

## Art Bulletin Vol XCII No. 3 (September 2010)

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### Articles

Aegyptus Redacta: The Egyptian Obelisk in the Augustan Campus Martius

MOLLY SWETNAM-BURLAND

135

The obelisk that stands today in the Piazza Montecitorio in Rome, placed there by Pope Pius VI in 1792, had two previous "lives." Quarried in Aswan, Egypt, it was brought down the Nile and erected in Heliopolis by Psametik

II (r. 594-589 BCE). Nearly six hundred years later, it was shipped to Rome

and set in the Campus Martius in 10 BCE by Augustus. Each act of appropriation

added another layer of meaning to the monument, and it is through awareness of these "first lives" that we arrive at a fuller understanding of its later reuse and display.

Circles of Creation: The Invention of Maya Cartography in Early Colonial Yucatán

AMARA L. SOLARI

154

With the colonization of the American continents in the early sixteenth century, cartography emerged as a visual medium through which diverse colonial actors asserted corporate identities. Given the novelty of this pictorial genre, the Maya of the Yucatán Peninsula effectively invented a cartographic tradition, using a seemingly benign compositional form, the circle. This was no arbitrary choice; native artist-scribes derived this composition from literary tropes found in pre-Columbian cosmogonic narratives. As such, colonial Maya maps inhabited the conflictual domain of colonial interaction, overtly satisfying Spanish dictates while allowing

Maya communities to maintain their identity amid the violence of colonization.

Material Futures: Reproducing Revolution in P.-L. Debucourt's Almanach National

RICHARD TAWS

169

Philibert-Louis Debucourt's 1790 Almanach national, intended to serve as a frame for a pasted calendar for the subsequent year, is a unique combination of allegory and everyday scene. Dominated by a bas-relief representing the National Assembly, the image presents responses to the French Revolution organized in terms of race, age, and social class and features a singular representation of a female newspaper vendor at work. Debucourt's image effectively mobilizes print to conceptualize the reproduction of Revolution across temporal and national boundaries, providing a means of thinking about the relation between Revolutionary time and the materiality of the image.

Giandomenico Tiepolo's Il Mondo Nuovo: Peep Shows and the "Politics of Nostalgia"

DARIUS A. SPIETH

188

What was the historiography of *Il mondo nuovo*, a fresco painted in 1791 by Giandomenico Tiepolo? How did its title emerge? Giandomenico likely found the inspiration for his subject in popular entertainment on Venice's Piazzetta. The houselike structure in the fresco's middle ground—a peep show—had been labeled *il mondo nuovo* by the eighteenth-century playwright Carlo Goldoni. Yet the fresco was not named until after 1906. Art historian Pompeo Molmenti introduced the Goldoni-inspired title, his efforts seconded by Corrado Ricci, a powerful art administrator. Both were steeped in the "politics of nostalgia," associated with the Italian Aesthetic movement.

Rioting Refigured: George Henry Hall and the Picturing of American Political Violence

ROSS BARRETT

211

In 1858, American artist George Henry Hall completed *A Dead Rabbit (Study of the Nude or Study of an Irishman)*, a stunning picture of a working-class Irish rioter. Directly engaging a subject—political violence—that contradicted the orderly imperatives of antebellum aesthetic and democratic theory, Hall undertook a project fraught with risk and difficulty. Reframing the midcentury rioter as an ideal nude, *A Dead Rabbit* seems both to temper and exacerbate the alarming connotations of violent upheaval. Marked by contradiction, the painting offers a unique lens on the broader conflicts and quiet ambivalences that complicated bourgeois responses to antebellum violence.

Ed Ruscha, Pop Art, and Spectatorship in 1960s Los Angeles

KEN D. ALLAN

231

Ed Ruscha's paintings and books of photographs are often interpreted as images of Los Angeles seen through the car windshield or read as billboards and movie screens. An examination of the material and spatial complexities of his work revealed by the viewer's encounter with it as an object illuminates the connection between Ruscha's practice and modes of spectatorship crucial to the art of the 1960s. Ruscha responded to the spatial experience of Los Angeles by experimenting with size and scale in his work in a way that also gives the viewer a new approach to the city itself.

Reviews

Melissa McCormick, Tosa Mitsunobu and the Small Scroll in Medieval Japan

TIMON SCREECH

250

Stuart Lingo, Federico Barocci: Allure and Devotion in Late Renaissance

Painting

CHARLES DEMPSEY

251

Erika Naginski, Sculpture and Enlightenment

SATISH PADIYAR

256

Kaja Silverman, Flesh of My Flesh

KAREN BECKMAN

258

Reviews Online

263

Reference:

TOC: Art Bulletin Vol XCII No. 3 (September 2010). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 5, 2010 (accessed May 6, 2026),

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