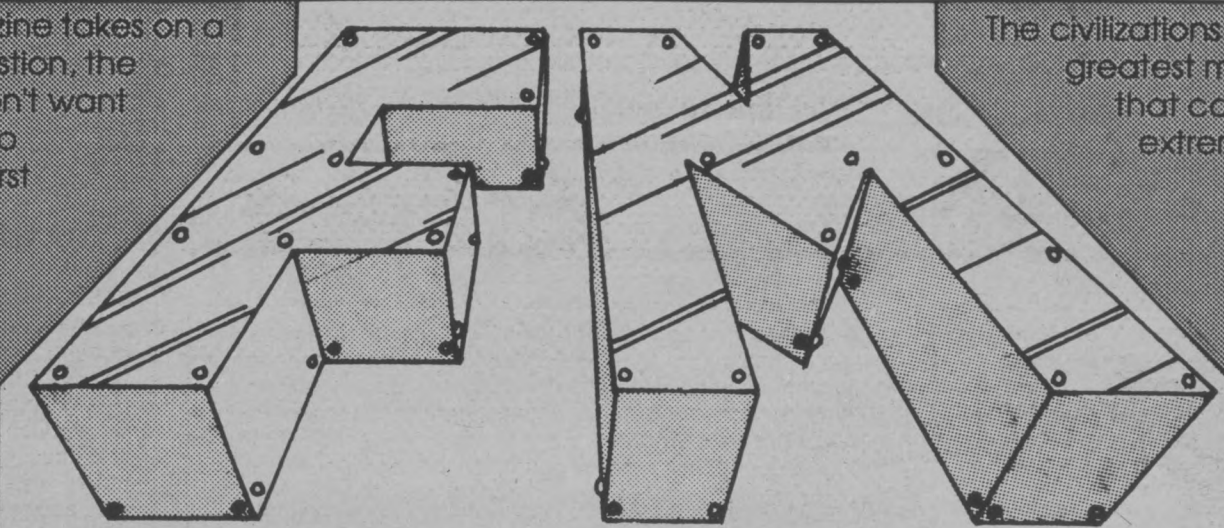


This week, Friday Magazine takes on a particularly difficult question, the nature of Art. But we don't want to ask a question with no purpose, so we pause first to look at how Art relates to life in I.V.

Art transcends nature, taking humanity with it. It helps us to say that we live for more than perpetuation. To say it though, our Art must be inefficient. It must use valuable resources with no tangible benefit to society.

No matter how fancy a spear, if can be used to hunt with, it ain't Art.

Art has to be useless. The more time we spend producing, maintaining, and admiring something with no practical value, the farther we are from the animal realm.



**BOLDLY
GOING WHERE
FOOLS FEAR
TO TREAD**

The civilizations that have achieved the greatest mark on history are those that carried this principle to the extreme. Using enormous amounts of labor with no benefit to the masses produced the wonders of the ancient world.

Isla Vista could be next.

We have rejected oil wells, state water, and the Bank of America. If we keep pushing, we could be a great one.

To cross that line, we need a type of Art focused on our most precious resource. Water.

Fountains are good, fake streams are cool, pools have a place.

But none of that will get us into history.

Desalination is not Art.

Resalination is Art. We should spend lots of money, resalinate all our water, import State Water just to make it unfit for human consumption.

What Is Art?

My date said that we would finally see Art. Art? I said, Art who? Fortunately, my stake in the relationship at that point was only 32 dollars and 47 cents (counting Certs). Unfortunately, I was stuck there for the evening. Even worse, she thought I was still capable of being educated about "Art."

This guy came out in his underwear, and started turning circles slowly in the middle of the floor. My date sighed, I asked her if I should take my pants off. She said, "you have to understand why his pants are off. It's art."

"Why," I said, "are his pants off?" I'm sure that she was about to explain it lucidly when the guy started sipping something blue out of a glass and spitting it at the front row.

"Did they pay extra for those seats?" I asked, intelligently noting that the people sat in their seats without acknowledging that someone had just spit blue stuff all over them.

My date looked at me with what I could swear was pity, and said, "Why do you keep closing yourself off from the experience?"

So I asked myself, "Self? Why are you closing yourself off from the spraying blue stuff?" No answer seemed to come, at least not before this guy walked right up to me, picked up my hand and said, "Come."

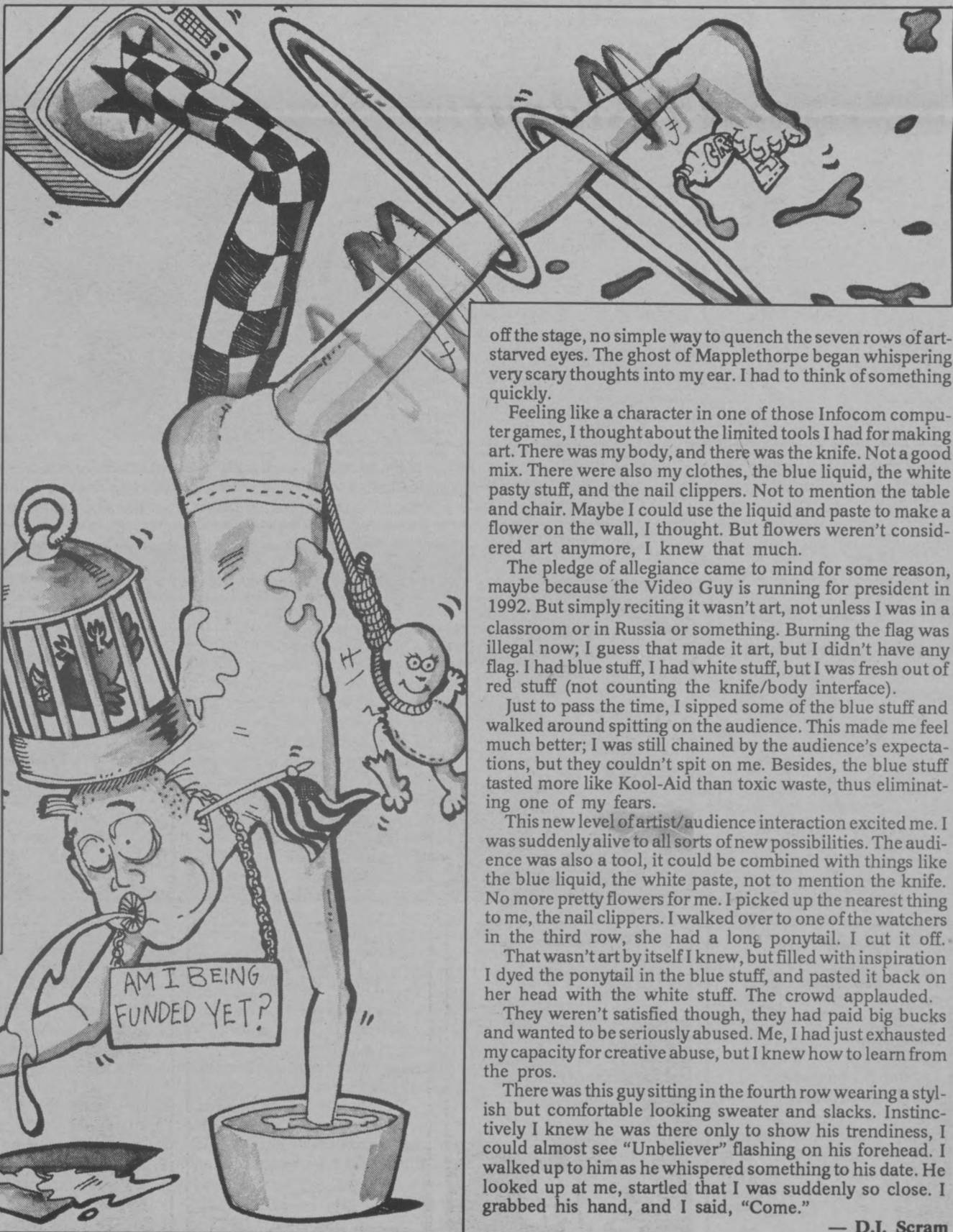
I must have had a neon-flashing "Unbeliever" sign on my forehead, the guy had to walk back through seven rows of aging hippies, trendy yuppies and new-age starlets, all sitting on folding chairs that had "The New Marchers of Zion Baptist Church" stenciled on the back. I couldn't stop myself from standing up and following him. I barely resisted the urge to strip down to my skivvies on the way up to the stage.

If art involves fear, I was getting pretty damn close. If art could be described as an acute feeling of embarrassment, coupled with a head-compressing, vision-fogging, near-faint feeling of confusion, I was there.

On the stage was a table and one chair. On the chair, oddly enough, was stenciled "The Firm Foundation Lutherans." On the table was a jar filled with something white and pasty, a bottle filled with the blue liquid, two wet looking cloths, a pair of small nail clippers, and a very long knife. The experience of art was beginning to look very ominous.

"We're waiting," he said. I realized that everyone was looking at me. They wanted something from me, expected me to react somehow. I didn't know how. For a moment, I seriously considered using the knife to cut off my finger, just to satisfy the staring eyes. But I knew that would be too obvious for art.

I knew from the "Sam Shepard" date that Art was this horrible driving force that made artists into drug-crazed, broken slaves. In view of this, I knew there was no easy way



off the stage, no simple way to quench the seven rows of art-starved eyes. The ghost of Mapplethorpe began whispering very scary thoughts into my ear. I had to think of something quickly.

Feeling like a character in one of those Infocom computer games, I thought about the limited tools I had for making art. There was my body, and there was the knife. Not a good mix. There were also my clothes, the blue liquid, the white pasty stuff, and the nail clippers. Not to mention the table and chair. Maybe I could use the liquid and paste to make a flower on the wall, I thought. But flowers weren't considered art anymore, I knew that much.

The pledge of allegiance came to mind for some reason, maybe because the Video Guy is running for president in 1992. But simply reciting it wasn't art, not unless I was in a classroom or in Russia or something. Burning the flag was illegal now; I guess that made it art, but I didn't have any flag. I had blue stuff, I had white stuff, but I was fresh out of red stuff (not counting the knife/body interface).

Just to pass the time, I sipped some of the blue stuff and walked around spitting on the audience. This made me feel much better; I was still chained by the audience's expectations, but they couldn't spit on me. Besides, the blue stuff tasted more like Kool-Aid than toxic waste, thus eliminating one of my fears.

This new level of artist/audience interaction excited me. I was suddenly alive to all sorts of new possibilities. The audience was also a tool, it could be combined with things like the blue liquid, the white paste, not to mention the knife. No more pretty flowers for me. I picked up the nearest thing to me, the nail clippers. I walked over to one of the watchers in the third row, she had a long ponytail. I cut it off.

That wasn't art by itself I knew, but filled with inspiration I dyed the ponytail in the blue stuff, and pasted it back on her head with the white stuff. The crowd applauded.

They weren't satisfied though, they had paid big bucks and wanted to be seriously abused. Me, I had just exhausted my capacity for creative abuse, but I knew how to learn from the pros.

There was this guy sitting in the fourth row wearing a stylish but comfortable looking sweater and slacks. Instinctively I knew he was there only to show his trendiness, I could almost see "Unbeliever" flashing on his forehead. I walked up to him as he whispered something to his date. He looked up at me, startled that I was suddenly so close. I grabbed his hand, and I said, "Come."

— D.J. Scram

Defining Art: Connotatively

Art, real art that is, needs to be concerned with something universal, something deep, something which takes the human spirit, strips it from its everyday activity and exposes it to our senses. Maybe that's why flowers are out. Used to be that flowers were part of the human soul, but they have been replaced with fish.

Fish is Art.

Art could also be described as a yearning of the soul for something beyond itself, something grander, deeper, more powerful; something like Campbell's soup.

Soup is Art.

Some people believe that art is pain. Humankind's inhumanity to other humans produces the tension which gives birth to all art. Art tries to make sense out of things like torture, mutilation, death, destruction, genocide and the IRS.

Ugly is Art.

On the other hand, art might be a deep-rooted harmony between things apparently unconnected in life. Meaning is produced by highlighting these associations. Pairs of things can be juxtaposed in art to show their secret relationship, such as Death and Birth, War and Peace, Fear and Faith, Bread and Water.

Soggy bread is Art.

Art could also be a summation of reality, a reducing of experience into the simplest symbols available. Art can take the sum of a wrenching, drawn out experience such as losing a relationship or dying of cancer, and symbolize the whole thing with a life-sized Burton drawing.

Burton is Art.

Of course, Art might be that guy down at the used car lot who said the thumping noise was the special "super-ruderator," and then after you bought the car, swore that it had purred like a kitten when it left the lot.

Art is Art.

Distorted Art

Even good art simply recreates reality, or some kind of reality (i.e., abstract art: the reality of pretentious confusion/depression). Bear in mind that there's no such thing as good Art if he's selling cars, although he too may be a recreation of reality.

Bear in mind that there will be some measure of distortion in any recreation. Recreational drugs, for instance; talk about distortion! But art, of course, is warped differently. This distortion is a product of personal perception or deception on the part of the artist (or it can mean the purveyor of the art is a miserable artist).

The point is, the presence of subjective enhancement or detraction from reality, ever-present in art, is basically fabrication: lying. We've always known that Art lies, he's not really gonna give you a deal on that lemon! But the most interesting facet of this deception is the reciprocal arrangement: lying is art.

Surely you've met somebody who is an artist of fabrication. Maybe you're dating him/her. Perhaps you've simply sat back in slack-jawed amazement and watched them do their work, oblivious of their identity. Everyone and anyone can be an artist, because everyone's a liar. The truly wonderful artists, however, are those who have perfected lying. Not porn queens, I'm talking gurus of deception.

Take the conversation I observed the other day while dining at Blue Dolphin. This couple, obviously boyfriend/girlfriend, was engaged in a heart to heart. Observe: Girlfriend: (taking boy's hand, gazing into his eyes) "Oh Tom! You know how much I care about you." (Note: puts boyfriend on his heels, warms his heart, nevertheless leaving him with a grim sense of foreboding.) "But I can't lie to you." (Oh yes she can, Tommy ol' boy! Note the brilliant use of alleged honesty to make it seem like liar is doing victim a favor.) "I'm just so confused." (With downcast eyes, she squeezes the hand, drawing a groan of pity from stupid boyfriend.)

Boyfriend: (with concern) "What are we going to do?" Girlfriend: (looking up slowly) "You know I care about you more than any other person I've ever met! I don't know what I'd do without you! (hyperbolic emotion/ego jerking; dangerous, but if used properly, a Monet of lying can result) But... things are just so crazy at home now, and I really feel incapable of dealing with any serious outside concerns...." Boyfriend: (swallowing rising lump of despair) "So that's it?"

Basically Tommy, yes, that's it. However, the girlfriend played her hand beautifully, working up a fitting denouement, leaving Tom with the vague impression that his ex-girlfriend did indeed have to dump him, but that she really loved him and they might get back together.

This same scene could be played out with the sexes reversed, and often is. However, many guys just don't have that integral characteristic so necessary to good relationship-ending lies. Good looks! Actually, guts are the most important quality, the courage to look in someone's eyes and tell him or her a barefaced lie, without flinching.

Really good artists can do it to professors, police, parents, and friends, as well as loved ones.

There's also the fabricated equivalent of a self portrait: lying to oneself. This can be done in the morning while primping, or at night while lying in bed agonizing over unfulfilled duties. Either way, it can reach amazing levels of artistic achievement. It can even lead to

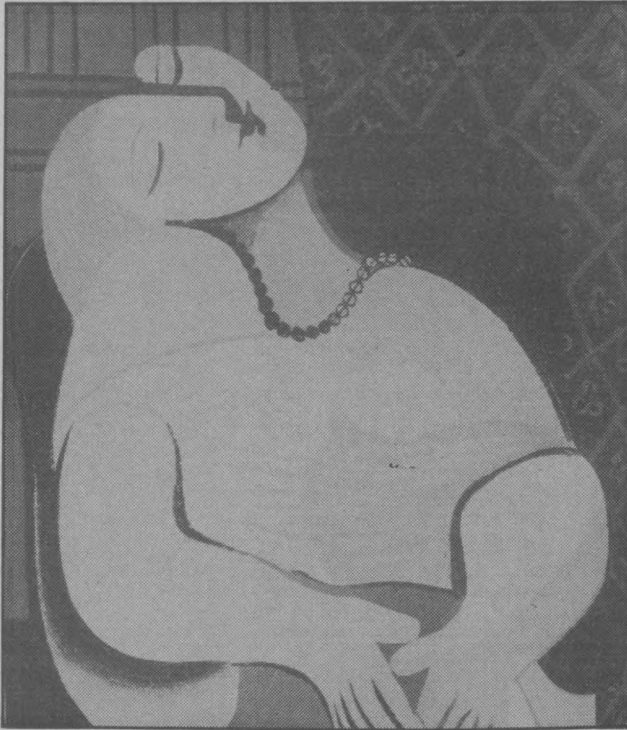
— Maxwell C. Donnelly

The Subliminal Con

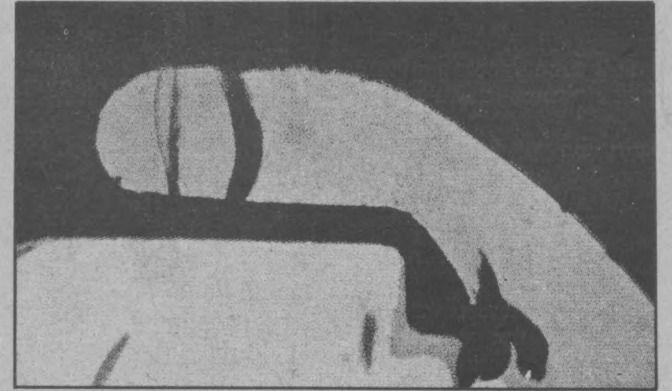
Even though they are among the most powerful of persuaders, subliminal messages have gone unstudied until recent years. Perhaps this is because everybody back then was stupid, but then again, perhaps not.

Subliminal persuasion does work. We've all heard about the studies that scientists did in the 1950s when they showed subliminal pictures of popcorn to the audience in a movie theater. That day, popcorn sales increased over 300 percent as did the sale of cardboard tubs.

Think. If popcorn vendors could use this technique to increase sales, just imagine what the great minds of famous ar-



Since we all know that Picasso was really wacked in the head, it should be no surprise to note what is happening here in his classic portrait, "The Dream."



Picasso's "The Dream" is quite an erotic piece. That is a penis there.

This young woman, presumably sleeping, is depicted as having more fingers than her natural allotment should allow. Considering the placement of her fingers, it does not seem out of line to suggest that her multiple digits connote the movement of her natural ten fingers. Why would she be moving her fingers around? Well, it would all depend on what was on her mind. If you look closely at the blow-up of this painting, you can get a vague idea of what is on her mind: a large penis.

But this revelation is not surprising; Picasso was a card-carrying pervert. To have the same subliminal tactics being used by someone like Norman Rockwell is something entirely different, however....



One of the most beloved of all American artists is Nagel. Norman Rockwell is another. Rockwell's quaint, lifelike style, defined middle-American values and expressed his



The boys actually have loaves of french bread as shoes.

love for the nation.

--Or did they?

A close examination of Rockwell's immortal "A Guiding Hand," shows his deft talent at utilizing images to subliminally change the social climate of the time. If the blow-up of this painting is studied carefully, you will note that the children are not wearing shoes; they are wearing loaves of french bread.

Given Rockwell's famous love for bread and considering the working title for this piece ("Boys With Bread For Shoes"), this interpretation gains credence.

French rolls as feet weren't largely accepted by the public until the mid-1950s, showing once again that Rockwell was far ahead of his time.

Yuppie Finds Love, Life, and A

To talk about Art, one needs to talk about an artist. Or at least someone who has encountered Art. Today we talk about Debbie Essen. A transfer student from the University of the Bubonic Plague in Lynchburg, Virginia, she is a senior here at UCSB. Debbie comes from a wealthy Virginian family and can trace her roots back to the days when her ancestors were the overseers of the slaves of George Washington.

Her family's interests in colonial agricultural technology, lifted them from humble beginnings and made them one of the most influential families in the old days of the Virginia Dynasty, a period in American history when only planters from Virginia could be president. "My Grandmother told me," Debbie says, "in those days as a planter, you could move up the social and political ladder much quicker if you knocked out your own teeth and wore false teeth made of hickory wood — hickory wood false teeth was key!"

Deb's unique American heritage did not prevent her from traveling the world and learning about other cultures. Her determination coupled with vast amounts of money sent her to the Far East, to Tibet, and it was there that she was enriched by Art.

"It was my father who sparked my interest in Tibet," says Essen. Indeed, Debbie's father, a critic and Editor In Chief of Re-

tractable Table Magazine, had financial interests in the Far East. As a member of a consortium which sold retractable tables to Singapore, Debbie's father's Oriental interests had an influence on her. So, on a whim, she chose Tibet, which, as she puts it, was "close enough" to Singapore.

Of the estimated 1,970,000 inhabitants of Tibet, it was the 32 farmer poets, living near Byang-Thang and the Kunlun Mountains — if indeed it is possible to live near them both at the same time — who sparked, young Debbie's interest. "I heard about the people called 'Mdzo-mo' from a Buddhist male exotic dancer while I was taking a bath," says Debbie. "He led me to their small village and I was enchanted by their way of life."

Debbie refers to these people as the "Yak Dirt Farmers of Tibet." A people who herd wild Yaks into a secret place in the mountains. At this place, the Yaks trample on soil that the farmers consider sacred. After a period of time they strip mine the soil with huge, 36-ton "earth movers," and pack the dirt into thousands of bags to be sold in the city.

According to Debbie, "the townsfolk surrounding the village buy the soil from the farmers but the farmers must purchase diesel fuel from the townsfolk in order to run the earth movers.."



Content Of Great Art

tists could have done if they knew the secret of subliminal persuasion. In truth, they did.

Artists are trained to make every color choice, every brush stroke, every single detail of their work, add to the total effect. This talent is so similar to subliminal persuasion that, often times, the line between them becomes blurred.

The following is a brief study of the use of subliminal messages in art. It is not meant to be a total, or all-encompassing treatise on the subject, but merely a primer. It is intended to open the public's eyes to what is really happening in great art, so they may look upon it with greater clarity. Thank you.



Leonardo's classic "Mona Lisa" may be the most closely studied artwork of all time. The main point of debate among art critics has been the question of why she is smiling.

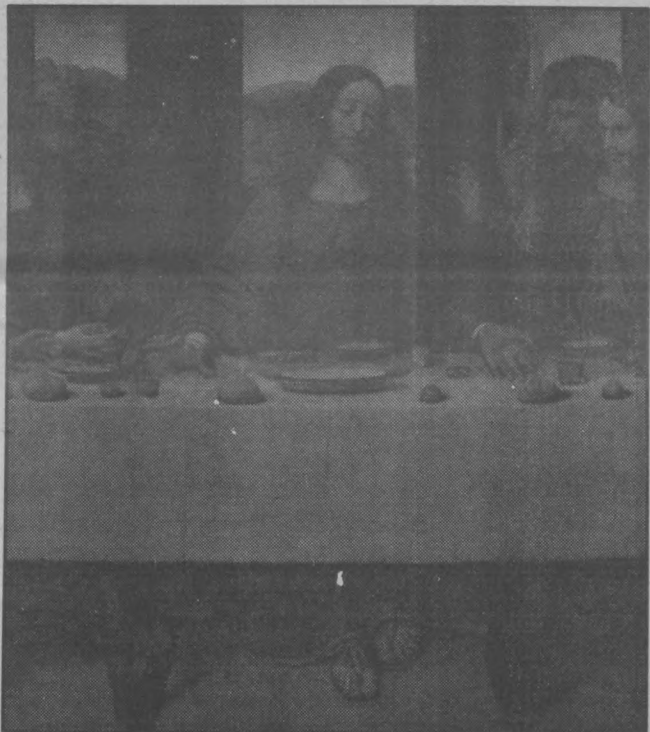


The presence of Don Rickles, as shown here reflecting in her eyes, was the cause of Mona Lisa's smile.

Using state of the art, computer-aided restoration, a small but diligent group of art historians at Chico State University believes it has settled the dispute once and for all.

The team has noted that its computer-aided magnifications of the work clearly reveal the appearance of Don Rickles reflected in the Mona Lisa's pupils.

Further research by the team has revealed that the source of the Mona Lisa's smile is connected to a specific incident in which Don Rickles, who was present during most of the modeling sessions, referred to Leonardo as "hockey puck."



Because Leonardo didn't use top-of-the-line paint supplies, his paintings are beginning to flake and decay, not even 400 years after they were finished. But thanks to the



New computer enhanced version.

hard-working team of art historians at Chico State University's art restoration lab, we have a better understanding of what Leonardo was trying to do with his popular "Last Supper" painting.

They have improved the image so greatly that it is quite apparent — after viewing the blow-up — that Judas Ascariot is giving Jesus "bunny ears."

The obvious religious symbolism need not be discussed. What is essential here is that in Leonardo's attempt to bring these deified people (the disciples) down to a real, human level, he inadvertently created a cultural monster. He subliminally started the playful, yet extremely annoying, "bunny ears" trend, carried on today by most every jerk in the world, from "Scary Gary" in the fourth grade to "Tricky Dick" Nixon.

Defining Art: Denotatively

Not Art

A can of split pea soup

Plastic garbage bags float- ing in the ocean.

A half folded Playboy cen- terfold, hanging by one thumbtack on the wall.

The A.S. Wave

Mike Stowers in a stylish but comfortable sweater and slacks.

College freshmen throwing up on Del Playa.

Three year old broken plates

Computer animation

Sexually explicit pictures

Rusting pieces of metal

Penthouse letters

Hunger

Anything on a bumper sticker

Musicians with long stringy hair.

Guys in uniforms

Gratuitous nudity in Hollywood films.

Art

A can that looks exactly like split pea soup but is actually filled with moldy bread crumbs.

Huge sheets of pink plastic floating around an island.

A Playboy centerfold, cut into three pieces and taped at odd angles.

Friday Magazine

Mike Stowers in loose baggy neon green pants and a plaid tank-top.

Chris Burden throwing up on the United State/ Mexican border.

2,000 year old broken plates.

Computer screen savers

Sexually explicit statues

Rusting bent pieces of metal

Charles Bukowski

Hunger with a cause

Anything on a T-shirt

Dead musicians with long stringy hair.

Women in uniforms

Gratuitous nudity in films with subtitles.

Conservatives Consider Art

All you artsy types who complain about our moral values need to realize that American art belongs to the God-fearing taxpayers. To quiet all you rabble rousers, I've personally thrown together a little shopping list you can adhere to if you want American green.

You Can't Touch This, or what not to include in "art"

- There will be no urine, fecal matter or anything that could be interpreted as symbolizing such. That includes lemonade, Gatorade, Mountain Dew, Baby Ruth candy bars, Hamburger Helper (or any casserole of equally questionable nature), burrito filling, or any open-faced Sloppy Joe or any other manwich.
- If its got a penis, especially one that is hairless and/or uncircumcised, I ain't havin' it.
- There will be no surrealism, minimalism, or any of that other non-objective pseudo-art. If I don't get it, forget it. Nobody, I mean nobody, is making a fool out of me by trying to sneak pornography-in-disguise past me. Make it clear or you're out on your ear, sonny.
- If you have ever shot yourself in the arm or masturbated beneath gallery floorboards before, under the thin guise of art, don't even think about sneaking it past us in the future.
- If I want cubism, I'll get my little boy Wagner to make me something out of some Lincoln Logs. Now that's art! None of this silly stuff that wastes a lot of paint to make everything look like a bunch of rooftops and shoe boxes and other tomfoolery. On that, I say phooey.
- If I don't see trees and valleys and schoolhouses and MacIntosh apples, you had better be painting portraits of old Mother Hubbard-types. I don't want to look at a bunch of ugly people running around doing ugly stuff; I get enough of that at work. They had better look pretty, because if they don't, then you may be in deep poop.
- I want to see All-American scenes: boys firmly tightening up their Cub Scout tie clips, little girls sipping root beer floats in a friendly ice cream parlour setting, a young lad gleefully frolicking in a grassy field, a playful puppy nipping at his heels ... Norman Rockwell kind of stuff. There will be no morally divergent "art" dealing with horrible issues such as racism, sexism, or anything else I can think of. The only human/animal interaction I want to see is a happy hiker with his trusty hound enjoying all that nature has to offer.
- In short, I want to see art that makes me happy, that makes me marvel at the wonders of democracy and boyhood, baseball and Cub Scouts, cotton candy and Oscar Meyer. And if you don't like it, well, nanny nanny billygoats, because I'm the man with the answers. If you don't like these simple guidelines, then starve.

— Bryan Wilhite

Art Among Tibetan Dirt Farmers



MOISH Daily Nexus

Debbie was fortunate to record many of the poems of these people. She will soon be publishing a book of poems translated from whatever language the Yak Dirt Farmers speak, into English. She insisted that we print some of her favorites:

After I Eat My Yak Dirt Soup

Maiden, 300-pound maiden
Be my wipe
I wish my tongue was so big
So I could lick your whole body
In just one swipe
Yak, Beloved Yak

Large Yak Bull

Heights of 1.8 metres
Exclamations! That is tall!
Mating takes place in winter
Eat snow for water
Let me get out of your way
Before you trample me over

The Warmth of the Yak

Yak, I keep warm
By your dried dung fire
I drink your thick milk
I long for a 300-pound woman
that I may share the joy of your luxuries

One of the most interesting characteristics of these people is their fondness for 300-pound women. According to Debbie, "It's not just an obese woman that is attractive to the men of this community. It is the actual weight that is appealing: they must be exactly 300 pounds — it's strange because it's not an integer in metric units of measurement — for reasons unknown to me." The method of weighing the women, at their marriageable age of eighteen years, is by comparing their weight to the 300-pound "mother superior."

"The mother superior," according to Debbie, "is kept on a strict diet by yak dirt farmer Buddhist monks." The monks transport the woman by truck into the city to be weighed. Before Chinese modernization, the standard was two or three yak calves. The exactness of the modern measuring tools makes life much harder for the "mother superior." Debbie reports that, "the men are now known to starve or force feed the women so that they may meet the exactness of the modern scales, in the old days the farmers weren't so strict."

Debbie Essen has truly opened the doors to a strange and fascinating subculture of Tibet. She says her book of Yak Dirt Farmer poetry is due to come out in March of next year.



If This Is Art, Take Me Too

Art. It ain't easy to define.

Plato said that it's the activity or object of any making or doing controlled by the movement down from theory to practice, and contrasting with the upward movement toward theory.

Uh, yeah, that's what I think too. But not everyone's as enlightened as me and Mr. P., and in recent years, the trend has been for art to be whatever you can get away with.

So in fairness to others, let's take a look at alternative definitions of that enigmatic something we call art.

As if Andy Warhol wasn't artsy enough, now his brother Hank is making bank by taking chickens, dipping their feet in paint, and having them hop (or whatever it is chickens do) around on canvasses. With the results being purchased for upwards of \$10,000, apparently others find this poultry painting performance art. So yes, chicken feet are art!

There's a woman out there, I don't know her name, I don't know where she lives, but she's out there and she's a performance artist, too. The things she does, well let's just say they're interesting. We're not talking spoken word/body movement stuff here; this is serious. I won't beat around the bush: she puts things in her body. Like yams and bottles and lightbulbs. And not in her mouth, ears, nose or other traditional orifices. Get the picture?

Pleasant, no. Art? Yes!!

Now what about this whole "Modern Primitives" deal? Maybe you've seen it on someone's coffee table. It's a collection of photos of people who have mutilated their body parts in fun and creative ways. There are the mandatory lip, nose and nipple piercing shots, of course, but the cleverly severed penis is sure to be a favorite.

Art? You bet!

Sure it's strange, but it just goes to show you that art is what you think it is. Chicken feet, painful insertions and mutilation all qualify. And people get paid for the stuff! So if any interested curators are out there, I do this little number with a pack of Rolos, a box of tooth picks and a can of WD-40 that'll just knock you out. Trust me, you'll love it.

— B.J. Sullivan

New In Isla Vista!

Only Reclaimed
Water in the
Kitchen!

Coffee Made
Fresh With
Gray Water!



Our cups and plates bio-degrade
While You Wait!

On the Corner of Pardall and Del Playa
Earth Day Cafe!

Video Guy's Art (By Courtesy of Artsweek and Troma Video)

Art. Let's do Art! Art-Art-Bo-Bart, Banana-Fana-Fo-Fart, Me-My-Mo-Mart, ART! What is Art?

True, The Name Game is Art, in its most esoteric form. I, The Video Guy, know this. You see, being an open-minded Video Guy, lots of junk is Art to me. Beer, really great beer, like Keystone, is Art. Scantly-clad Germanic Babes named after Hamburger Helper flavor are Art. My 1992 presidential campaign is Art. Homer and Marge Simpson's eldest male child is Bart. Napoleon's last name is Bonaparte. A really bad car made by Dodge is Dart. Chopping up vegetables is done more easily with a Cuisinart. A word that doesn't exist is Sclart. If you go to the SuperMart, you use a shopping cart. MOST IMPORTANTLY, EVERY VIDEO I LAY MY VIRTUAL REALITY GOGGLE-CLAD EYES UPON, IS ART.

Take, for example, "The Toxic Avenger." Pure, Polyunsaturated Art. Note the subtle "Jouier de Vivre" as our hero sticks a shake mixer, along with ample ice cream and chocolate, down an evil bad guy's throat. Tingle with artistic pleasure as blood mixes with ice cream, blossoming in a compodaning glow of reddish, whitish pink. Quite simply, this is "Coup de Ville," in its finest form.

Or how about "Schoolgirls in Chains?" Of course you all recall that magic scene when one of the chained school girls is stabbed in the derriere with a rusty nail. You wince with a scatological pain as you notice the look of "calamari de jour" on her schoolgirl face. It is all eerily reminiscent of the classic "Gas Pump Girls."

My final example of Art in its most Arthurconandoylian form is "Killer Klowns from Outer Space." I need not cite any specific scene from this onomatopoeia of an epic. I simply have to quote the ancient Greek philosopher, Bactin Hepititus, "Cloraform, Ultimatum Diafram Colisium Calum Asyaseeum Mosilini."

I'm The Video Guy. This is Art. You are reading this. Don't Drive Drunk.

— You Know Who

The Good, Bad, and Ugly Across Time

Art. Art, art, art, art, art. One definition of Webster's (the dictionary, not the cute little guy on TV) is "technical skill often as if aided through magic." Think about it. The funny little guy who made the balloon animals at your fourth-grade birthday party is really the second coming of Picasso. I don't know about you, but I say Webster don't know what's up. I'll tell you what art really is. It's good, it's bad, or it's ugly like a Clint Eastwood movie or a blind date. With that I present a gallery, if you will, of the good, the bad, or the ugly art from the '50s through the '90s. (It is best to read this column with a glass of fine red wine.)

The '50s

The Good

I'd say the best art of the '50s came from Franz Kline. He did these big swashes of black on white canvasses. Either he was trying to communicate the very essence of minimalist movement, or color just messed him up.

The Bad

The worst art of the '50s can be seen in the clip art our very own Nexus uses to fill inconvenient white spaces. You know, everybody's smiling and holding up packages of processed cheese products. I believe this school of art is called "post-modern Velveeta-ism."

The Ugly

My choice for the '50s ugly award goes to Willem de Kooning for his work *Woman 1*. This lady is sooooo ugly that she makes Tammy Fae look like Lisa Bonet. She's worse than the stuff your dog did after eating avocados. She doesn't need a facelift, she needs a face. You get it.

The '60s

The Good

I must say that the best of the '60s is the trippy art movement, otherwise known as "pre-post-oh-dude-did-you-just-see-that?-ism." It still works. Just consume your drug of choice and enjoy works of art that literally jump out at you.

The Bad

The bad has just got to be anything by Warhol. Come on, a painting of 100 Campbell's soup cans? What does that tell me? That I'm hungry? Is it supposed to be new insight on the canned foods section at Vons? I don't get it.

The Ugly

My choice for ugly goes to Richard Linder for his piece *Rock-Rock*. It's a sorta surreal rock guitar player wearing really bad "I'm a rhinestone cowboy" clothes. Looks a little like Keith Richards.

The '70s

The Good

Well, there's just nothing really good about the '70s, is there? Art? Nobody made any.

The Bad

The worst, and I mean the absolute worst, has got to be the work of Christo. What a jerk. He goes to some cocktail parties, tells some rich widows that he's an expert at pulling up the covers, and what do you get? *Valley Curtains*,

where the sweet talker has very artfully blocked the view of a majestic mountain valley with huge drapes. I think he blew up an island for Earth day.

The Ugly

OK, so this guy thinks, "Hey, like, you know, everything's art. You just have to, you know, say it." The artist — Keith Arnatt. The piece — on the wall of a pretigious New York art gallery the words "Keith Arnatt is an Artist." In this case it's the stupidity of the critics, not the art, that is ugly.

The '80s

The Good

The choice for good art of the '80s goes to Hans Haacke for his piece *Creating Consent* which consists of an oil barrel, topped by a TV antenna, and the words "Mobil Oil, We spent \$102 million last year in advertising. We just want to be heard," and the name of Mobil's chair. Still, I wonder why they spend so much when they get free advertising and nice tax breaks for their oil spills. Go figure.

The Bad

The bad goes to Elsworth Kelly for his provocative "Franz Kline-already-did-it-in-the-'50s-but-maybe-no-one-will-remember" rendition of black paint on white canvas, that is oh so imaginatively titled *Black Panel 2*.

The Ugly

This definitely goes to Duane Hanson for his most unusual sculptural creations. They are incredibly lifelike sculptures of mostly fatter, older persons wearing '70s fashion ensembles. They're just ugly, plain and simple, but hey, as the DJ in Saturday Night Fever says, "I like that polyester look!"

The '90s

The Good

OK, I know they haven't really happened yet so I'll tell you what you can look forward to. The best of the '90s will be a school of art called "post-post-post-it-all-over-the-place-ism" It's gonna be about flyers posted as an insight into the natural world's abuses by humanity. The A.S. election posters and Earth Day flyers are samples of the early works.

The Bad

The bad of the '90s will be the ultra minimalistic works by the man with no name. Nobody will know him, nobody will ever see his work, and people will give him no money. It will be rumored that he works at Roma, Pizza Bob's, and The Blue Dolphin, and has a funny haircut.

The Ugly

The ugliest work of the '90s will be sooooo ugly that it's pretty much unprintable, but I will say this... imagine what the funny little clown who made the balloon animals at your fourth-grade birthday party would make if he ate avocados. Enough said.

— Debbie Uriik



MATT SUMNER Daily Nexus

Friday Magazine Staff:

Editor

Daniel H. Jeffers

Production

A. Ali Jeffers

Writers

Todd Francis

Max Donnelly

J. Christaan Whalen

Debbie Uriik

Bryan Wilhite

Ben Sullivan

Video Guy

Illustrators

Todd Francis

Moish

Debbie Uriik

Photographer

Matt Sumner