provided, of course, that evil was in fact a nazi or a really mean looking guy in a black hat. Black hats were the worst, as any kid could tell you. This film captured that pulp innocence of days gone by in a way that made me complete unaware that those days had, in fact, gone. I cannot wait to see how this thing holds up.



Just know that there are plenty of zombies and interesting turns to be had and you will no doubt be sleeping with the lights on after you put this mother down.

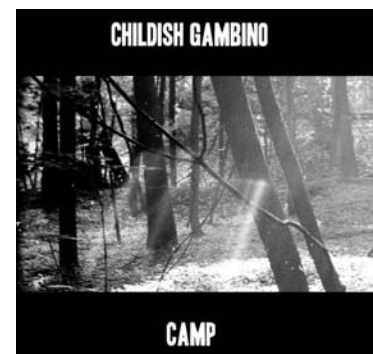
MOON KNIGHT BY BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS AND ALEX MALEEV

— Moon Knight has never been the easiest hero to capture. He's sort of like if Batman were fully aware of just how nuts he is, and also if he had multiple personalities as a result. But Bendis and Maleev have captured lightning in a bottle with this series and their new take on Marc Spector and his world. Even if you're just vaguely aware that the Marvel Universe exists, this is perfect for someone who loves a crime story.



CAMP BY CHILDISH GAMBINO

You might know Donald Glover from a little show called "Community." What you might not know is that he spits hot fire. No joke, this kid has it, whatever it is. Set down firmly in the middle ground between indie rap and mainstream hip hop, Childish Gambino brings a tongue-in-cheek delivery that hip hop just straight up needs right now. Bet on it.



lenger to PC games, it's a pretty big deal. This edition goes one step further and allows the player to switch between the old graphics and the new ones during actual game play. I know I'm excited to relive the story all over again and you should be, too.

HALO: COMBAT EVOLVED ANNIVERSARY

— Taking a game and updating the graphics has never really been a huge deal. But for a game like "Halo," that made first person shooters on console systems a real challenge to PC games, it's a pretty big deal. This edition goes one step further and allows the player to switch between the old graphics and the new ones during actual game play. I know I'm excited to relive the story all over again and you should be, too.



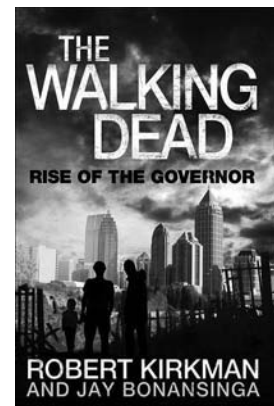
SECRET WAR BY JIM SHOOTER, MIKE ZECK AND BOB LAYTON — This is the big one folks. While there had been crossovers before, none of them packed the fun and excitement of "Secret Wars." It had all the moments we wanted to see and none of the universe-shattering implications of other crossovers that shall not be mentioned. Things

changed after this, but they were character specific like Spider-Man's new costume that turned out to be alive. Yeah, that's in here. Get on this crazy train.

And so that ends our yearly ritual. Don't look for me out wandering the aisles. I'll be safely tucked away, shopping on Amazon and looking

out the window, dreaming of baseball. Get yourselves some warm drink in your bellies and tell the ones you love that they matter. The season of good cheer is upon us once again and the skies above are cold and unforgiving.

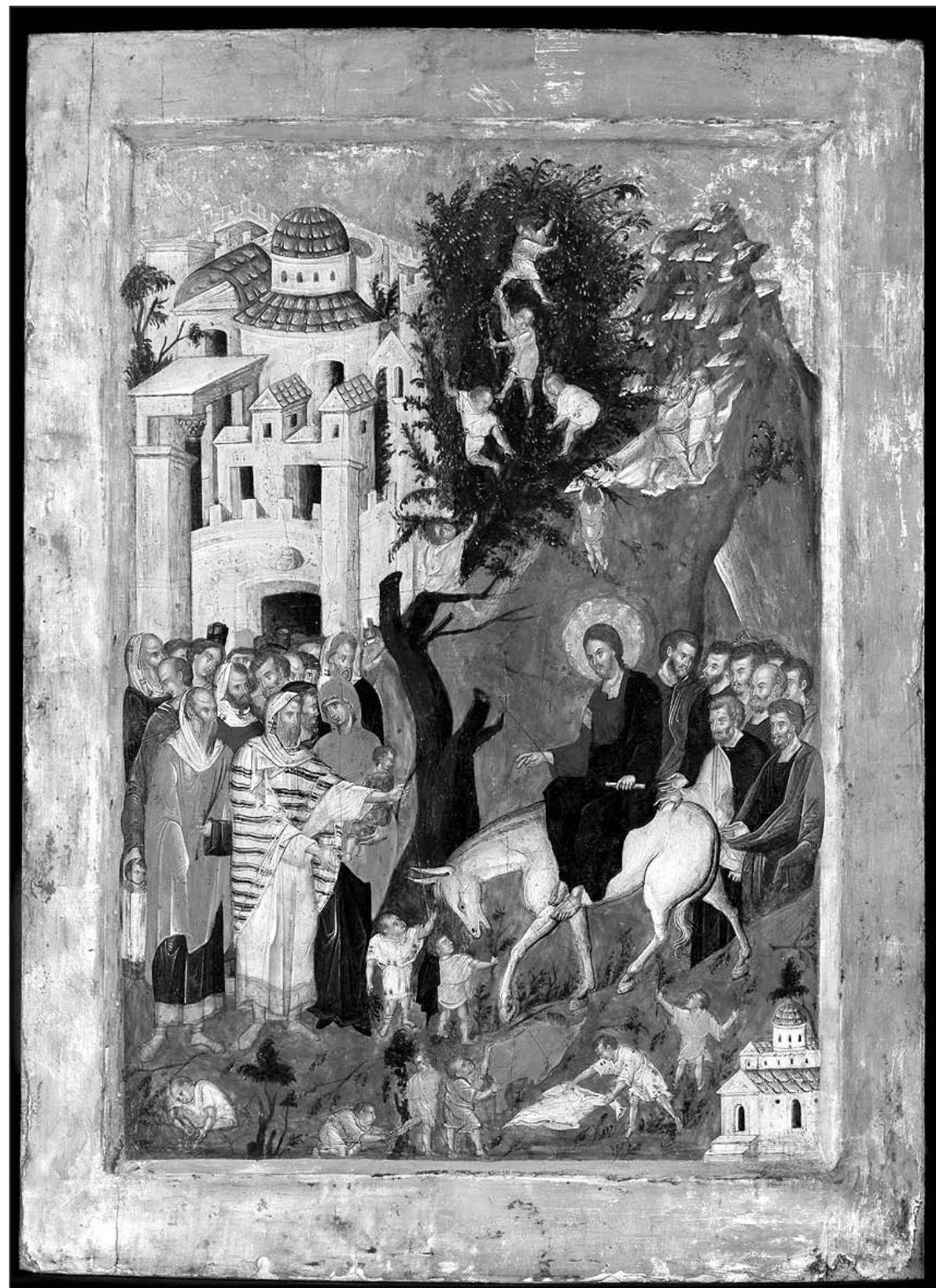
Mahalo!



THE WALKING DEAD: RISE OF THE GOVERNOR BY ROBERT KIRKMAN AND JAY BONANSINGA — The creator of the critically acclaimed comic book and the producer of the critically acclaimed TV series tries his hand at prose and comes up smelling like roses. This is a side story set in "The Walking Dead" world. Don't worry if you've never read the comics or if you're behind in the show.

ICONIC IMPRINTS

MENIL EXHIBIT DISPLAYS DIVINE ARTISTRY



THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM, ca. 1400. Gold and tempera on gesso on wood panel, 19-1/4 x 14 x 1 inches. The Menil Collection, Houston, Tenth anniversary purchase, with funds provided by The Brown Foundation, Inc.; The Wortham Foundation, Inc.; Mr. and Mrs. James Elkins, Jr.; Shell Oil Company; and Houston Endowment Inc. Photo: Paul Hester [97-16 DJ]

Review by
Andy
Coughlan

IN MODERN ART, ALL things are possible. Hyper-realism co-exists easily with abstract expressionism on the gallery walls. Picasso and Matisse face off in national collections against Rembrandts, Caravaggios and Flemish pastorals. The artist controls the image and we see whatever the artist chooses to relay to us.

But the iconographers of Byzantium and Russia did not believe the image was theirs. The images they painted were divine images relayed directly from God. Their job was simply to render the holy image so that the viewer could share, could be imprinted with the divine image and thereby literally connect with God.

"Imprinting the Divine: Byzantine and Russian Icons from the Menil Collection" is a superb exhibition of the iconographers work. The Houston museum has one of the most comprehensive collections of these rare artworks and the show is a fine survey of these works.

The Byzantine Empire was the Eastern Roman Empire during the periods of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, centered on the capital of Constantinople. The designation of the Empire as Byzantine began in Western Europe in 1557, when German historian Hieronymus Wolf published his work "Corpus Historiae Byzantinae," a collection of historical sources. The term comes from Byzantium, the name of the city of Constantinople before it became the capital of Constantine. Byzantine art is the term commonly used to describe the artistic products of the empire from about the 5th century until the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

Byzantine is also the art of Eastern Orthodox states which were contemporary with the Byzantine Empire and were culturally influenced by it, without actually being part of it, such as Bulgaria, Serbia, or Russia, and also for the art of the Republic of Venice and Kingdom of Sicily, which had close ties to the Byzantine Empire despite being in other respects part of western European culture. Most of the pieces in the show are focused on the period between 1300 and 1600.

The sumptuous catalog that accompanies the exhibition is an invaluable resource for understanding what the works meant to the artists and to the viewers.

"They are not just images of holy people," Annemarie Weyl Carr, university distinguished professor emerita of art history at Southern Methodist University, writes in the catalog. "They are holy images. As such, they pose the question of how images can be understood to participate in the divine."

Byzantine thinkers believed that the image itself — not the physical material that renders the image — was what was holy. The holy image begins with God and emanates through Jesus and so on. Therefore, the image



ICONOSTASIS, Russia, possibly Yaroslavl, Mid 17th century, Tempera and gold leaf on wood, The Menil Collection, Houston. Photo: Paul Hester [85-057.44 DJ]

is a step in the line that connects God to the viewer.

"As angels and saints are images of God, icons, in turn, are images of them, and so participate in the emanation of their sanctity," Weyl Carr writes.

Philosophically, if the original is holy, the image will bring holiness to mind. Psychologically, each time an image is seen, the original is imprinted in the mind and therefore reinforced.

In the show, only the icon of St. Onouphrios is by a named artist. Although they may have been well known at the time, the iconographers did not sign their work, believing that they didn't "own" the image. They tried to keep to the recognizable format, the repetition being a service to the holy original.

The images of "St. Nicholas" are from different times and locations, yet they are clearly recognizable as being the saint. The image from the Russian Novgorod school, ca. 1500, is clearly a direct descendant of the image from Byzantium, ca. 1302. The rounded head with the high forehead and beard streaked with white are clearly recognizable in each image. Both images feature a white shawl with large black crosses on each shoulder.

One would expect later artists to be more detailed, but this is not the case here. The Byzantine image is much more finely rendered. This makes sense when one considers that repetition — essentially copying — over time becomes a less precise process.

The pieces are nicely displayed, although Bertrand Davezac, former Menil curator, in his catalog essay, points out that once the icons are in a museum they are transmuted from being viewed as sacred objects and become elements of style — art objects, and the iconographers are seen as artists. The pieces no longer have their original intention.

In a gallery setting the figures may appear static, but the gold that surrounds many of the figures was intended to reflect the flickering light of the candles giving the images movement and a vitality that the gallery setting, with its static light, does not.

In the 16th century Russian "Baptism of Christ," the figures are highly detailed with defined muscles. However, like modern comic books, the muscles are not always anatomically correct. In many cases, the ribs are very high on elongated torsos. Russian artists followed a canon which was established by early Byzantine icon painters who tried to replicate Roman sculptures. The sculptures were anatomically correct, but often times the artist made mistakes in the copying and so the details moved on to be decoration rather than an effort to realistically depict the body. Christ, in this image, has a curious ornamentation of abdominal muscles where one would expect to see a six-pack.

The paintings are tempera, a permanent fast-drying painting medium consisting of colored pigment mixed with a water-soluble binder medium (such as egg yolk). Tempera paintings are very long lasting, and examples from the first century still exist. Egg tempera was a primary method of painting until after 1500 when it was superseded in popularity by oil painting. Most are panels, but icons are not necessarily so. It wasn't until the 14th century that panels began to dominate.

The Koimesis, or "falling asleep in death," of the Virgin is first found in Byzantine art in the 900s. The image would become one of the most popular icons in the Middle and Late Byzantine world, often appearing over the doors of churches to be contemplated by the faithful as they left the service.¹ In the 15th century "Koimesis of the Mother of God," the Virgin rests on a bier for the dead. Christ stands behind her holding up her soul, as if it were a baby, offering it to attendant angels to take to heaven. Jesus is invisible to all and lifts Mary's soul to heaven while the mortals surround the sleeping figure. The apostles stand witness. It is unusual in its muted palette. The iconographer has chosen to browns and earth tones but the bier is in bright red, drawing one's eyes to Mary's body, above which is Christ and her soul, arched in grey rather than the usual blue. A look at the 16th century

Russian version reveals how closely the compositions are copied through the centuries.

Bertrand Davezac, in his catalog essay, writes, "Proceeding from the idea that icons are a medium through which the hallowed subject of veneration manifests itself is the belief that icons across the ages are sanctified by virtue of their conformity to the original prototypes. In other words, icons are made holy by their adherence to tradition."

Davezac writes that in the orthodox world, tradition maintains strict control over the art of the icon.

The depiction of St. Onouphrios sits easily in the tradition. St. Onouphrios was an Egyptian who spent 60 years in the desert as a hermit. The story goes that he was covered only by his own hair when he was discovered by the wandering monk Paphnoutios. One can be forgiven a moment's irreverent thought when noticing the similarities to the hermit of "Monty Python's Life of Brian," who must surely have been modeled on the saint. The figure is the typical skinny, naked figure covered by his long beard. The mountains and rock formations, in this early to mid 17th century piece from Crete, take on a geometric patterning, a stylistic representation repeated throughout the icons from all regions.

However, the original iconographers created images that were not only the holy image, but also helped the viewer relate in a "real" way. "Nativity" (Cretan ca.1500) has a stature that is at odds with its scale. Measuring a mere 7.5 inches high, it is rich with detail. In the foreground is the sleeping figure of Joseph who symbolizes the world being at peace. In the foreground are two women with water, ready to bathe the infant. Even though these women do not appear in the Bible, "everyone knows" that there should be midwives at a birth, and these artists added them to the scene to give it a realistic connection for the viewer.

See **ICONS** on page 15

Must art be seen to be believed?

Commentary
by
Peyton
Ritter

COULD THE GREATEST PAINTING ever painted truly be the greatest painting if it is never seen? Can it even be considered art?

Philosophers and art historians have unsuccessfully attempted to create an all-encompassing definition of art since the term was created. Unfortunately, their best efforts do little but create

two self-satisfying opinions of art — one is a broad declaration that everything is art, and the other has a scope so limited it serves only its elitist definition. The latter of these, which is arguably the worst, only allows that which critics narrowly define as art to be art. It fails to see art as a living, breathing, ever-changing entity focused on expression that is open to

Anything could be art — but not everything is art. We must focus our attention on a view that can't include everything, but must also not disqualify everything. Instead of a definition that declares what art is, the scope should focus itself on declaring what art isn't, thereby shedding light, at least within the realms of this anti-definition, on what art might actually be.

Art is a form of communication that requires people to be actively involved in its process. A message sent without a receiver in mind is a message not worth sending. If art is a message, then creations that don't intentionally seek a receiver should not be thought of as art. From artists and viewers, to critics and buyers, people must be active participants in the artistic process for the art to truly "exist."

However, some people argue that the artist can be independent of the communicative process, meaning the artist must concern himself only with the process of creating the work.

But can an artist truly operate without thinking about whether or not someone experiences his work? Isn't an artist who claims not to care about what people think, or that art is a form of therapy, just afraid of the possibility of criticism? They are frightened of people not turning up to their show, so they tell themselves they're above the fray when in reality, it's nothing more than a form of self-preservation.

Two groups of people are frequently given 'Indie Cred' that allows them to act like the anti-artist — someone who cares for nothing about life or society, but about just being a slave to the artistic process. One is hipsters, the other musicians, and even though they wholeheartedly believe in what they're doing, it doesn't make them artistic, mysterious or cool. In fact, it makes them clueless of what art actually is.

The "Indie Cred Ideal," would, at first glance, seem to support the claim that artists can only concern themselves with the process and not worry about communicating a message, if it existed.

"Hipsters are a subculture of men and women typically in their 20s and 30s that value independent thinking, counter-culture, progressive politics, an appreciation of art and indie-rock, creativity, intelligence, and witty banter," according to Urban Dictionary.

However, this definition misses the idiosyncratic nature of the hipster population.

Hipsters do use sarcasm to find value in worth-



"Of course, one doesn't need to 'see' my work as long as one understands the integrity of the artistic process."

less objects — for instance, Pabst Blue Ribbon, Steve Urkel glasses and moustaches. The perceived value of these objects directly corresponds to the magnitude of apparent sarcasm — the more sarcastic you can be about the object, the better the object is.

People can easily argue that the hipster population is just the type of group that would create something for the sake of being against a general definition of art — a communicative process between sender and receiver. Critics making this argument fail to see that the hipster artists' creations, which don't care about the outcome just the sarcasm, actually do search for acceptance, they do seek a receiver — it just happens to be other hipsters.

We all search for a group. As humans we're social animals, so even the hipster will seek the social interaction of others.

Like the hipsters' sarcasm, musicians also use rhetorical tactics that aim for a detachment of the artist from the communicative process. The general public loves the idea of the brooding, struggling artist, whose songs seem to be written to speak directly from the artist's soul to ours. As a complement to this figment of our imagination, we often construct the idea of an artist free of the effects that criticism creates. It's not only the fan, but also the artist himself who promotes the ideal of creating art because they "have to" or because it's their "emotional release." This reasoning leads to a mythology that sees the artist as so in tune with their emotions and so trusting of their ability, they can't even begin to contemplate anything outside of the process.

In reality, does this exist? Sure there are trou-

bled musicians and artists in general, but do any of them create without any thought of releasing their work to the world, or without taking into account what the world might think?

It's illogical to conclude that an artist who cares for nothing but the creative process exists. If we have seen a work of art, then it was created — maybe not explicitly with the idea of being seen, but at least with the idea of a communicative process which requires a sender and receiver, bouncing around the artist's mind.

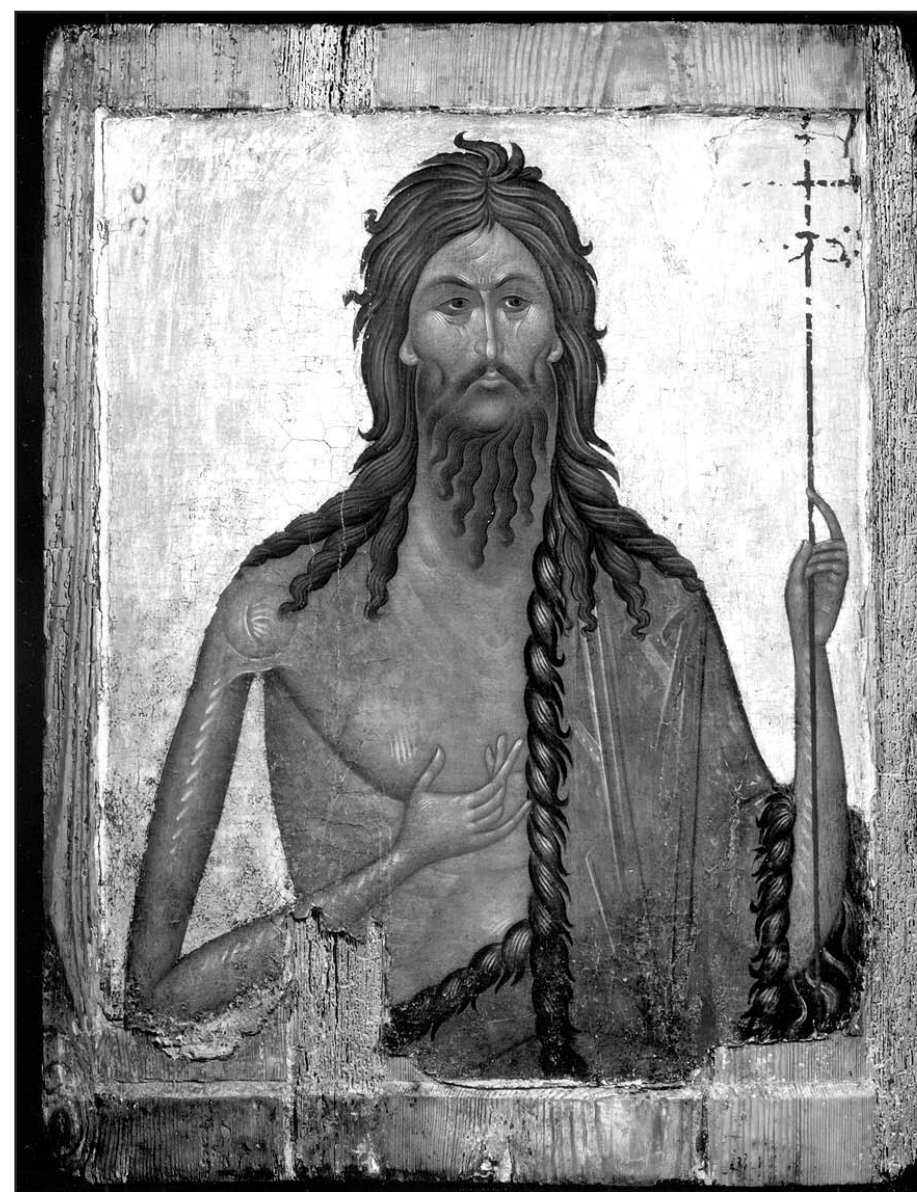
In fact, imagine an artist who had no concern about his work ever being seen. It would be exactly what bad art is — a message that couldn't be received correctly. How good can a work that the artist doesn't want anyone to experience be?

When talking about the Sex Pistols album, "Never Mind the Bollocks," singer Johnny Rotten said, "If the sessions had gone the way I wanted, it would have been unlistenable for most people. I guess it's the very nature of music; if you want people to listen, you're going to have to compromise."

Art is painting, music, sculpture, theater — but these are only mechanical processes that the artist uses to create a work. True "Art" is as much outside of the artist's hands as it is in them. For something to be art, it must be seen, heard or experienced; it must be intended for consumption outside of the person who created it.

So, to return to the initial question, could the greatest painting ever painted truly be the greatest painting if it is never seen?

Well, it remains to be seen.



SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST, Byzantium, by a painter trained in Constantinople. Early to mid 15th century. Tempera and gold leaf on wood. 25-1/4 x 19-3/8 x 7/8 inches. The Menil Collection, Houston. Photo: A.C. Cooper, London [85-057.07 DJ]

ICONS from page 13

In the 15th-century Byzantium piece "Entry into Jerusalem," it is interesting to see figures of various sizes. But these are not to present a sense of perspective. Some of the smaller figures are in the foreground. The size of the figures symbolizes their status within the community. In many cases, the sense of scale is distorted. In the 16th century Russian version, the gates of the city walls are huge, but the city itself is shown through a hole in the walls in miniature. It looks almost like a patchwork quilt. It stands out against the muted background so that the city is given importance by its color rather than its scale.

The first piece Dominique and John Menil acquired as part of a planned collection. Portable iconostases began to appear in the late 16th century. Many iconostases were life size and separated the sanctuary from the congregational area of the church. The closed piece represents the holy doors and when opened it symbolizes the holy church. It is in four levels with the bottom being the first tier, featuring Mary, John the Baptist and other saints surrounding the seated Christ. The second tier is the

feast cycle. The third tier is devoted to the prophets and is centered on the Mother of God. The top tier has the patriarchs.

"Often thought of as a barrier that conceals the mysteries of the liturgy from the laity, the iconostasis can be more truly understood as a vast window upon Heaven that concentrates the gaze upon the cosmic order of salvation," Weyr Carr writes.

The Menil's iconostasis has lost four panels to the left, but the ornate piece is none the less impressive for that.

"Imprinting the Divine" is well worth a visit to the Menil. Even if the gallery setting may diminish the divine connection — or even for the secular among us — the detailed offerings of these devout iconographers are beautiful on their own terms. Maybe their art is divine in itself.

The Menil Collection is located at 1515 Sul Ross in Houston.

The exhibition catalog is \$50.

For information, visit www.menil.org.

1 Metropolitan Museum of Art, www.metmuseum.org.

Menil frescoes to return to Cypress

The Menil Collection announced Sept. 23 that the Byzantine frescoes on loan from the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus — displayed since 1997 at the Byzantine Fresco Chapel on the Menil campus — will return to Cyprus next year, after the loan period concludes in February.

The following is a letter that Menil Director Josef Helfenstein sent to the museum's supporters:

Dear Friends and Supporters of the Menil Collection:

After more than two decades in Houston, the beloved Byzantine frescoes will go back to Cyprus in 2012. While this moment is bittersweet, the story of these frescoes—from their rescue, to their long-term loan to us, and now to their return—very much reflects the essence of the Menil Collection, its focus on the aesthetic and the spiritual, and our responsible stewardship of works from other nations and cultures.

In 1983, Dominique de Menil, founder of the Menil Collection, was presented with an extraordinary prospect: to acquire two 13th century frescoes from Cyprus. Mrs. de Menil was struck by their beauty and understood immediately their art historical significance. However, after further research Mrs. de Menil learned that the frescoes had been stolen from their home in a small votive chapel in Lysi, Cyprus.

That knowledge led to an act of extraordinary generosity—in fact, a series of generous actions that eventually engaged many other people. First, the frescoes were acquired by the Menil Collection on behalf of the

Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus. Then, the Menil Foundation supervised the restoration of the frescoes, which had been cut into more than 30 pieces when they were stolen. In gratitude, the Church lent the frescoes to the Menil on a long-term basis, for presentation in a consecrated chapel in Houston. The Byzantine Fresco Chapel opened to the public in 1997, with support for its construction provided by donors in Houston and across the country.

Since then, hundreds of thousands of people have seen the frescoes and experienced the majesty of Cypriot Byzantine art and religion. Moreover, the frescoes' installation in the Byzantine Fresco Chapel—a consecrated space that simultaneously honors their sacred origins and the tragic history of their looting from their true home church in Lysi—includes a profound, sacred dimension and is therefore different from traditional museum presentations of antiquities.

While the loan of the frescoes formally concludes in February 2012, this will not be the end of their story—or the story of the building. We are exploring how best to use it in the future, in ways that carry forward our mission. We will also be organizing a number of public programs focused on the frescoes over the next few months, and I hope you will join us for these events.

Thank you for your interest and support. We look forward to seeing you at the Menil Collection soon.

Josef Helfenstein
Director, Menil Collection



The Byzantine Fresco Chapel Museum, left, in Houston. The frescoes are due to be returned to Cypress in February. According to the catalog for "Imprinting the Divine" exhibit, the frescoes, which were stolen from a church in Lysi, Cypress, were rescued from the black market by John and Dominique de Menil in 1983. The Menils agreed to pay for restoration in exchange for a long-term loan.

Around & About

If you come across any interesting exhibitions, museums or other places on your travels, share them with us. Call 409-838-5393, or contact us through our web site at www.artstudio.org. Be sure to include the location and dates of the subject, as well as any costs.

The **MCFADDIN-WARD HOUSE MUSEUM** will host a **GINGERBREAD HOUSE COMPETITION**, open house and live auction to benefit Buckner Children and Family Services of Southeast Texas. Anyone can enter a gingerbread house in the no-fee contest or come to the McFaddin-Ward House visitor center on Dec. 10 at the museum's Open House event to bid on one of the completed houses. Prizes will be awarded to the top-placing gingerbread house winners.

Houses are due to Buckner Children and Family Services on Monday, Dec. 5 for judging.

The McFaddin-Ward House Museum will exhibit the houses from Dec. 7 through Dec. 9.

On Dec. 10, at the museum's Open House event, the houses will be sold at their exciting live auction, where all proceeds benefit Buckner Children and Family Services of Southeast Texas.

Entry rules and forms are available at www.mcfaddin-ward.org or may be picked up at the visitor center.

Contact the museum at 409-832-2134 for more information.

The **ART MUSEUM OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS** will host a **HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING WORKSHOP** at 3 p.m., Dec. 1 on the grounds of AMSET and Texas Energy Museum.

Children and their families are invited to create ornaments for the Downtown Museums' Holiday Tree and to take home. Santa will reserve that date to meet children. The United States Postal Service will be on hand to help children mail their letters to Santa at the North Pole.

There will be cookies to decorate and glitter to be

applied all before the tree is lit at 5:45 p.m. in the evening.

For more information, call 409-832-3432.

The **STARK MUSEUM OF ART** is hosting its holiday-themed exhibition **MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS: FROM THE STARK COLLECTIONS**. The exhibit is on view through Feb. 25.

This exhibition features four Books of Hours from the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Each is open to a page of glorious hand-painted illuminations on view to the public for the first time.

The Books of Hours in this exhibition provide a view into a world of the past. These prayer books especially highlight two aspects of medieval life: the significant role of the Church and religion in European life and the cultural interest in objects of beauty. The books are filled with devotional imagery and scenes from the Christmas story, including the Adoration of the Magi. French, Dutch and Flemish artists painted the illustrations in the books with precious materials creating works of art rich in decorative detail.

The exhibition explores the process of making a manuscript with a display of the types of materials used and descriptions of the methods. Visitors can view samples of parchment material used for the books' pages, the expensive mineral lapis lazuli that was used for blue paint, and the gold leaf used to create the luminous effects. The exhibition displays the tools used for writing in the Middle Ages and shows how medieval books were constructed. Medieval Manuscripts includes an educational area with hands-on activities especially for children and an interactive

RECENT ART STUDIO NEW OR RENEWING MEMBERS

Evie Atkins
Richard & Sandra Laurette
Chrissie Leigh Mouton

viewing station with digital images of additional manuscript pages.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Museum has designed a collectible Christmas ornament that reproduces the exhibition's signature image, the Adoration of the Magi from a French Book of Hours. The ornament is available for purchase at the Museum.

"We invite the public to experience these wonderful treasures from a past age. The exhibition is also enhanced by modern technology with a tablet computer station that the visitor can use to simulate turning the pages in the Books of Hours to see other illuminations," said Sarah Boehme, museum director.

The Museum will have additional programming in relation to the exhibition on Dec. 13 and 15, from 5 to 8 p.m. The Museum will also be open on Sunday,

Located at 712 Green Avenue in Orange, Texas, the Stark Museum of Art is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Admission is free for all ages. Group tours are available by appointment.

For more information, call 409.886.ARTS (2787) or visit www.starkmuseum.org.

Four students will present their work at the Lamar University Senior Thesis Exhibition, opening Dec. 2, 7-9 p.m. in the Dishman Art Museum.

This year's exhibit comprises four graphic designers — Chelsea Willis of Batson, Will Schlesener of Bridge City, Tracey Baxley of Silsbee, and Jeremy Hobbs of Vidor.

The exhibition provides the students with a chance to show off their work and explain the ideas behind their pieces. Students are required to produce a minimum of eight pieces to be displayed at the show.

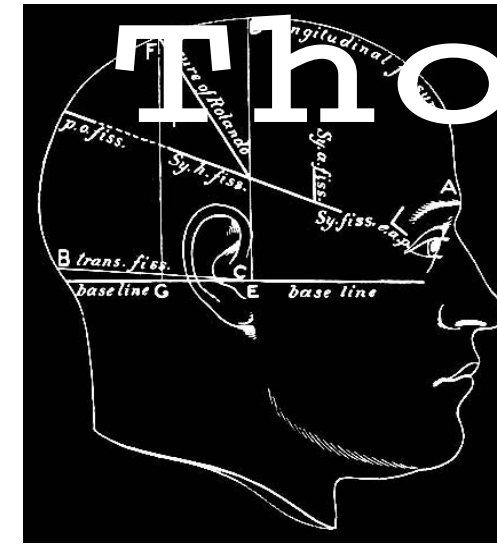
"I'm illustrating a book and I'm going to be using my multiple illustrations to choose my eight frames from," Baxley said.

Willis' collection will showcase food safety on both a social and cultural level.

Schlesener's project focuses on the negative effects of anabolic steroid use on the human body. He says his work tends to focus on still lives and drawings he has made from his own observations.

Hobbs' thesis, titled "Wander World," is a brand-identity project involving a series of video games released between 1987-2011. By studying packages, advertising and other related materials, Hobbs created four package designs for different games, as well as print ads for the games.

The Dishman is located on the campus of Lamar University.



Thoughtcrime

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I am a free soul.

I trail the heights with my wings

I perch on the highest mountain top

I fly.

The people beneath my shadow laugh;

They ridicule my flight.

They, with their stunted limbs

of drudgery and class

Ostriches, in their ignorance and contempt,

pecking for crumbs of mediocrity

in a world of strait-jacketed conformity.

But I

I-

I-

I feast on Liberty.

Rocio Rueda.

Tempus Interulus

I have a little problem

with calendars and clocks.

They're always changing places

like my underwear and socks,

which, by the way, you see, I say

what's early done is best.

So that is why I try them on

before I'm fully dressed.

But getting back to tics and tocs

and dates long overdue,

whenever I am ready to

do whatever I need do,

such as write a silly, little poem

like this for a little, silly you,

I find I haven't got the time,

and now is rather late, too.

Jesse Doiron

Restraint on Freedom

Glued into a not quite home

My growing skin and rotting mind

Freeze in the stale heat of chatting entities

Vultures circle under overcast sky

Unseen outside my box

But not unheard

A sigh is my only defense

A ward - warding off an invisible enemy

Lost laying still in backward thought and forward flow

Lost laying still in forward thought and backward flow

Lost laying still, eluded by flow

Cynthia Perkins

Corrupted

It will all be over soon...

Open the mouth and let the hate slide in

Devour the contents like the strongest acid

Turn the pure soul into a cantankerous soul

Open the mouth and let the hate slide in

Swallow it down; shudder and laugh

Turn the pure soul into a cantankerous soul

The corrupted shall inherit the earth

Swallow it down; shudder and laugh

Turn the insides black

The corrupted shall inherit the earth

Turn everything black

Turn the insides black

Turn everything black

The city begins to burn as the corrupt tune their fiddles

It will all be over soon...

Bethany Eldred

Subtle Casualties

I remember the day this ghost was born —

The man who drowned in aquatic eyes

Frozen in time beneath glacial gestures,

Celestial skin that cradled me into the oblivion,

A life that haunts the dead

like memories plague the mind,

Her light stifled by shadows

of scavenger's wings.

So willing was I to follow death

Without the power to make this zombie stay.

Andrew Strange

On Chagall's Lovers

they seem to fly so easily

twisting in the swirling wind

buffeted by invisible currents

that bend the stars to their will

linked hand in hand over the city

the lights twinkling

while lives carry on below

not knowing the lovers are above

lost in each other's eyes

lost in each other's souls

red lips reaching for the kiss

they dance suspended

neither waking

a dream a dream a dream

Andy Coughlan

Chicago

My dreams are here now

these last few nights.

Deeply imbedded in a phantom city

that smells of pizza and corruption.

Our equivalent to Gotham

but without a winged savior in sight.

My sleep is restless and my dreams

are full of snow and wind.

I don't mind though,

being warm is overrated.

Jeff Dixon



Unknown Artist, French, **ADORATION OF THE MAGI** (open book), Book of Hours, Use of Paris, c. 1510, paint, gold and ink on vellum, 6.25 x 4.25 in., Stark Museum of Art, Orange, Texas, 11.900.4.

THEATER from page 7

“We’re trying to get some first-hand experience — what better way to do that than like this? Part of what we want ‘Stage Left’ to be is an actors’ activist group, where they are willing to do every role, not just act. That’s what we are hoping to expand it to, at least,” Whitaker said.

Other crew members for “Brilliant” include set designer Sarah Green, stage manager Maci McFarland and Bethany Eldred, the company’s dramaturge (play researcher).

The team hopes that their audience comes away with a new appreciation for communication and people’s stances on secrecy.

“I want them to be able to reflect on their past and look beyond it,” Hoffman said. “To put it simply, it will

be about how we think about and handle experiences in our lives. I want them to question why they do the things they do, and maybe come up with a new approach (to life) as a result.”

With their graduations looming in the near future, the three thespians are unsure about any long-term plans, but they are certain of one thing.

“We love our art. We love being able to showcase our skill and talent. And we will take this experience away with us — it’s an evolution,” Dupuis said.

The hour-long play will run from Jan. 20 to 22. Friday and Saturday show times are 7:30 p.m and the Sunday show starts at 5 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 at the door. Cash only. Limited seating is available, so please arrive early to reserve your spot.

For more information, contact Whitaker or Dupuis at 474-9187 or 626-1013.



Steven J. Hoffman, Jr., centers, will direct Joseph Whitacker and Bonnie Dupuis in “Brilliant Traces” at The Art Studio, Jan. 20-22.

ISSUE photo by Andy Coughlan

VIEW from page 3

demics. Some state agencies are stacked with conservatives who abuse their power to serve their own agendas and not those of the students or teachers. They are determined to set up public education to fail and then use that to dismantle the entire system.

Why?

I’m baffled on reasons, but what I see is a division of haves and have nots. The result could be a school that could easily become a haven for xenophobic parents to shelter their child from the realities of the world and continue to propagate their own limited

view of knowledge, contrary to scientific evidence, historical fact or mathematical truths. All schools need art as a building block to the learning experience, and organizations like TASI, AMSET, BAL and others are on the frontline to provide children the arts education they need to be better students, dynamic inventors and greater citizens.

This is a time when these organizations can step up and offer the arts outside of schools and give these children the tools to learn and develop to the best of their abilities. We are not out to make your children artists, but the practice of the arts of any sort throughout one’s life is a pleasure and a blessing. It is what separates us from the other animals.



Mission Statement

Founded in 1983, The Art Studio, Inc. is devoted to: providing opportunities for interaction between the public and the Southeast Texas community of artists; furnishing affordable studio space to originating artists of every medium; promoting cultural growth and diversity of all art forms in Southeast Texas; and providing art educational opportunities to everyone, of every age, regardless of income level, race, national origin, sex or religion.

PURPOSE

The purpose of The Art Studio, Inc. is to (1) provide educational opportunities between the general public and the community of artists and (2) to offer sustained support for the artist by operating a non-profit cooperative to provide studio space and exhibition space to working artists and crafts people, and to provide an area for group work sessions for those artists and crafts people to jointly offer their labor, ideas, and enthusiasm to each other.

GOALS

1. To present public exhibitions
2. To provide educational opportunities
3. To provide accessible equipment for artists
4. To provide peer feedback through association with other artists and crafts people

OBJECTIVES

1. To present 10 art exhibitions per year
2. To maintain equipment for artists in a safe working environment
3. To provide better access to artists for the public
4. To offer regularly scheduled adult and children’s classes
5. To develop and maintain public activities with all sectors of the community
6. To develop and maintain equipment to aid artists in their work
7. To provide a display retail outlet for artists
8. To expand programming and activities with increased facility space

SOUTHEAST TEXAS

ARTS COUNCIL

This project is funded in part by the Texas Commission on the Arts, Dishman Trust, Entergy, HEB, and the Vic Rogers Foundation through the Southeast Texas Arts Council

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Art Studio is looking for energetic people who have a few hours a month to help us in the following areas:

**OFFICE SUPPORT • BUILDINGS & GROUNDS
 SPECIAL EVENTS • MAILOUTS**

If you are interested in one or more of these opportunities or if you know of anyone who might be, give us a call at 409-838-5393



WE WANT YOU FOR BAND NITE

Hear original music by local musicians at



For upcoming gigs, visit the studio’s facebook page

\$5 admission

All ages welcome • 21 and up BYOB and have your ID.

Class Search.com





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Beaumont, TX

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

INSIDE

- **ABOMINABLE SNOW BALL**
- **THOUGHTCRIME: MUSINGS FROM AREA POETS**
- **BYZANTINE ICONS**
- **GEEKS GIFT GUIDE**

ISSUE

When you support The Art Studio with your membership, you receive ISSUE, Southeast Texas' and Southwest Louisiana's alternative press as well as class schedules, invitations to opening receptions and various Studio functions.

Volunteers

These people are the life blood of our organization. WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU! To volunteer, drop by The Art Studio, Inc., or call 409-838-5393.

- Bryan Castino
- April Ringland
- Heather & Adam Butler
- Andy Ledesma
- Rhonda Rodman
- Sue Wright
- Cyndi Grimes
- Rhonda McNally
- Andy Coughlan
- Olivia Busceme
- Greg Busceme, Jr.
- Brianna Grice
- Ben Jennings
- Jordan Johnston
- Beth Gallaspy
- Kimberly Brown
- Kim McGlothlin
- Elizabeth Pearson
- John Roberts
- Philip Grice
- Beau Dumesnil
- Karen Dumesnil
- Sheila Busceme
- Kailee Viator
- Haley Bruyn
- Bryan LaVergne

**JOIN US
FOR ART OPENINGS ON
THE FIRST SATURDAY
OF THE MONTH**

**THIS MONTH:
HOLIDAY
SHOP-O-RAMA
EXTRAVAGANZA**

DECEMBER 3
GALLERY RECEPTION IS 7-10 P.M.



**SOUTHEAST
TEXAS**



COUNCIL

This project is funded in part by the Texas Commission on the Arts, Dishman Trust, Entergy, HEB, and the Vic Rogers Foundation through the Southeast Texas Arts Council

THE ART STUDIO INC. ISSUE DISTRIBUTION POINTS

DOWNTOWN

THE ART STUDIO, INC.	720 FRANKLIN
ART MUSEUM OF SOUTHEAST TEXAS	500 MAIN
BABE DIDRIKSON ZAHARIAS MUSEUM	1750 IH-10E
BEAUMONT CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU	801 MAIN
(IN CITY HALL)	
BEAUMONT ART LEAGUE (FAIRGROUNDS)	2675 GULF ST
BOOK BAZAAR	1445 CALDER
THE CAFE	730 LIBERTY
CAVE INTERIORS	1425 CALDER
JERUSALEM HOOKAH CAFE	3035 COLLEGE
NEW YORK PIZZA & PASTA	790 NECHES
ONLY ONE VASES	1455 CALDER
SETAC	701 NORTH STREET, STE. 1
TEXAS ENERGY MUSEUM	600 MAIN

SOUTH END/LAMAR UNIVERSITY

CARLITO'S RESTAURANT	890 AMARILLO @ COLLEGE
DOS AMIGAS	1590 FRANKLIN
LU ART DEPARTMENT	DISHMAN ART MUSEUM

OLD TOWN

HAIRY BUSINESS SALON	2121 MCFADDIN
JASON'S DELI	112 GATEWAY SHOP CNTR
JEFFERSON CO. DEMOCRATIC PARTY OFFICE	CALDER
KATHARINE & CO.	1495 CALDER
RAO'S BAKERY	2596 CALDER
SIGN INTERNATIONAL EXPRESS	2835 LAUREL
SUNRISE	2425 S 11TH
SWICEGOOD MUSIC CO.	3685 COLLEGE
THE TATTERED SUITCASE	2590 CALDER

CENTRAL/WEST END

BASIC FOODS	229 DOWLEN
BEAUMONT VISITORS BUREAU	IH-10
CHRISTIAN MYERS-RMT	6755 PHELAN BLVD 24E
COLORADO CANYON	6119 FOLSOM
GUITAR & BANJO STUDIO	4381 CALDER
LOGON CAFE	3805 CALDER
THE MESSAGE INSTITUTE	2855 EASTEX FRWY, SUITE 1
(@ DELAWARE)	

NORTH END CYCLE

PACESETTER	COLONNADE CENTER
QUIZNOS	3939 SUITE 9 DOWLEN
RED B4 BOOKS	4495 CALDER
REED'S LAUNDRY	6025A PHELAN @ PEYTON
STUDIO 77	6372 COLONNADE CENTER
TRENDY'S	5905 PHELAN, STE. E
WEST END MEDICAL PLAZA	2010 DOWLEN
WILSON CHIROPRACTIC	7060 PHELAN BLVD.

PARKDALE

RAO'S BAKERY	4440 DOWLEN
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ORANGE

STARK MUSEUM OF ART	712 GREEN AVE.
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