



Perspectives on Art As a Source of Knowledge

Proceedings of the 2012 Company of Ideas Forum
of The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

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PREFACE

This book is the result of the fifth annual Company of Ideas Forum held at The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park in May 2012.

The Forum was founded on the premise that art acts in the production of knowledge by offering novel perspectives that can form a basis of evolution in thought.

Its purpose has been to reassert the value of art as a source of knowledge.

Over the past five years, the approach to this purpose has been to invite rigorous scholarly examination of Jeffrey Rubinoff's sculpture and the insights he has advanced through The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park.

History of The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

Since the acquisition of the 200-acre property on Hornby Island, British Columbia, Canada, in 1973, Rubinoff has worked towards the creation of a sculpture park for the display of his work in perpetuity. This effort included significant multi-year landscaping projects to reshape the former farm to complement the over 100 pieces of sculpture created during that period.

Almost 30 years later, in 2005, The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park society was officially established with the charitable purpose, "... to advance education in the arts by preserving the sculpture collection created by Jeffrey Rubinoff and making it available for the enjoyment and education of art students and the general public."

From 2004-2007, the institutional foundations of the park were formed, including the construction of a multipurpose

building for educational and interpretive activities. Educational activities included an annual Masters of Counterpoint concerts and park openings to highlight the parallels between the visual counterpoint of Rubinoff's sculpture and the aural counterpoint employed by composers such as Bach and Beethoven.

History of the Company of Ideas Forum

In 2008 the park was formally opened to the public, at which time the Company of Ideas Forum series was inaugurated.

For the 2008 inauguration, Rubinoff stated the relevance of the Forums to his work and the mandate of the park as extending "... the ancient narrative of art and consequently rekindling the historical spirit of modernism. In addition to viewing the work, which includes the Sculpture Park itself, the goal is to revive the interdisciplinary creative impetus of early modernism and to attain the understanding of art as a serious and credible source of special insight for the evolution of ideas."

In addition to being the first formal opening of Rubinoff's complete body of work to the public, the 2008 Forum is significant in two other respects. It publicly states the ambition of the sculpture park as the legitimization of art as a source of knowledge. And furthering that ambition, Rubinoff proposed the scholarly examination of a set of historical insights that he claims evolves with and from the sculpture work (reprinted on page 197).

His claim reverses the prevailing intuition that art is a manifestation of the artist's historical context. Rubinoff states that in and through his work, art yields original insights that inform his view of history, and may usefully inform others.

This was a significant claim that needed testing.

To approach this goal, the insights were explicated to enable an analysis of the various threads of their interrelated arguments.

The first explicatory essay was entitled *The Inherent Value of Art at the End of the Age of Agriculture*. A group of seven arts educators, who attended the Inaugural Forum in May 2008, returned in July 2008 to discuss the essay. The discussion, while interesting, revealed a gap in the participants' historical knowledge base that impeded a more rigorous critique.

Adjustments to the selection criteria for the 2009 Company of Ideas Forum saw an increase in the scholarly qualifications of the presenters and discussion members. This was partially successful in enabling the Forum to address the historical questions at issue. However, the challenge remained to retain the scholars' focus on Rubinoff's work and insights, and not tangential issues of their own research.

The strategy of the 2010 Forum was to formally limit the scope of the essays to just one of Rubinoff's key insights: *The End of the Age of Agriculture*. A key breakthrough was attracting the participation of two internationally authoritative historians in their respective fields. This marked the beginning of the identification of a key target group for the Forum: the educators of future educators. It was also the first Forum at which Rubinoff himself presented a major essay: *Art Beyond War: A Discussion About Prehistoric War and the History of Art by Artists*.

2010 Forum presenter, world renowned historian Dr. Jay Winter of Yale University, was approached with an offer for Yale to jointly lead the following Forum. With Yale's acceptance, the *Yale Forum On Art, War and Science in the 20th Century* was organized at the sculpture park in the spring of 2011. Scholars from Yale, Cambridge, and the Universities of Paris and California presented essays and took part in discussions. In addition,

several students from Yale and various Canadian universities were invited to participate.

This was an important stage in the realization of original the ambition of the Forum. Rubinoff's work and by extension art itself had been placed on the plane of the highest scholarly thought on the issue of central importance in the 20th and 21st century.

The 2012 Forum was structured to deepen the engagement of artistic insight and scholarly thought. Cambridge University art historian, Dr. James Fox, agreed to write the introduction to the Forum on the value of the engagement of and with art. Presenters were selected who stated they could directly critique and utilize Rubinoff's insights and statements in extending their own ideas.

The resulting essays and dialogues explore how the artist's perspective is capable of seeding new knowledge. They mark the culmination of five years of effort to realize the original goal of the Forum series to "attain the understanding of art as a serious and credible source of ... insight for the evolution of ideas."

Perspectives on Art as a Source of Knowledge

2012 Forum presenter Jeremy Kessler, a specialist on the history of conscientious objection in the 20th century, stated that:

"Rubinoff, in keeping with an important if neglected tendency in post-WWII thought, sought ... a re-imagining of human interiority that would be capable of confronting the complex brutality of the nuclear age. ... [this] can be understood as a search for what Jeffrey has called the 'mature conscience.' While the traditional 'act of conscience' emphasized individuality and witness, the mature conscience introduced the problem of knowledge, the problem of natural and technological complexity. To be sure, the mature conscience, like earlier notions of conscience, stands

witness to ‘the value of life itself.’ The ‘mature conscience’ also recognizes, however, that ‘life’ is no simple, irreducible substance, but the product of massive feats of organization.

“In the nuclear age, individual witness would no longer be enough to affirm the value of life itself. Instead, humans would have to contend with the systems they had produced and that had produced them—contend with the fact that human life had created systems capable of ending the history of life itself. Only by bearing witness to—and participating in—this level of complexity could humans claim to be truly conscientious. **I suspect that it is this kind of witness, a witness that attests not just to the individual perspective but its irreducible embeddedness in the history of human life, that Jeffrey seeks to provide with his art.**”¹

However, in his 2012 Forum essay, Rubinoff clearly rejects an interpretation of his written work and insights as prescriptions:

“As I have stated, my insights do not in any way imply a new ideology or any other prescription. There is no new grand narrative.

“Art is valued by the artist’s unique perception that might provide original perspectives. ...

“The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park is the context of the sculpture. In presenting the insights that have evolved from and with the sculpture as arguments, art becomes embryonic ideas and therefore a source of knowledge beyond self-reference. Art understood as such a source of knowledge becomes essential to

1 Kessler, Jeremy. “The Search for a Nuclear Conscience,” *Perspectives on Art as a Source of Knowledge: Report of the 2012 Forum of The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park*. The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park. 2012 — Emphasis Added

the necessary measure of human values in the Post Agriculture Age.”²

It is contribution of art to the knowledge required for the measure of human values that is the statement of this book.

— Karun Koernig, Editor

2 Rubinoff, Jeffrey. “Existential Realities of Post Agriculture,” *Perspectives on Art as a Source of Knowledge: Report of the 2012 Forum of The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park*. The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park. 2012

Editor's note regarding Forum dialogues

The dialogues following each of the presentations were recorded and transcribed in their entirety by a commercial third party.

The editing process consisted of selecting those comments most relevant to each presentation or to Rubinoff's work. In a small number of cases, the order of the comments was rearranged to emphasize a continuing line of inquiry.

Editorial interventions in the text consisted of changing punctuation, word order, adding words, and removing unnecessary parenthetical phrases to make each speaker's intent clear. Colloquialisms and filler phrases were removed; however, spoken contractions were left unchanged as transcribed. Quotations and titles of written works and names of authors were checked and corrected where necessary.

To maintain clarity and narrative flow, no typographical indications of these edits were used in the dialogues, except in rare cases. Full transcripts can be made available upon request.

All errors in interpretation remain the responsibility of the editor.

Subsequent editions may include changes and corrections requested by dialogue participants.

2012 FORUM TOPIC: ART AS A SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE

Jeffrey Rubinoff proposes that artists' inherited abilities for acute perception of spatial and temporal order are the same faculties evolved to bring down large prey. We 200,000-year-old modern humans are the descendants of a 2.5-million-year history as hunter-gatherers. He argues that these genetic gifts for the perception of contrapuntal relationships in space and time are vital carryovers to art from the age of hunting. Underscoring this point is the fact that the earliest surviving art predominantly depicts animals.

While some symbolic markings reminiscent of written language do accompany this early art, our biological capacity for speech supports the contention that the widespread use of language evolved orally. Indeed, evidence of fully written languages only appears during the age of agriculture.¹ This may have been due to greater need for predictability in the administration of more complex societies demanded by the adoption of agriculture itself. What we can be certain of is that written language increases control of knowledge transmission through time and space.

For those of us socialized to think using written language, the notion of words and symbols having a prescribed meaning is inherent to the process of thought itself. Often those so habituated judge art to be a mysterious, subjective, and hence unreliable, source of knowledge at best.

Interestingly, Rubinoff inverts this into one of art's greatest strengths, arguing that "art provides a means to experience the

¹ Senner, Wayne M. "Theories and Myths on the Origins of Writing: a historical overview" in *The Origins of Writing*. University of Nebraska Press. 1989. pp. 2, 6 and 23.

sacred beyond prescriptive narrative.” For art to be relevant to the measure of human values, it is desirable that its most sacred meanings not be prescribed by a social authority. Art thus offers a channel of perception and communication outside of the socially prescriptive institutions of the age of agriculture. Rubinoff’s ambition for art is to impact upon individuals’ conscience in their measurement of the values of human existence. He invites the assertion of these values as a necessary countervailing force to the existential threats posed by the products of advanced scientific inquiry, such as nuclear weapons and genetic engineering.

Beyond contributing to an internal reflection on the values of human existence, art can also be a source of original perspective on the empirical realities that threaten existence itself. To recognize this, we must extend our consideration of art as a source of knowledge to include the artist’s act of witnessing. Rubinoff describes art as “*an act of will in accord with a mature conscience*”, which for him includes both the act of witnessing and recording:

Nature, by the passage of time and by the genetic sculpting of life, has created a history that is crushingly honest and constantly probing the future. It is thus simultaneously innocent and guilty of the most destructive crimes that lead to the most magnificent creations. Without life there is no witness to this awesome and terrifying creative unfolding of the universe.

As far as we know, we fragile humans are the only fully cognizant witnesses. With this capability comes the great responsibility of this knowledge. This responsibility is a priori in those who are born artists. The act of will that I describe in my definition of art is the act of witnessing and recording this knowledge. This is the highest of human values—the recognition of the value of life itself. Therein resides the mature conscience. This

is the essence of our being. Art is the map of the human soul.

For Rubinoff this act of witnessing has been articulated as historical insights, one of the most important of which is the End of the Age of Agriculture. However, such insights cannot be evaluated in the same manner as the largely interior experience of the work itself. Their value must be judged on the same terms as other evidentiary knowledge claims. If, after thorough examination, a few find them to be useful, they may articulate them further into full-fledged ideas. These complete ideas may in turn evolve knowledge.

The insights that evolved with and from Rubinoff’s work are the themes addressed by an international group of scholars during the annual Company of Ideas Forums. Because the articulation of insights makes a double demand on the artist, the instances of artists with such ambitions are likely to be relatively rare. Jeffrey Rubinoff is one such artist.²

— Karun Koernig, Curator

² Reprinted from 2012 Company of Ideas Forum on Art as a Source of Knowledge. <http://www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org/coi/2012Forum.pdf>

2012 FORUM PARTICIPANTS

Presenting Discussion Panelists

(Presenters' biographies are appended to their essays)

Dr. James Fox
ART HISTORIAN,
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

Jeremy Kessler
PHD CANDIDATE,
HISTORY AND LAW, YALE UNIVERSITY

David Lawless
MSC STUDENT, BIOLOGY, OXFORD UNIVERSITY

Jenni Pace Presnell
PHD CANDIDATE, ART HISTORY,
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Shahana Rajani
MA STUDENT, CURATORIAL STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Jeffrey Rubinoff
SCULPTOR

Non-presenting Discussion Panelists

Dr. Peter Clarke
PROFESSOR OF MODERN HISTORY
AND A FELLOW OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

Peter Clarke has published three major books on aspects of British political history in the late 19th and 20th centuries, including: *The Keynesian Revolution in the Making 1924-1936* (1988). He is the author of volume nine of the Penguin History of Britain, *Hope and Glory, Britain 1900-1990*. He writes regularly on history and politics for *The Times Literary Supplement* and the *London Review of Books*.

Karun Koernig
CURATOR, THE JEFFREY RUBINOFF SCULPTURE PARK

Karun Koernig is a social development specialist with twenty years of experience in various positions. He held the position of Activities and Forum Director for The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park from 2008-11, and in 2012 accepted the position of Curator. In addition he holds the position of Head of Operations for the German foundation, Water is Right, which is set up to fund water and sanitation projects globally. Previously he worked in partnership with UN-HABITAT in Nairobi to establish entrepreneurship, environment, and arts programmes for urban slum youth. Karun Koernig graduated with honours from Simon Fraser University, where he majored in Political Science.

Dr. Maria Tippett
CULTURAL HISTORIAN AND AUTHOR

Maria Tippett is one of Canada's leading cultural historians and author of many books including two award-winning biographies. She has lectured extensively in North and South America, Japan and Europe. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, she is a former Senior Research Fellow at Churchill College, Cambridge University.

Dialogue Participants and Observers

Bob Anderson
Elisha Burrows
Susan Cain
Carole Chambers
Paul Clemens
Robert Denning
Frank Frketich
Debbie Frketich
Heather Goldman
Dick Goldman
Rowan Helliwell
Azmina Kazam
Betty Kennedy
Jesse Kennedy
John Kirk
Janet LeBlancq
Michael McNamera
Cathy Mezei
Charo Neville
Vaughn Neville
Arne Olsen
Leba Rubinoff

DR. JAMES FOX

Introduction to the 2012 Company of Ideas Forum on Art as a Source of Knowledge

Dr James Fox is a Research Fellow in the History of Art at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge University.

Before this, he held research positions at both Yale and Harvard. He works primarily on the impact of the First World War on visual culture, and is currently developing a monograph on the subject.

James also curates exhibitions and works with the British media, and has just finished writing and presenting a major BBC broadcast series on 20th century art.

Thank you, Karun, and thank you for having me again. It is pretty much exactly a year to the day since I was last on Hornby, and I am delighted to be back on this beautiful island again. As I look around I see many faces that I recognise from last year, and some new faces too. My hope is that everyone here—whether old or new—feels comfortable to say whatever they think to this Forum. This shouldn't be a case of academics talking, everyone else listening; it should involve all of us conversing. That way we can all have a stimulating, productive, and enjoyable few days. It certainly seems that way from the programme that Karun has lined up: this year we have an impressive group of speakers delivering some very wide-ranging papers. My job is simply to get the ball rolling.

The subject of this year's Forum is 'Art as a Source of Knowledge'. It is an ambitious subject—even more ambitious than last year's—because humans have been debating that issue for almost as long as we have been debating. Certainly for as long as we have known what art is.

What is the value of art?

Is it a source of knowledge?

If so, what kind of knowledge?

These questions are old, they are important, and they are perhaps in the end unanswerable.¹ Yet this has not stopped people weighing in on the matter.

The first great contributor to the discussion was of course Plato. And Plato was unequivocal on the issue. Plato maintained that art offered us no knowledge of reality. Instead, it idly repli-

1 See Malcolm Budd, *Values of Art*, Penguin, London, 1995.

cated the superficial appearance of reality. Art was therefore not much more than a mirror. All a mirror does, he claimed, is show us things we can already see.² However, a mirror shows us at least one thing that we cannot otherwise see: it shows us ourselves. And I believe that is where the value of art resides: in self-knowledge; in self-consciousness. The best art helps to show us who we really are.³

It has always been the case. In fact, it goes back to what I consider to be the oldest surviving artwork. This object is, believe it or not, millions of years older than the cave paintings and the Venus figurines of the Paleolithic period. It is so old that it even antedates homo sapiens itself. Even more remarkably, we know the story behind it. Approximately 3 million years ago, a hominid was wandering through the scrubland of southern Africa. It stopped at a stream. Perhaps to drink. Perhaps, like Narcissus, to examine its reflection in the water. But then it noticed something. On the riverbed was a small reddish stone. It reached in, grabbed the stone, and carried it approximately 20 miles back to its cave. Three million years later, in 1925, that stone was found in that same cave near Johannesburg, next to the remains of what we assume was its finder. Now, what was so special about that stone? Well, due to the vagaries of erosion, it had taken on the form of a face.⁴ Its finder had neither made nor adjusted the object. It picked it up simply because in the stone's form, it recognised itself and its kind. For me, this story reveals that from the very beginning, images, symbolic objects, artworks—whatever you

2 Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee, Penguin, London, 1987. For the 'divided line', see 510; for Plato's mirror analogy, see 596d.

3 For an interesting discussion of this issue, see 'Works of Art and Mere Real Things', in Arthur Danto, *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace: a philosophy of art*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA, 1981, pp. 1-32.

4 Robert Bednarik, 'The "australopithecine" cobble from Makapansgat, South Africa', *South African Archaeological Bulletin*, 53, 1998, pp. 4-8.

wish to call them—were inextricably bound to self-awareness, to self-consciousness, to self-knowledge.

Let us return to Plato. He refused to accept that art played a role in our intellectual development. Yet think about his generation. There were playwrights like Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes; sculptors like Phidias, Myron, and Polyclitus; and architectural projects like those at Delphi and the Acropolis. In fifth-century Athens, the arts were at the very heart of society and they were absolutely viewed as sources of knowledge. A perfect example of this is Homer. We now view *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* as great works of literature. But to Plato's generation, they were much more: they gave historical, moral, and theological instruction; they became the basis of formal as well as informal education; and they could even be described, as many scholars have done so, as the Bible of the ancient Greeks. Plato knew this, and that I think is why he went on to banish most of the arts from his 'Republic': not because they failed to give his contemporaries knowledge but because they gave them too much—so much that they even rivalled his own school of philosophy.

Ancient Greece was not unique in this respect. Throughout the history of art and throughout the world, artists were called on to discover, to codify, and to pass on their era's most highly prized knowledge. This was why, in spite of a Biblical prohibition of 'graven images,' Pope Gregory the Great advocated Christian artworks as 'Bibles for the illiterate.'⁵ This was why, in the Italian Renaissance, artists could be philosophers, scientists, poets, and noblemen, as well as being artists (it is therefore no surprise that in Raphael's School of Athens, Plato is played by Leonardo, and Aristotle by Michelangelo). This was why, in the great era of the Academies, 'history painting' was a crucial tool by which the values and ambitions of Europeans were shaped. And this is why,

5 See Celia Chazelle, 'Pictures, Books, and the Illiterate: Pope Gregory I's Letters to Serenus of Marseilles,' *Word and Image*, IV, 1990, pp. 138-53.

in the modern age, artistic expression became a virtual synonym for self-expression.

I could go on and on. Because in most societies at most times, art was not just one source of knowledge; it was one of the principal sources of knowledge. That is why it was so important to its contemporaries. However, I must now turn to our own era. When I asked Jeffrey a few months ago what he wanted me to discuss in this introduction, he used one word again and again: engagement. In some ways I think that word sums up the whole point of this Forum, the reason that we are all here today. Jeffrey believes that because art is such an invaluable source of knowledge, it is crucial that it continues to engage with the political, ethical, and intellectual issues of its time. Jeffrey's own lifetime has presented unique challenges to that ambition, but he believes that those challenges have made that ambition more necessary than ever. I therefore wish to use the rest of this introduction to discuss Jeffrey's call for engagement in the arts within the context of his life and times.

Jeffrey Rubinoff was born in October 1945. What a time to have come into the world. A catastrophic global war had just ended; a potentially even more catastrophic Cold War was just beginning. The extent of the European genocides was still being revealed, and the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had barely stopped smoldering. The two years before Jeffrey's birth had probably been the most murderous years in history, and at the time many people believed that things were only going to get worse. In last year's paper, Jeffrey described himself as being 'born in the shadow of the Endgame.'⁶ Yet for all the justifiable apocalypticism, this calamitous world seemed to offer art a new beginning. For if nothing else, those awful events forced artists to engage: to collaborate with the public institutions that surrounded them; to

6 Jeffrey Rubinoff, 'Through the Lens of the Endgame,' (prepared for the 2011 Yale Forum on Art, War and Science in the C20th), May 2011: www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org/events/2011Rubinoff.pdf

confront the fundamental issues of their time; and to do so for the good of the wider community.

Let me give you an example. In 1945 Britain was losing £14 million a day. Its national debt had climbed to 250 percent of GDP—almost five times what we have at the moment. Yet at precisely this time the government put significant amounts of money towards the foundation of the Arts Council.⁷ Why? Because it knew that the beleaguered British population had never needed art more. The Arts Council's inaugural report stated the following:

‘The visual arts are integral to a civilisation. Their quality and their success in expressing individual and social values shape the outlook of the whole community.’⁸

The Arts Council, I think, was correct, because the finest British art of the period consistently interrogated those individual and social values. Francis Bacon's *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* explored the human capacity for violence and hatred, and thus symbolised, according to Raymond Mortimer, the ‘atrocious world into which we have survived.’⁹ At the same time Graham Sutherland (a friend of Bacon's) approached the same subject, basing his figure of Christ on a propaganda book of photographs taken at the recently liberated concentration camps.¹⁰ Yet Sutherland's painting, which was installed in the church of St Matthew's in Northampton, was designed to remind his viewers that even in the dark days of 1945, hope, faith, and self-sacrifice

7 The funding of The Arts Council commenced in 1945 with an annual grant of £175,000. For more, see John Pick, *The State and The Arts*, City University Centre for Arts, Eastbourne 1980, p. 15.

8 *The Visual Arts*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1946. p. 42.

9 Raymond Mortimer, ‘Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion’, *New Statesman and Nation*, 14 April 1945.

10 K-Z: Bildbericht aus fünf Konzentrationslager, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Forces, 1945.

could lead the British people forward. I cannot think of two more fundamental subjects than those addressed by these two pictures.

Across the continent, at exactly the same time, other artists were engaging with the era's political, ethical, and existential questions. In 1944 Pablo Picasso, searching for concrete change, became an official member of the Communist Party. Other artists, meanwhile, came to be identified with the period's leading philosophical tendencies. One of them was the sculptor Alberto Giacometti. In 1948 Jean-Paul Sartre, in an article entitled ‘The Search for the Absolute’, claimed that Giacometti's etiolated sculptures were the embodiment of existential man.¹¹ Giacometti admittedly refused the ‘existentialist’ moniker, but his figures—which are fragile, solitary and lost in the immensity of space—are both the charred victims of industrialised warfare and the survivors’ struggles for a new life in its aftermath.

In the United States, too, the late 1940s spawned an outburst of cultural production that confronted the existential dilemmas of a war-torn world. Jackson Pollock and Barnett Newman believed their vast paintings could answer, or at least address, their age's biggest metaphysical questions; Mark Rothko used abstraction to search for the sacred in an otherwise seemingly godless world; and the sculptor David Smith—who had stumbled on a number of his signature techniques while assembling M7 tanks during the Second World War—used metal to explore the most fundamental sculptural idea of them all: the figure's relationship to space; man's dialogue with the natural world.¹² These are ideas that continue to be worked out on this island in Jeffrey's sculpture park.

11 Jean-Paul Sartre, ‘La recherche de l'absolut’, in *Le Temps Moderne*, 3, no. 28, 1948, pp. 153-63.

12 See Rosalind Krauss, *David Smith: Terminal Iron Works*, M.I.T. Press, Cambridge MA, 1971, p. 60.

What point am I trying to make? Well, I am trying to argue that in the early part of Jeffrey Rubinoff's life, artists were busy *engaging*. Whether through abstraction or figuration, painting or sculpture, they were tailoring their work to the needs of the age, reflecting on the past, ruminating on the future, and above all interrogating—indeed asserting—a fragile but surviving humanism. This material will be addressed in greater depth (and no doubt with greater elegance) by Jeremy Kessler after our coffee break. So suffice it for me to say that in the 1940s and 1950s, the best artists were confronting the most serious and wide-ranging issues of their day; they were being rewarded for doing so; and they were doing so with what might even be called a public mandate.

But then something happened. Jeffrey Rubinoff has dated that 'something' to 1962, when he was seventeen years old. It was the year of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The year of Andy Warhol's first one-man exhibition. But what was that 'something'? What actually changed? Rubinoff has described it as a shift in the tone of modern art from one of 'defiance' to one in which 'resignation' was 'stated as defiance'.¹³ I'm not sure that I can be as precise as Jeffrey in dating and defining this cultural transformation, and I know that Jenni will be discussing 'resignation stated as defiance' later this afternoon. Broadly speaking, however, I am in agreement with Jeffrey: I think he is right to claim that at around this time there was a shift in the tone of modern art. That shift involved an abandonment of the high seriousness of the 1940s and 1950s; a loss of interest in the humanist themes that had preoccupied artists since the war; and above all, a *disengagement* with the wider world and its concerns.

13 Jeffrey Rubinoff, 'Through the Lens of the Endgame', (prepared for the 2011 Yale Forum on Art, War and Science in the C20th), May 2011: www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org/events/2011Rubinoff.pdf

So what brought about this change? What caused the disengagement that Jeffrey Rubinoff saw all around him when he decided to become an artist in the early 1960s? I think there are two principal factors.

The first, I believe, is social. The 1950s and 1960s are widely seen to have produced a new kind of society in the West. That society has been given various names: the 'media society', 'the society of the spectacle', the 'post-industrial society', and most memorably, 'the consumer society'.¹⁴ The development of this consumer age had a number of cultural consequences: first, it shifted priorities from the needs of the community (as had been necessary during the war) to the desires of the individual; second, with the rise of Pop Art, consumer products replaced transcendental values as the focus of artists' attentions; and third, the division between those products and the artworks that mythologised them was quickly and willfully erased, with the result that art itself was drawn into the same consumer constellation as everything else.

Art had nearly always been a commodity, of course, but never before had it been such a profitable one. The New York art market of the 1960s is now almost legendary, with dealers like Leo Castelli managing not only whole careers but entire artistic movements. And Castelli was not alone: the market expanded exponentially in the period. When Jeffrey was born, there were about seventy galleries of all types in New York City. By the time he was thirty that number had increased eightfold to almost 560.¹⁵ And of course, this growing market changed the nature of art. It was inevitable. The market encouraged art that was novel, entertaining, easily domesticated, and above all, easily sellable.

14 For a brief survey, see Madan Sarup, *Identity, Culture and the Postmodern World*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1996, p. 106.

15 For more, see Joan Marter, ed., *Grove Encyclopedia of American Art*, vol. 1, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2011, pp. 512-14.

Unsurprisingly, there was little demand for monumental paintings and sculptures that tackled forbidding existential issues.

The second reason for this change was rather more rarefied. It was in the 1960s that the modernist paradigm started to collapse and a new 'postmodern' era emerged. For some, postmodernism was little more than the artistic expression of the consumer age that I have already discussed.¹⁶ However, it also made numerous intellectual interventions that profoundly undermined the avant-garde ambitions of engagement.

The first—and I realise that I am generalising hugely here—concerned meaning. A number of writers and philosophers from the 1960s onwards—Jacques Derrida being the most influential—argued that meaning itself was a moveable feast; a mirage in the desert; an unreliable 'play of signs' rather than a beautiful secret that was waiting to be discovered.¹⁷

This insight in many ways produced the second insight. If meaning was nothing more than a free play of associations—none more real than the others—then the artist and his or her ideas became virtually irrelevant. In 1968 Roland Barthes concluded that the artist (or author) was, quite simply, 'dead'.¹⁸

The third insight was perhaps even more wide-ranging. Postmodern thinkers challenged many of the modernist values and narratives—all those Enlightenment universals like Reason, Progress, Truth, Morality and the liberation of the individual.

16 See Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1991.

17 See Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass, Routledge, London, pp. 278-94.

18 'The Death of the Author' (1968), in Roland Barthes, ed. Stephen Heath, *Image Music Text*, Fontana Press, London, 1977, pp. 142-8.

These were all exposed by thinkers like Jean-Francois Lyotard as 'idols' and 'metanarratives' that had no basis in reality.¹⁹

So what did this mean for engagement in the arts? Well, if the artist was allegedly dead, if meaning could never be reliably communicated, if nothing in the end mattered, and nothing in the end could be changed, why bother even engaging at all?

And that might be another reason why, from the 1960s onwards, we can discern a very different tone in modern art: seriousness was replaced by silliness; purpose was replaced by play; optimism became irony; originality became pastiche; design was ditched in favour of chance; creation substituted for deconstruction. And perhaps above all, the old idea of an artwork as the finished product of a unique individual became old-hat. Instead, mass production and collaborative performance became the most fashionable practices. The changes I am outlining may seem somewhat schematic, but before you interrogate me about them, I must confess they are not my own: many originate from Ihab Hassan's 1987 tabulation of the differences between modernism and postmodernism.²⁰

In short, my belief is that these two factors—the increasingly organised commodification of the art world, and a general loss of interest in big ideas—has led the artists of Jeffrey's own generation away from the issues to which their predecessors were drawn.

And I must now say something very briefly from my own experience. I have spent a lot of time over the last decade in

19 'Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity towards metanarratives'. Jean-Francois Lyotard, *The postmodern condition: a report on knowledge*, trans. G. Bennington & B. Massumi (French original, 1979), University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1984, xxiv.

20 Ihab Hassan, 'Towards a Concept of Postmodernism', in *The Postmodern Turn: Essays in Postmodern Theory and Culture*, Ohio State University Press, Columbus, 1987.

and around the London art world. Believe it or not, London still controls roughly 29 percent of the global art market.²¹ And in that art world—in its fairs, and its galleries, and its events—I have seen very little evidence of what Jeffrey Rubinoff considers to be *engagement*. In fact, I have seen the opposite. The cold white spaces seem designed, if anything, to discomfort and exclude the public: only a V.I.P. population of the rich and famous is invited; the contents of these spaces are marshalled by a firewall of curators, gallerists and critics who seem determined to mystify rather than clarify; and more often than not the works themselves feel like the punch lines to inside jokes of which you never heard the beginning. In short, the art world is now such a successful institution that it does not need the public anymore. And I'll go further: the art world is now so full of parties, celebrities, and sponsors that it doesn't even need art anymore.

Now I realise that I am being personal, and I certainly don't expect everyone here to agree with me. But it is these things that have drawn me to what Jeffrey Rubinoff is doing. Because as far as I see it, Jeffrey has bucked the prevailing practices of the art world in almost every way. He has withdrawn from the network of urban art galleries that showcase so much of today's art; he has made his work freely available to the visiting public rather than selling it to the highest bidder; and he has continued to produce what he feels is important rather than what a dealer tells him will sell.

But most important of all, events like this represent Jeffrey Rubinoff's ambition to make art *engage* again—in much the same way as it did earlier in the 20th century, and in the centuries before that. Look around: you can see people from different parts of the world, from different generations, from different backgrounds: academics, students, artists, neighbours. And Jeffrey and Karun

have brought all these people—all of us—together so we can talk as equals about issues that matter. What's more, this forum ensures that art is placed right at the centre of debates about who we were, what we are, and what we should do. I believe that is where it belongs.

But this, I should add, is only the first step. Jeffrey hopes that by re-legitimising 'art as a source of knowledge' and then mobilising that knowledge, the consequences could be far-reaching. He believes that what goes on here may in the long run inspire new artists, new audiences for art, and even alter the views of people who haven't previously considered art at all. Only time, as they say, will tell. But I think it is now time to hand over to the man himself.

Thank you.

21 Arts Economics (for the British Art Market Federation), 'The British Art Market', www.lapada.org/public/The_British_art_Market.pdf (accessed: 8 May 2012).

DIALOGUE ON THE FORUM INTRODUCTION

Peter Clarke: I think a lot turns here on what we mean by knowledge. Never mind what we mean by art, but what we mean by knowledge. If we are talking about art as a source of knowledge, in what way do we even understand that? I find it very persuasive, the way you've put it, that art is, in some sense, a source of knowledge. Even to those like Plato, who tried to reject that whole idea. But is it a source of knowledge in itself quite directly without any interpolation, any sense of translation, or do we mean, that art is a metaphor for knowledge? That we then need some sort of translation into other forms of knowledge, perhaps more verbal forms of knowledge, perhaps more formalized sense of knowledge before we can really appreciate what's going on here?

Now, at some times, when you were talking, I thought you probably meant that the art spoke to us absolutely directly in this immediate, tactile way, where we could take in primarily through our visual senses the stunning impact of the art itself. And then there were other times, when you were decoding the British art of 1945, you were very helpfully showing us what was going on in the painting by Sutherland, or that of Bacon. There seemed, then, to be quite a lot of exegesis in your account where, in order for that to speak to us, we had to have it put into words. We had to have the history and the context supplied as though the art, in that sense, was leading us to knowledge. But it wasn't just, in itself, in an immediate, tactile way, the knowledge in itself.

James Fox: I think it is elusive. You can't pin down art in the same way that you can pin down other things because

it's not a closed concept. Art is not just one particular gateway to other kinds of knowledge. That would suggest that the function and the value of art is simply instrumental, its purpose being to serve some predetermined objective.

I don't think that's the case. Art isn't just a source of knowledge. It also is knowledge. And, of course, back in Plato's day they had words like "techne," the Greek word for "art," which also actually meant "knowledge": a knowledge of agriculture, or carpentry, or house construction, or, indeed, painting and sculpture.

So I think separating the two and suggesting that art is only the first step towards obtaining a knowledge that is also contained in words is not necessarily the right way to do it. In fact, I think there are different and peculiar kinds of knowledge that are imparted only by artworks.

For Mark Rothko, it was not about having some prescriptive statement saying, "This is what you will learn from this artwork." For him the experience of the artwork was the knowledge. Whereas there are illustrative artists, for example artists in the figurative tradition painting a religious scene, where the knowledge is not the work itself. It is the story that the work is communicating in as powerful a way as possible.

So I think it's a very elusive thing to pin down. I think that's the great thing about art: that the knowledge it can provide and the experiences it can generate are different in different artworks, and for different people for the same artworks.

Much of it is a matter of changed perspective. I was lucky enough to interview an astronaut a few months ago who went up in Apollo 8 in 1968. He was the first man to leave the Earth's orbit. He was the one that took that famous photograph of the Earthrise, the Earth coming over the moon. He told me that they went out on

this mission to see the moon, and ultimately what they discovered was the Earth. They looked back on the Earth and they saw it in a way that they had never imagined before, this tiny little fragile planet floating in empty space. And I think that's the kind of thing that an artwork can do on a very small level for all of us. It can make us see our lives in a way that we can't otherwise because it just gives us a different perspective and a different knowledge.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: There is a role of the artist that I think is very, very important to clarify. The artist has different perception. From that different perception he or she is able to give new perspective. And other people may take the same view as that new perspective. If so, the artist's perception alters their perception in that it offers a different perspective on their knowledge. And it's that value of art as a source of knowledge that we are talking about.

Now, not everyone can see it. That's part of the problem. And I'll speak to this in my paper. I believe art perception is something that comes from our biology, as does our sense of morality, as Darwin called it—a sense of morality as opposed to morality itself. So, too, there is an art sense which gets passed down to both artists and audience.

The German Idealists had to struggle within themselves to deal with pagan art, which they absolutely loved, despite the Lutheran restrictions concerning it. I think it's an incredible struggle that they had within themselves.

What they had was their own art perception as they discovered Greek art, which forced them to come to terms with a new perspective of their own knowledge. I believe that the Kantian term "a priori," is in fact Darwin's "sense."

Jeremy Kessler: I think Jeffrey's intervention, calling attention to the artist's perspective, is really helpful in reinterpreting Peter's initial provocation about what is the proper or the most useful or the most valuable contribution of the viewer towards the work of art. If art is in some way a source of knowledge, is it a source of knowledge through some form of direct revelation, or is that knowledge only tapped through some kind of exegetical process?

I think that is a question one asks about any source of knowledge. In the sense that in interpreting scientific documents or reading about geopolitics or reading a work of history, there are always debates among scholars and among citizens about what kind of stance you need to take with regard to any object in order to properly or most effectively perceive the truth in it.

Often, the way in which the study of literature or art in the academy is justified, at least in America today, is by saying that the study of literature or art requires a certain kind of critical, exegetical comportment that will then allow you to glean knowledge of the world more generally.

So even if it's not proper to think of art as a direct source of knowledge, maybe that's okay, as we're suspicious of this sort of direct revelation in many areas of life.

But then it's very interesting that maybe Jeffrey's call is, "it's not enough to have this viewer's perspective." Is there something different about the artist's perspective that actually gives us a better grasp on knowledge? Does that mean in order to have true knowledge, does everyone have to be an artist? You know, does everyone need this perspective? Is that really an epistemically valid thing to say?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Art perception is what the artist is born with. He's born with a certain amount of art perception which informs his own perspective. The artist's personal perspective is not as nearly as important as the new perspectives offered by the manifestations of that inborn perception—specifically his or her artworks. So there's a difference between perception and perspective. The gift of the artist is altered perspectives—perspectives that are not available in any other way for thinking people to be able to take this particular perception that the artist communicates through his or her art and find a different perspective within themselves. It's the offer of perspective, not the definition of perspective. So for me, I don't ever see myself ever dictating the perspective.

Maria Tippett: I'm thinking about the process that the artist goes through. For myself, being a writer, it is words. Conversely, for you, Jeffrey, it is all about spatial expression. And why is it that we can create in our heads—an activity that entails the painful process of objectifying our thoughts? And isn't the artist's knowledge expanded through that process? Is it not akin to a grain of sand becoming a pearl in an oyster shell.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: This concept of art that I have is about perfection, and perfection meaning completion. That sense of completion has to happen in the artist first in the creation of a work of art. And it is the sense of completion that is the most important part, not the sense of process. And so the artist's motivation to continue working comes in the sense of completion that comes from the perception itself being completed. And completion is the threshold of what I consider art. The completion has to be within the artist first. And so when I look at a work and look

at the artist to artist coding of that work, I look to see whether or not the artist has crossed the threshold of completion, and that's my whole measure right there.

James Fox: I wouldn't want to be too prescriptive either way. Every artist has different priorities, and I would not try to reduce them all down to one practice. A good example might be two of the greatest painters of the 20th century, Picasso and Matisse. Picasso was a famously cerebral artist, an artist whose work was hard and intellectual, and often forced you to look at things in new ways. And Matisse was completely the opposite. When Matisse was asked to describe what his art was, he said, "I think art should be like a good armchair which provides relaxation from physical fatigue." It's a very different idea of what art could be. I think both men's work is fantastic. I think both are great artists.

Karun Koernig: I wanted to ask a couple of questions. One is, how much of the historical narrative do you need to be immersed in, in order to derive intellectual satisfaction from a work of art? And, conversely, what role does the untutored emotional impression play, because that's a large part of what I call the interior aspect.

To me, the interior aspect of the work is both the emotional and intellectual together. If you are unaware of the historical context, getting back into that time period obviously enhances your understanding of a work, and to me makes it feel more significant. So at the same time that I understand it consciously, unconsciously I feel more interested and feel that it's more significant.

So I wonder if you can elaborate on what layers of consciousness we are looking at here as a source of knowledge? If it is just the kind of instrumental knowledge that Peter Clarke is talking about, then you automatically have to be in the historical context of the work. But if it's as I have described, a totality of experience that brings knowledge, the work firstly offers knowledge of and for yourself. The knowledge that every human being needs to act conscientiously in their own life. But Jeffrey is proposing a larger gift, which I think is equally important, which is how do we act as a community of people, or how do you act as a conscientious leader? And this is reflected in his idea of the artist's original perspective on knowledge. So that's something, that to me is different. It's not an interior aspect of the work, it speaks to the totality of one's experience.

James Fox: I don't think it has to be one or the other. Let's take the work here in the Sculpture Park. Of course there is all this context and all these incredibly complex and rich ideas that Jeffrey has, and the more you know about those, the more you can understand what's going on here. But at the same time, nothing can quite replicate that immediacy of standing next to one of those huge pieces of metal in the landscape, being dwarfed by it, seeing the complexity of it, moving around it and understanding its relationship to site. You don't really need to know about the history of the Cold War, Darwin or Transgenic Engineering to really appreciate that you are next to something and sharing space with something that is really exciting.

So I think that's the wonderful thing about art. I think it was the same with Mark Rothko. You didn't need to know about the history of sacred art and the plight of the postwar human to stand in front of one of those paintings just think, "Wow, this is

an extraordinary experience." So I think it's both, but it can be fantastic when it's just one as well.

Jeremy Kessler: Hearing you say that there can be this direct experience, that you don't need the historical context, you don't need the exegetical framework, I wonder if you could say a bit more about what that engagement is within the work? Because you talked about engagement as political or a social matter and that there was art at a certain moment, the late 1940s, that was engaged, and then at a later moment, it becomes disengaged. What role does engagement play in telling you whether or not you're going to get a piece of art that works in this ahistorical way? Because, we think about engagé artists, we think about engagement. I associate that kind of work with work that is more historically aware, or might require a kind of foreign historical knowledge. So I wonder what that relationship is.

And I'm particularly curious because it seems that pop art and the stuff that Warhol was doing in the '60s, from a certain perspective, is quite engaged. I mean, it's clearly responding to postwar affluence and the consumer culture that is being produced by the government and by major political actors. So when we say that's not engaged, what do we mean?

James Fox: Well, I don't think Pop art is entirely disengaged. I think, for instance, that the British Pop artist who died last year called Richard Hamilton engaged with consumer culture to try and understand how it worked and to try to show people what was going on underneath it. I personally don't feel Andy Warhol was doing that. When he made those Campbell's Soup tins someone said to him, "Why did you paint the soup

tins?” He said, “Well, because I like soup.” I do think that Warhol was a fascinating artist. I love a lot of his images, but I don’t think he was engaged. I don’t think he was trying to change things particularly. I think he just loved consumer culture, he thought it was great and exciting and fun, and he wanted that to rub off on his own work. You could say that perhaps he was democratizing art in some way, that he was trying to make it about things that all people every day interacted with.

So you can make your claim for that. But I don’t think he was trying to deal with the most profound human issues and trying to alter society in the way that the avant-garde was trying to do in very active political ways earlier on in the century. I think if you look at the early 20th century, the great avant-garde movements from Futurism and Dada and, obviously, the Russian Constructivists that Maria Tippet knows a lot about, they were really trying to change society. They were trying to get their art out onto the streets, in many cases, and change the way people thought about their position in the world, their political regime, the wars that were going on. I don’t see that in Andy Warhol’s work.

But at the same, take music, for instance. Music has a huge impact on me. I love music, but I can’t read music. I don’t know what’s going on. I couldn’t tell you when the recapitulation is happening or even sometimes which instrument’s being used. But at the same time, it does change the way I think about the world. I think the best art does change your view of things. If you read a novel about characters who are going through terrible things, it does give you more empathy with other people. And so I don’t think you need to necessarily understand the historical causation and context of what’s going on politically to be enriched by and learn from art.

SHAHANA RAJANI

The Significance of the Relationship of Jeffrey Rubinoff’s Sculpture to its Environment¹

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¹ Due to unforeseen circumstances Shahana Rajani was unable to present her paper. It was instead presented and expanded upon by cultural historian and author Dr. Maria Tippet.

The relationship between sculpture and outdoor spaces has always been in a state of flux, adapting to changing contexts. Recent scholarship has been increasingly interested in tracing this dynamic relationship, surveying historically significant moments in the formation of “the Georgian landscape garden, the Victorian urban park, the outdoor spaces of twentieth century modernism” and the late 20th century phenomenon of the sculpture park.² While sculpture was mostly a secondary consideration in the design of the Victorian urban parks, the late 20th century sculpture park is purposely built for the display of sculpture. Whilst patrons of sculpture parks are mostly local authorities and Arts and Heritage funding bodies, The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park was established by the sculptor Jeffrey Rubinoff himself, for the sole purpose of displaying and preserving his works. While sculpture parks run by local authorities form a means of managing access to the countryside and to historical landscapes, The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park—developed over a period of thirty-five years—provides a permanent home for the artist’s own artworks.

Upon exploring the sculpture park, it becomes evident that the site of display is an integral part of experiencing the sculptures. Through form, mass and colour, the sculptures form dynamic relations with the surrounding landscape. Rubinoff’s decision to display his sculpture outdoors is a critical curatorial act; a positioning that suggests particular meanings for the artworks and particular ways of viewing his artistic production.

In choosing to move away from the gallery space and creating a sculpture park, Rubinoff encourages an experience of viewing that is radically different from visiting a gallery. Institutional critique, as early as 1970, highlighted the idealist hermeticism of the gallery space of display. The modern gallery or museum space—with its white walls, artificial lighting, controlled climate, and

2 Eyres, Patrick and Russell, Fiona. Eds. *Sculpture and The Garden. (Subject/ Object: new studies in Sculpture)* Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006. p. 116

pristine architectonics—is coded with mechanisms that actively disassociate the space of art from the outer world, furthering the institution’s idealist imperative of rendering itself and its hierarchy of values objective, disinterested and true.³ The sculpture park, however, does not uphold this pretense of autonomy. Instead it enables its viewers to see a multiplicity of interrelations between the sculpture and landscape, which are both heavily invested in and reliant on one another.

While Rubinoff’s sculptures initially circulated within the art market, the conception of the sculpture park in 1973 allowed him the opportunity to work independently of the commercial circuit. The artist was freed from the constraints of scale and material that were often imposed while displaying within the limited space of a gallery. He was also released from the market’s obsessive need to constantly “value” artworks, and could concentrate solely on developing his aesthetic vision, uninhibited. The park and the works within reflect Rubinoff’s self-conscious desire to resist the forces of the capitalist market economy, which circulates artworks as transportable and exchangeable commodities. He began producing his works with the sole intention of displaying them in the park, and this new venue caused a profound change in his artistic practice as he moved increasingly towards site specificity. Sculptures were not produced in isolation of his studio, but developed through careful considerations of the landscape and environment in which they were to be placed. His sculptures were no longer transportable, placeless, or nomadic. Instead they came to be deeply embedded in the materiality of the natural landscape. The space of art was not a blank slate, but a real place, where viewers could experience his works in the sensory immediacy of the spatial temporality of the park.

3 Suderburg, Erika. *Space, Site, Intervention: Situating Installation Art.* University of Minnesota Press, 2000 p. 40

Rubinoff's sculptures have an inseparable relationship with their site, where meaning is not just located within the art object but extended to the contingencies of its context. The artist explains that shadows, natural lighting, negative spaces, colors, and contours of the surrounding landscape are an essential part of experiencing the works. Movement of the viewer activates the sculptures, giving them a temporal quality. Take for example the sculpture in Fig. 1. While the photograph frames the sculpture against a static background, viewing this work first-hand in the sculpture park is a radically different and lively experience. Walking around the sculpture, the tensions within its folded compressed shapes are extremely palpable, further accentuated by the contours of the surrounding landscape. Yet the work does not appear rigid; instead the viewer can sense the dynamic interrelations of the various forces acting within and against the forms of the sculpture, necessary for maintaining the integrity of its shape. The viewer's movement activates within the sculpture a fluidity equivalent to that of the surrounding landscape. The sculpture's surface has also acquired a patina of colorations through exposure to fungi and other natural agents in the environment. As a result the sculpture takes on colours of the landscape, highlighting the aesthetic mutability of the works, which are in a constant process of transformation. The artist, unconcerned with controlling environmental effects, allows for a productive interchange between natural agents and the artworks, which results in a close integration of the art and landscape. The sculptures therefore do not demand the sole attention of the viewer, but exist in harmony with the surrounding beauty of nature. It is however important to note, that although the artworks are activated by the topography of the site, they also in turn accentuate and activate the landscape and are therefore integral to the spatial organization of the park.



Fig. 1 Jeffrey Rubinoff, a sculpture from Series 3 (early 1980s)

The art and landscape form a symbiotic relationship, coexisting and complementing each other. The artwork is not framed in a fixed relation to its site, but in a process of constant transformation. The setting of the sculpture park allows for a fluidity of meanings and associations, rather than fixing things in standing-reserve. It offers a plurality of experiences for the viewer, with art and with nature, blurring boundaries and revealing the multiplicity of inter-dependencies with the surrounding environment.

DIALOGUE ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF JEFFREY RUBINOFF'S SCULPTURE TO ITS ENVIRONMENT

Maria Tippett: Shahana rightly stated at the beginning of her paper that the relationship between sculpture and its setting has always been in a state of flux. I can certainly agree with her observation. During the formation of the Georgian landscape garden and Victorian urban parks, and during the creation of city parks and gardens in the last century, sculpture invariably played a secondary role to its setting.

But I can't agree with Shahana's claim that today's purposely built sculpture parks are that much different from their predecessors. Certainly when one looks at contemporary sculpture parks and gardens, several questions arise.

For example, are today's sculpture parks entirely free from the patriotic, the religious, and the moral concerns that determined how an earlier generation displayed sculptures? Do the organizers of today's sculpture parks allow the work they display to interact with what we might call the natural landscape? Are contemporary sculptors given a say in where and how their work is exhibited? And is it easier for the public to view works of art, and specifically works of sculpture, today than it was during an earlier era?

When I began to examine some of the most frequented sculpture parks and gardens in the world, I discovered that few of them were, as Shahana says, "purposely built," that is, solely created for the artworks on display. For example, let's consider the much-celebrated Boreal Sculpture Garden, which was founded in 1995 in St. John's, Newfoundland. Although the park was created to

exhibit the work of the bronze sculptor Luben Boykov, it was the environmentalist John Evans who situated the work among the six acres of bogs, forest, and pasture. This meant that the artist had nothing to do with placing the work in and thereby allowing it to interact with the landscape.

Barbara Hepworth's famous sculpture garden in St. Ives poses another problem. Here the bronze sculptures are forced to compete for our attention with the untamed domestic vegetation that virtually smothers the works, and her modest stone house.

While recent parks have given sculpture more room to breathe than is the case in Barbara Hepworth's sculpture garden, there are other competing factors. Many of them are located on vast country estates. For the work in the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in England and in the Chateau la Napoule in France, this has meant that it has to compete for the viewer's attention not only with carefully groomed lawns and copses of trees, but with historic buildings. In fact, the mission statement of both parks invites their visitors to admire not only the sculpture but the heritage buildings and the immaculately groomed landscape.

Equally, the impact of the sculptures in Germany's Kunst Bahn Sculpture Park is largely determined by the way the sculptures are displayed along a disused railway track. Once again, the artist has not been involved in placing his or her own work.

The most outrageous example of distancing the artist and the public from a work of art is found in Jason Taylor's sculpture parks. One park is located off the Yucatán Peninsula and the other is near the island of Grenada. Both parks are situated under water. Unless you snorkel or hire a glass-bottomed boat, you can't see the work. Absolutely bizarre!

Few of today's sculpture parks are purposely built. But there are a few exceptions, of which The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park is the best example. Here, there are no price tags on the sculptures. There is no civic body or administrator to hit us with a mission statement or an admission fee when we enter the vast grounds. There is no historic building or railway track or undersea garden to divert our attention from the work. There's no gardener or grounds man or woman, or environmentalist to impose his or her agenda on the landscape.

At The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park, things are very different. It is the artist himself who has created the setting by digging trenches, building mounds and berms, and by creating lakes, all of which speak to the contours of Mount Geoffrey, which looms behind the park, and the level-headed ridge of the Forbidden Plateau in the distant foreground. And there's no curator who has decided where and how the work should be placed. This task is the sole preserve of the artist, who has been determined to let the sculptures speak to the environment and allow the environment to speak to them in a delicately balanced visual counterpoint.

There aren't any gimmicks at The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park either. The artist hasn't placed the work on abandoned railway tracks or under the surface of his ponds and lakes. Nor does one find a shop selling maquettes of Rubinoff's work. Or a teahouse offering visitors a comforting cup of tea. (This would not, however, come amiss since it takes a minimum of three hours to view the work!)

And finally, the Park has no cultural historian. If it did, he or she might note the debt that Rubinoff owes to the American sculptor David Smith. Like Smith before him, Rubinoff began as an abstract expressionist painter. This enabled him to appreciate the relationship between geometric form and the rigorous gestures of abstract expressionist painting. Like Smith again, Rubinoff has

learned that by abandoning bronze cast sculpture and fashioning his work out of sheets of stainless steel, he has been able to challenge the long-held belief that sculptural form springs from the centre.

While Rubinoff would be the first person, I think, to acknowledge a debt to Smith, I think we must appreciate how he's gone beyond Smith and beyond any of his contemporaries. Rubinoff has taken his work to another plane by allowing his sculptures to speak to and be shaped by the natural environment. But, I should stress, it is an environment that has been shaped by the artist as much as by nature.

While we might view The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park as different from any other sculpture park in the world and note how Rubinoff has freed himself from the gallery and everything that commercial exhibiting entails, he does have a public. He does have students and scholars like ourselves, neighbours and friends. In short, he has an audience—an engaged audience—and we can all be sure that Rubinoff's future work will take new directions just as mounds of earth, trenches, and bodies of water will appear. What surely will not happen, on the other hand, is Rubinoff selling out to commercialism, to fashion, and to conventional tastes, or even to views of cultural historians like myself. And this means that we will come to the work without viewing it through someone else's ideas and conceptions or a gallery dealer's price tag.

James Fox: I wanted to ask about the word "culture." I think it's Terry Eagleton who said "culture" is the second most complicated word in the English language, and "nature" is the first most complicated. He argued that culture actually derives from nature, because culture comes from the practice of cultivating the natural world. And I wonder, Jeffrey, whether the landscaping

itself is part of one larger artwork, or whether it's just the perfect setting for individual artworks. You like to give a tour in a certain order, which suggests that you conceive it as an entirety, as a single cultural expression rather than lots of different ones.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: When I conceived of both the park and the work, each individual piece had to be able to work in counterpoint with this environment. This is a crushing environment for sculpture because it's so sculptural itself that you're set in an entire position of being intimidated by it. So for a sculpture to work with this environment, it has to stand as a work of art. And so the way that the pieces have been produced has been one at a time in the evolution of the work itself. That was a measurable thing to me. And then when each work was done, it was set out by that barn [Rubinoff's studio] and viewed in 360 degrees.

One of the aspects of this location is that it's a 360-degree environment, which is a perfect sculptural environment and also the perfect environment for intimidation of the artist. The work had to stand by itself in this place where I would show it. Each would have to stand naked to this environment, and each would have to be strong enough to be able to survive the environment and not feel crushed or invisible. On the other hand, they were not meant to dominate the environment either. They were simply, like a human being, placed in an environment and had to be tough enough, good enough, and able to hold their own. That was the first stage of doing. So that measure, when there were no other pieces around and standing naked against this environment, told me something very strongly about the piece. That it could actually stand up and survive in this crushing environment. That was the number one measure.

And so as the work progressed gradually, it not only measured itself against the environment, but against the other pieces so that it would be in counterpoint with the other pieces. But that took a long time, because I had always planned to be able to show this work and remove it. As well, much of the place was under water most of the year, so I concentrated the work on one little field, and they weren't spread out. I knew that once they spread out, I would never send them out.

John Kirk [landscaper] and I worked together over these years. We talked and planned how this environment would work. So when each individual piece was to be placed, none of them had a specific context. But what would happen is when each got to the right spot, they would ring in and they would never be moved again, and I knew that. And then there are times when a placement would just absolutely make me crazy. They just absolutely didn't work with that placement. And gradually we were able to ring in the work into the environment so that the pieces could speak to each other and speak to the environment itself.

But the number one thing was that each piece was done one at a time and that it had to stand naked outside that barn and be able to speak to this entire environment and survive.

Jeremy Kessler: I have a question for both the artist and art historians here. Is it plausible to think about what's going on here in part as related to Robert Smithson's land art? Why talk about this as a sculpture park, in this curatorial vocabulary of placing art on the land, why isn't this a piece of land art?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: I was aware of this when I decided to take a specific art historical position, abandoning the avant-garde position I easily could have taken. I looked at this place for many years thinking, “Well, I guess I can really do a conceptual land art piece here.” And instead, when I got back to work, I departed from my own particular historical position.

James Fox: I think there is quite an interesting comparison with the land art movement here, because that also emerged in the late 1960s as a response to the commodification of art and the urban art galleries deliberately choosing work that couldn't be bought and sold in that way. Jeremy mentioned Smithson, but an artist that I find quite similar in some ways, is James Turrell. Turrell bought a farm in the 1970s in Arizona, and has spent the last 40 years remodelling that land for his work. Obviously, Jeffrey has put many sculptures on the land whereas Turrell is building one thing. But I think there's a great similarity there.

JENNI PACE PRESNELL

In Advance of Resignation Stated as Defiance¹

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¹ The title phrase “In Advance of” is taken from a 1915 work by Marcel Duchamp, *In Advance of a Broken Arm*. In his 1961 lecture at the Museum of Modern Art entitled “Apropos of ‘Readymades’”, he described how this store-bought snow shovel had become a work of art simply because he CHOSE it: “In New York in 1915 I bought at a hardware store a snow shovel on which I wrote ‘In Advance of a Broken Arm’”.

Since the mid-late 1950s, the prerogatives of the art world have largely been informed by a stance that Rubinoff has described as “resignation stated as defiance” ... a “self-fulfilling failure.” While artists may claim their work subverts the authority of social norms or corporate culture, they are in fact resigned to the status quo to the point that they’re indistinguishable from it. This essay will consider Rubinoff’s insight and argument to the contrary that art can and should function as the “map of the human soul”, that the history of art is fused with the subject in a line of inheritance from Chauvet to Otto Dix, and it carries the “essence of liberation.” As he’s written, the “artist’s journey on the path of art history takes him to the furthest reaches of his predecessor as his point of departure ... the soul is the sum of all human knowledge.” Rubinoff’s body of sculptural work conveys a “chart for evolution”, which he is “obliged to extend to his successors”, who will in turn be called upon to navigate the crises of their own age. Chief among his aims, and those of the Park, is promoting this understanding on the role of the artist in society.

Dix and George Grosz are key among the 20th century artists whom Rubinoff regards as his artistic predecessors. The first section of my paper will examine the concepts they gleaned from art history to produce what he calls statements of “defiance” and “liberation” in the face of total war and corrupt leadership. I will briefly consider how they negotiated the challenges of deep social suffering, in the trenches and on the home front, by engaging in conversation with art of the past. I will also touch on a handful of artists who linked to the examples of Dix and Grosz to address the horrors of World War II.

Painters Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Robert Motherwell, along with sculptor David Smith, absorbed the lessons of Grosz and Dix, and continued to expand the tradition of art history while negotiating the contemporary world within the scope of universal concerns. Interestingly, all four seized upon

the practice of automatism employed by European Dadaist and Surrealists, as an act of resistance against oppressive society. The Americans, however, laid aside the goal of excavating universal anxieties, and instead described the un-meditated act of creation as a means of, first, knowing the self, and, second, enabling the viewer to develop new ways of seeing to negotiate postwar realities.

In part two, I will consider the descendants of the so-called abstract expressionists, the first generation of artists to reach maturity after World War II, in the age defined, as Rubinoff has described, by the threat of nuclear winter, and the means by which they soundly rejected examples provided by artists like Grosz and Dix and Motherwell and Smith, as a “source of knowledge” and “liberation”, turning instead to the Dadaist Marcel Duchamp, Johns, Rauschenberg, Warhol, and others of the so-called “next generation” after the abstract expressionists. They ruptured the line of inheritance from their artistic ancestry by disrupting the role of the artist in the creative act and resituating the viewer as the “nexus” of information. In short order, “resignation stated as defiance” became a commodity and sent shock waves through the academy. This essay will draw clear a distinction between Rubinoff’s pursuits and those of his contemporaries, who came of age and experienced success in the greatly changed art world of the 1960s, mobilizing his argument that, in its present state, most art production and supporting institutions are not concerned with the role of the artist in evolving consciousness. It will also underscore his argument for an alternative conception of the history of art as a source of liberation.

Otto Dix fought on both the Western and Eastern fronts in the Great War and visualized both his traumatic experience in the trenches and postwar scenes of urban life. In the series *The Trench* and *War Cripples* he is highly critical of Weimar leadership, especially the systematic neglect of war veterans. To address

the specific challenges of war and postwar life, he linked to his art historical predecessors, disrupting the illusionistic picture plane while referencing subject matter visualized by Goya in *Disasters of War*, which reveals the ultimate futility of war to dispel the myth of noble death.

For Geroge Grosz, legibility was paramount in his critical depictions of Berlin life under the Weimar. He argued that art should be readily comprehensible to have the broadest impact on society. In works such as *Germany: A Winter's Tale* (1917-9) and *Grey Day* (1921) he referenced art history to present a radical reformulation of traditional principles. As he wrote:

“My Drawings expressed my despair, hate and disillusionment, I drew drunkards; puking men; men with clenched fists cursing at the moon ... I drew a skeleton dressed as a recruit being examined for military duty ... “

Rubinoff shares their concern for negotiating current political and social realities by linking to his “ancestors.” In addition to Dix and Grosz, these include Bach’s musical principles of counterpoint, which, he argues, are discernible in the sculptural forms of Michelangelo and Mondrian’s infinite landscapes. Because his works contain the “roadmap to the human soul” handed down by these artists and others, Rubinoff argues that they enable the viewer, young artists in particular, to achieve a new awareness of his/her location at this particular spot in the natural world and in this age defined by the ever-present threat of nuclear winter, in order to evolve consciousness to adapt and reform our leadership and institutions.

As a preface to analyzing Duchamp’s strategy (or non-strategy) of “resignation stated as defiance” that was embraced by young artists in the 1950s, I will first consider a handful of mature New York artists working immediately after World War II to address

the previously inconceivable human catastrophes wrought by the Holocaust and atomic bomb. Pollock, Newman, Motherwell, and Smith shared the aim of prompting viewers to contemplate the creative act as a means of adapting to the new realities of contemporary life. Their examples support Rubinoff’s argument that artists can engage in dialogue with their predecessors to help viewers orient to a new reality.

Jackson Pollock credited Kandinsky for teaching him how to “enter” a picture, “... to move around in it, and mingle with its very life.” Fineberg summarized the experience of viewing works like *Number 1, 1948* (1948) as “reconstruct[ing] the act of creation.” Because the artist’s every motion and gesture is traceable, the work maintains a sense of immediacy, which “highlights the present as the fixed reference point in the painting.”² As Pollock argued in a 1950 interview: “... new needs need new techniques ... It seems to me that the modern painter cannot express this age, the airplane, the atom bomb, the radio, in the old forms of the Renaissance or any past culture.”³ He also addressed the question of whether the layman could appreciate his work by suggesting that s/he “... should not look for, but look passively—and try to receive what the painting has to offer and not bring a subject matter or preconceived idea of what they are to be looking for.”⁴

Barnett Newman asserted:

The subject matter of creation is chaos ... all artists ... have been involved in the handling of chaos in trying to go beyond the visible and known world he is working with forms that are

2 Jonathan Fineberg, *Art Since 1940: Strategies of Being*, 3rd edition. New York: Prentice Hall (2011), pp. 94-5.

3 Jackson Pollock interview with William Wright (1950). *Pollock: A Catalogue Raisonné* 4, Eds. Francis V. O’Connor and Eugene Victor Thaw, eds. New Haven: Yale University Press (1958), pp. 248-51.

4 Ibid.

unknown even to him ... engaged in the act of true discovery in the creation of new forms and symbols that will have the living quality of creation.⁵

In *Vir Heroicus Sublimis* (1950-1) he visualizes the infinite in the red field and employs narrow vertical bands (called “zips”) to convey the presence of the artist and thus relate natural order to the human scale. This device, he argued, gives the viewer a sense of place to “be” within the universe.

Robert Motherwell produced his *Elegy to the Spanish Republic* series to “[insist] that a terrible death happened that should not be forgot”—the execution of Garcia Lorca among the countless horrors of the Spanish Civil War.⁶ The ovoid forms paired with bold vertical bars form what Fineberg called a “dramatic foil for the spontaneous emotive elements, such as the loose gestural brushwork, the paint drips, and the free irregularity of the artist’s rebellion against the self-imposed compositional order of alternating bars and ovals. The resistance to order ... stands for resistance to order on wider fronts ... ”⁷ In the act of painting, he employed metaphors of “abandonment, desperation, and helplessness.”⁸

David Smith’s sculptures belie the hand-worked and improvised practices of action painting. He employed industrial materials to create “symbols of the industrial era.” His *Cubi* series balances human values and intellectual life, facilitating a new

5 Barnett Newman, “The Plasmic Image” (1943-45) in Thomas Hess, Barnett Newman Part I. New York: Museum of Modern Art (1971), pp. 22-24.

6 As quoted by Fineberg, p. 75, from Robert Motherwell, “Robert Motherwell: A Conversation at Lunch,” in *An Exhibition of the Works of Robert Motherwell*, January 10-28, 1963, to accompany the first Louise Linder Eastman Memorial Lecture, Jan. 14, 1963. Northampton, Mass. Unpaginated.

7 Fineberg, p. 75.

8 Motherwell conversation with Fineberg, Jan 8, 1977.

dialogue between viewer and artwork by drawing attention to the process.⁹ He argued that, in dealing with irrational aspects of the natural environment and man’s nature, each project has the potential to change the world. As Smith wrote, “If you ask me for whom do I make art, I will say that it is for all who approach it without prejudice. My world, the objects I see are the same for all men of good will. The race for survival I share with all men who work for existence ... ”¹⁰

Helen Frankenthaler is a crucial transitional artist, a generation younger than the abstract expressionists, whose work was centered in debates on the merits of formalism versus expression. She allowed the possibility that *Mountains and Sea* (1952) contained “in the Pollock framework ... a certain Surreal element—the understated image that was really present: animals, thoughts, jungles, expressions.”¹¹ Clement Greenberg, however, discounted that possibility, instead praising its “decorativeness”, suggesting that the surface and color had become inseparable. Kenneth Noland was among a cluster of young artists who embraced this formal reading as a way forward. In *And Half* (1959) he employed Frankenthaler’s staining process, but with the goal of shifting the viewer’s attention from the creative act to the formal interaction of colors, as “pure visual presence,” arguing, “we realized that you didn’t have to assert yourself as a personality in order to be personally expressive ... We felt that we could deal solely with esthetic issues, with the meaning of abstraction, without sacrificing individuality ... ”¹² As Crow described, even

9 Ibid, pp. 136-7.

10 David Smith, “Statements, Writings” (1947-52) in *David Smith by David Smith*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston (1968), p. 133.

11 Helen Frankenthaler interview with Henry Geldzahler, *Aftforum* 4, no. 2 (October 1965), p. 37.

12 Kenneth Noland interview with Diane Waldman. Excerpt from “Color, Format and Abstract Art: An Interview with Kenneth Noland,” *Art in America* 65, no. 3 (May-June 1977), p. 99.

before Pollock's "sensational, near-suicidal death" in 1956, young New York artists were questioning the perceived expectation that they "owed their audience some form of spectacular self-revelation."¹³

Artists of the next generation alleged that the "Existentialist rhetoric" of Abstract Expressionism was inherently "subjective," that the "moralizing" was bankrupt, and that it had become a homogenizing cultural force that left no room for maneuvering.¹⁴ Deriding gestural painting as obsessively decorative, and no longer "viable"¹⁵, they called for a new, objective conception of the "real." These criticisms of the older generation are based on an abstracted retelling of their stated intentions, creative processes and public response.¹⁶ Next generation artists outlined a series of "problems" with their predecessors, and much of their

13 Thomas Crow, *The Rise of the Sixties: American and European Art in the Era of Dissent*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc (1996), p. 9. The younger artists were also concerned by the rising value of abstract expressionists' works. In 1957, for example, the Metropolitan Museum purchased Jackson Pollock's *Autumn Rhythm* for \$30,000 and in 1959 de Kooning's show at the Sidney Janis Gallery sold out for \$150,000 on opening day.

14 These arguments were directed, in part, at the public adulation and institutional endorsements achieved by the abstract expressionists by the early 1950s, including profiles in *Life Magazine* and exhibitions organized by the US State Department. In the latter, abstraction was promoted as evidence that democracy enables free thinking in contrast to Communism, which forestalls it. See Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom, and the Cold War*, transl. Arthur Goldhammer. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press (1983). Rubinoff has acknowledged that his predecessors in the Age of Agriculture were employed by the "warrior class" and the patron's intended message in works like Michelangelo's *Pietà* was not in keeping with a Humanist agenda. But, because those artists remained loyal to art history, their work supercedes the specific conditions into which it was introduced, and survives as an essential component in the "map of the human soul".

15 Barbara Haskell, *Blam! The Explosion of Pop, Minimalism, and Performance 1958-1964*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company with Whitney Museum of American Art (1984), p. 15.

16 As George Segal later asserted in conversation with Haskell, "We found it amazing that so much avant-garde twentieth-century art was rooted in physical experiences of the real world and suddenly the Abstract Expressionists were legislating any reference to the physical world totally out of art. This was outrageous to us." Haskell p. 15.

content was situated as a critical solution. I will focus here on the perceived problem of a gap between art and life, considering how this argument was structured and a variety of responses to "acting" in that gap.

The younger group was bound by a sense of self-alienation and armored for an attack on the myths of consumer culture. While they carried forth the basic values of existentialism from the New York School, the younger group denied that there was such a thing as fixed identity to be "discovered." Instead, they resituated the viewer as a "nexus" of information, and argued that the artist's task is to facilitate the discovery and rediscovery of the environment in which the self is continually formed. As Robert Rauschenberg argued, "I don't want my personality to come out through the piece ... I want my paintings to be reflections of life ... your self-visualization is a reflection of your surroundings."¹⁷

This conception of the spectator as contributing to the creative act was in large part informed by the early 20th century experiments of Dadaist Marcel Duchamp. In the 1917 he submitted "The Richard Mutt Case" to the artist's magazine *Blind Man*, cementing his vision of the artist as someone able to rethink the world and remake meaning through manipulations of language as opposed to someone who produces handcrafted visual objects for "retinal" pleasure.¹⁸ As he wrote: "Whether Mr. Mutt with

17 Quoted by Fineberg, p. 167. From Rauschenberg interview in Barbara Rose, *An Interview with Robert Rauschenberg*. New York: Elizabeth Avedon Editions, Vintage (1987), p. 221.

18 This was in response to the decision by the Society of Independent Artists to reject Fountain on the grounds that it was not art. By rule, the Society displayed all submissions of art. Duchamp dismissed the development of modern art from Courbet as purely "retinal", i.e. appealing to the eye. Of course, this dismissive reading of Courbet overlooks the truly defiant nature of works like *Burial at Ornans* and *The Stonebreakers*, which attacked a range of corrupt contemporaneous institutions, including the Church, the Royal Academy and consumer economy itself. He also dismissed the Impressionists as being concerned only with capturing what they see, despite the social problems exposed by Manet, Degas and others. As the artist described to Pierre Cabanne, he had considered himself "liberated from the past" since, in 1912, the *Salon des Indepen-*

his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it. He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view—created a new thought for that object.”¹⁹ Thus, in the effort to question the very notion of art and the “unnecessary adoration” of it, he contrived a system to alter its very identity and value. Rubinoff describes this strategy as one of resignation stated as defiance and draws a stark distinction between Duchamp’s work, grounded in Dada’s imperative to reject and ridicule art and bourgeois culture as an anti-war stance, in comparison to that of Dix and Grosz discussed earlier. Rubinoff suggests that because Duchamp rejected art history, his work neglects the essential Humanist function of art. Furthermore, in reviving Duchamp’s example of negation to both criticize their predecessors and create a new role for the artist and viewer, the next generation created a lasting rupture in the understanding of the artist’s role in society as inherited from Chauvet.

Beginning in 1954, when a large collection of Duchamp’s works, including *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912) and *The Large Glass* (1915-23), were placed on permanent display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and accelerating through the late 1950s and early 1960s, when he contributed to numerous publications, including “The Creative Act” (1957) in *Art News*, his “comeback” cemented a 40 year-old gambit that the creative act is not performed by the artist alone, that the spectator brings the work into contact with the external world by “deciphering and interpreting its inner qualifications.”²⁰

dants refused his *Nude Descending a Staircase*. As he claimed, “It helped liberate me completely from the past ... I’m going to count on no one but myself, alone.” From Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*. New York: Thames and Hudson, p. 31.

19 Marcel Duchamp, “The Richard Mutt Case,” in *Blind Man 2* (1917), p. 5.

20 Marcel Duchamp, “The Creative Act” lecture given in Houston, April 1957. Published in *Art News* 56, no. 4 (Summer 1957). Translated into French by Duchamp for Michel Sanouillet, ed., *Marchand du Sel: Ecrits de Marcel Duchamp* (1958).

In 1960 British Pop artist Richard Hamilton laid out a typographic version of *Green Box* (originally published in 1934) in book form and in 1963 Pasadena Art Museum director Walter Hopps organized Duchamp’s first retrospective, which resulted in his “canonization.” Tomkins argued that the display of his Readymades in particular emboldened young artists to employ mechanized production as a means of breaking through the existing barriers of the art world.²¹ And, in 1964 the artist endorsed the production of thirteen Readymades in signed editions of eight for the Galleria Schwarz in Milan. As Girst noted, Duchamp himself wryly predicted the toll of time on his early 20th century Readymades, acknowledging that the original shock effect could not be repeated.

Next generation artists on both sides of the Atlantic also embraced the premise of Marshall McLuhan’s 1951 book, *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man* (a reference, of course, to Duchamp), which examined subliminal messaging in corporate ad campaigns. McLuhan pioneered the field of cultural studies with analyses on the social implications of such imagery.²² The British Independent Group, as theorized by Hamilton and Lawrence Alloway, were actually the first to describe American consumer imagery as “Pop” and situated it as a sort of aesthetic challenge to tradition, appealing to artists to separate from “an obsolete art of agonized private experience, tied to the antiquated regimes of European power ... fixated on traumatic memories ...” of the war.²³

21 Calvin Tomkins, *The Bride and the Bachelors: Five Masters of the Avant-Garde: Duchamp, Tinguely, Cage, Rauschenberg, Cunningham*. New York: The Viking Press (1962).

22 And, in the early 1960s McLuhan coined the phrase “global village” in forecasting that “electronic interdependence” would cause a shift from independent to collective identity. In *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Makings of Typographic Man* (1961) he warned that the world was becoming more and more like a computer with the result that Big Brother was replacing the human senses.

23 Haskell, p. 40.

Hamilton penned the following statement to accompany *Just What Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?*, which was featured in the group's *This is Tomorrow* exhibition in 1956: "We resist the kind of activity which is primarily concerned with the creation of style. We reject the notion that 'tomorrow' can be expressed through the presentation of rigid formal concepts. Tomorrow can only extend the range of the present body of visual experience." Hamilton challenged the artist to become a "knowing consumer", to "accept the objects that constitute [the] environment in a new way."²⁴

In the mid- through late 1950s Rauschenberg developed a series of "Combines" including *Bed*, *Canyon*, and *Odalisk*, that foregrounded his contention that everyday materials and imagery would bridge the gap between art and life. Most objects in this series contain a reference to the spontaneity of gesture painting, although Rauschenberg admitted that he could not fully embrace chance as many of his peers did. *Odalisk*, for example, took three years to complete.²⁵

Rauschenberg argued that his role as artist was to assimilate the found objects that appeared in his everyday activities, without imposing an analysis on them. He described the artist as becoming aware that "he is part of an uncensored continuum that neither begins with or ends with any decision or action of his."²⁶ Artists on both sides of the Atlantic embraced this notion of seeking out and acknowledging feedback, "from an acceptance of the life we are leading to an awakening to that same life."²⁷ The great difference in his stance in comparison to Rubinoff's is summed up in

24 Christopher Finch, *Image as Language: Aspects of British Art 1950-1968*. New York: Penguin (1969), p. 24

25 He exhibited the combines at the Leo Castelli Gallery in 1959.

26 Ibid, pp. 23-27.

27 Ibid.

this 1977 statement: "I don't think any honest artist sets out to make art. You love art. You are art. You do art. But you're just doing something ... if you try to separate the two, art can be very self-conscious, a blinding fact. But life doesn't really need it so it's also another blinding fact."²⁸

Jasper Johns also embraced the notion that art should not be introspective, but that it should "[reorient] input rather than originating content."²⁹ He focused on the question of how the art object means what it means, and closing the gap between the thing and its representation. His *Target with Plaster Casts* (1955) is, literally, a target, and yet it also employs the established "language" of painting, with obvious brushstrokes and careful choice of colour. Crow suggested that he purposely chose a contested national symbol, *Flag* (1954-5), to undercut the expectation that artists "owed their audience some form of spectacular self-revelation" and to bracket the "marks of ... privileged, metropolitan individuality within the anonymity of bypassed, provincial forms of expression."³⁰ He employed encaustic, as a way of tracking each movement. In *Flag* there's a sense that "each stripe, each star, and the blue field were individually created by assembling small pieces of newspaper dipped in wax ... and sealed in place on the underlying ground of thin fabric."³¹ While the medium enables an emphasis on repetition, exactitude and, as Crow suggests, "literalness", the beads and ripples also function to evoke and neutralize the analogous effects of Abstract Expressionism.³²

28 Robert Rauschenberg video Interview with Barbaralee Diamonstein, ed. *Inside New York's Art World: Robert Rauschenberg and Leo Castelli*. New York: Recorded in cooperation with New School for Social Research (1977).

29 Fineberg, p. 194.

30 Crow, p. 9.

31 Ibid, pp. 17-18.

32 Ibid, p. 18.

Instead of transforming the flag in illusionistic space, he underscored its 2-D status. Furthermore, utilizing a known symbolic object enabled him to illustrate the conscious act to forfeit artistic decision-making.³³ He employed a “sign” from the real world to question the status of his creation as art object, questioning the relationship between the painted image and the “real.”³⁴ Crow suggests that, when Johns had his first one-man show at Leo Castelli in 1958, the audience received the message that the “emotionally loaded gestures” of his predecessors were “grandiose and hollow”, while his frozen in time effect functioned to “create a barrier rather than an invitation to emotional empathy.”³⁵

Artists of the 1950s and 1960s assimilated media and consumer culture in the effort to distinguish themselves from their immediate predecessors by underscoring how they were linked to homogenized culture, a gambit based on the assertion that all available conceptions of art had been exhausted. Rubinoff, on the contrary, sees no gap between life and art. His

33 Haskell, p. 77.

34 Is it a painting of a flag, or just a flag?

35 Crow, p. 19. While this Pop conceptual art was gaining steam and overtook the New York scene in the early 1960s, many along the way voiced concern about the meaning and functioning of these works, their regard or disregard for their predecessors and for the future. Leo Steinberg, for example, summarized his feelings of unease upon viewing *Target with Four Faces* by quoting Baudelaire on Ingres: “No more imagination; therefore no more movement ... For what really depressed me was that I felt these works were able to do to all other art.” In *Target with Four Faces*, “ ... I seemed to feel the end of illusion. No more manipulation of paint as a medium of transformation ... [Johns] resorts to a plaster cast and builds an actual box to contain it ... So, the flat is flat and the solid is three-dimensional ... There is no more metamorphosis, no more magic of medium ... There is in all this work, not simply an ignoring of human subject matter ... but an implication of absence ... of human absence of the man-made environment. In the end, these pictures by Jasper Johns come to impress me as a dead city might—but a dead city of terrible familiarity. Only objects are left—mad-made signs which, in the absence of men, have become objects. And Johns has anticipated their dereliction.” Steinberg, “Contemporary Art and Its Public,” in *Harper’s Magazine*, 224: 1342 (March 1962) pp 36-8.

insight on art as the map of the human soul indicates that it was Duchamp who caused the initial rupture and the Pop artists who reopened and deepened it. While their stated aims do, on the surface, intersect with Rubinoff’s insight on the potential for art in the face of nuclear winter, a comparison of the two strategies begs the question: if “culture” instead of direct experience of nature is designated as subject matter, what sort of outcome can be expected when culture itself is flawed? How can we possibly achieve the necessary level of reflection to evolve consciousness? Instead of returning to art history to both shed these associations and address contemporaneous concerns, as Johns and his cohort situated dominant artistic practice firmly in the culture of which they claimed to disapprove. Today many and perhaps the majority artists who pursue the MFA route to professionalization, claim to be subverting a particular cultural norm through a set of material references, but with the support of an institution that Rubinoff would suggest is itself corrupt.

Certainly, this phenomenon is intertwined with another narrative to emerge from the art of Duchampian dissent. As Crow described, “The eclipse of old heroic models did not bring about a decline in the importance and appeal of art. On the contrary, the proliferation of dissent and the fragmentation of voices propelled advanced art to new levels of desirability for wealthy individuals, corporations and great civic museums.” Yes, there is “aggression in the work, yet its setting speaks in a contrary voice of acceptance and reassurance.”³⁶

In the mid-1960s, Minimalist art emerged as a direct descendant of Duchamp via the conceptual-Pop art of the 1950s. Donald Judd crystallized Rauschenberg and Johns’ interest in eradicating content from the work itself and hence negating any claim of emotional introspection. He took a “logical” next step

36 Crow, pp. 12-13.

within their discourse, to abandon imagery altogether, instead asserting the overtly un-symbolic physicality of materials, so that the object is entirely literal. He constructed series of boxes to establish a new dialogue with the art of the past, from Pollock through the history of painting, in the effort to question the entire system of illusionistic perspective. If an image suggested three dimensions, he argued, it was a “compromise.” In these works he insists that art should be rooted in experientially verifiable truth. Thus, there is no suggestion of three dimensions, because three dimensions exist. In 1965 Judd coined the term “specific object” to refer “to the literalness with which this new sculpture and painting revealed itself to the observer as precisely what it was in the physical sense rather than as a metaphor or representation.”³⁷ The next year art historian Lucy Lippard hailed his work as an avant-garde gesture, writing, “The exciting thing about [it] ... is [his] daring challenge of the concepts of boredom, monotony and repetition.”³⁸ It’s important to bring Judd’s sculptural works into this discussion because viewing them in comparison to Rubinoff’s can deepen our understanding of his insight on the Humanist value of art as the map of the human soul.

Here I want to interject another sort of rebuttal of Minimalist anti-illusionism and Pop disengagement. Eva Hesse was one among a number of women artists who openly challenged the prevailing trends of the mid-1960s, by likening them to the impersonal, alienating corporate culture they claimed to oppose. As she asserted, “I feel very close to Carl Andre ... I feel, let’s say, emotionally connected to his work. It does something to my insides. His metal plates were the concentration camp for me.”³⁹ While I’m not suggesting a direct kinship with Rubinoff, she’s a

37 Fineberg, p. 281.

38 Lucy R. Lippard, “New York Letter: Recent Sculpture as Escape,” *Art International* (Feb. 20, 1966), p. 50. Quoted by Fineberg, p. 281.

39 Quoted by Fineberg, p. 299. From Eva Hesse in Cindy Nemser, “An Interview with Eva Hesse,” *Artforum* (May 1970), p. 60.

strong example of an artist who surveyed the scene and spoke out, arguing that art must be personally engaged, specifically that it should be rooted in real, tactile experience of the world. She described a personal drive to find form for her emotional struggles in the aftermath of escaping the concentration camps in 1939, and the subsequent suicide of her mother.⁴⁰ And, while I doubt Rubinoff would agree with her employment of the forms and systematic character of Minimalism in works like *Ishtar* (1965) and *Rope Piece* (1965), she did challenge the established definition of “non-work”, suggesting, “I would like the work to be non-work. This means that it would find its way beyond my preconceptions. What I want of my art I can eventually find. The work must go beyond this.”⁴¹

Hesse wasn’t alone in insisting that art should be engaged in both individual and collective struggle. Romare Bearden, who was taught by Grosz at the Art Students League in the 1930s, credited his foundational lessons on the history of art and technical focus on composition for enabling the development of African American subject matter during the civil rights struggle. In works like *The Dove* (1964) Bearden “pays homage to the Cubist grid as a way of setting off the energetic fragmentation of the subject. The brick wall in the background, obstructing a long view into space, is directly inspired by seventeenth-century Dutch street scenes. Meanwhile, the dove, perched above the central doorway, suggests ... Christian faith, without ... any systematic allegory.”⁴² Likewise in *Baptism* (1964), he “consciously quotes historical styles of art ... in the four faces borrowed from West African masks ... and ... the compositional structure ... of Zurbaran.”⁴³ Bearden also

40 Fineberg, pp. 296-7.

41 Eva Hesse, untitled statement in *Eva Hesse*. New York: Fischbach Gallery (1968).

42 Fineberg, p. 367.

43 *Ibid*, p. 367.

looked to Courbet, who carefully considered his audience, and the social responsibility of artists, an acknowledgment that contrasts starkly with Duchamp's designation of Courbet as instigating the "retinal" trend in modern art.⁴⁴

These are just two of many artists working in the 1960s, who called out and worked in opposition to Duchampian ironic detachment. The significance of their stances tends to be subsumed, however, in the persistent Postmodern narrative on the ever-increasing "plurality" of the art scene. Rubinoff has also expressed concern over the lasting influence of Postmodern political philosophy as exemplified by Lyotard, who argued strongly against Enlightenment values in support of such universal ideals as freedom and progress through history. He contended that, given the impossibility of universal values, human actions will always be motivated by incompatibility and difference.

As this presentation draws to a close, I return to Rubinoff's conception of Duchamp's stance of "resignation stated as defiance" to note a seeming resurgence of interest in "Systems Art" of the late 1960s, made perhaps most tangible in MIT's re-creation of Hans Haacke's 1967 solo show. The original purportedly opposed that institution's involvement with the military industrial complex. For it, Haacke devised a number of elaborate physical and biological "systems ..." produced with the "explicit intention of having their components physically communicate with each other, and the whole communicate physically with the environment."⁴⁵ These included *Condensation Cube* (first made in 1963), a hermetically sealed plexiglass box.

44 Romare Bearden Interview with Henri Ghent for the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution (June 29, 1968).

45 Caroline Jones, "Hans Haacke 1967" in *Hans Haacke 1967*. Cambridge: MIT List Visual Arts Center (2011). As Jones has noted, he originally called the prototype "Weather Cube", a title which accommodates shifts due to visitor presence; the later title "Condensation Cube" is more a device to capture (or present) a process, which, again, eliminates the human observer.

Jones has suggested that Haacke's effort to encapsulate a micro-climate within the gallery further extended Duchamp's ready-mades by completely detaching art from an emotion, mystery, feeling or intuition. In elevating the system to object, he eradicated the human observer from it. Hence, the viewer is witness but s/he is not a part of the system and there is no opportunity for empathy.

I referenced this project because many of my cohort, including artists, art historians, and curators, see great promise in *Aesthetic Relations*, which seeks to produce inter-subjective encounters. Local iterations include *Colourschool* and *Instant Coffee*, and perhaps the best-known laboratory is the *Palais de Tokyo* in Paris. The crux of the practice is that meaning is decided collectively, in gatherings of people, rather than individually. In my experience, there is typically an overriding claim to subverting all sorts of oppressive systems, ranging from capitalism to American imperialism, and art school homogeneity, while there is little tangible proof of a sustained "interruption." As Bishop warned, "An effect of this insistent promotion of these ideas as artists-as-designer, function over contemplation, and open-endedness over aesthetic resolution, is often ultimately to enhance the status of the curator, who gains credit for stage-managing the overall laboratory experience ..." ⁴⁶

Girst argued that unexamined re-deployments of Duchamp's ideas in the contemporary environment can be a "hollow gesture of resistance—especially since this resistance has been practiced as a meta-ironic gesture in the art world for decades." As an example, he pointed to Takashi Murakami's summation of his

46 Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," in *October* (2004), pp. 54-5.

collaboration with Louis Vuitton: “The Louis Vuitton Project is my urinal”!⁴⁷

On this note, I will close with an excerpt from Duchamp’s 1961 speech at the Philadelphia Museum College of Art:

... I mean that the general public accepts and demands a lot from art, far too much from art; that the general public today seeks aesthetic satisfaction wrapped up in a set of material and speculative values and is drawing artistic output towards an enormous dilution ... [which] losing in quality what it gains in quantity, is accompanied by a leveling down of present taste and its immediate result will be to shroud the near future in mediocrity. In conclusion, I hope that this mediocrity conditioned by too many factors foreign to art per se, will this time bring a revolution on the aesthetic level, of which the general public will not even be aware and which only a few initiates will develop on the fringe of a world blinded by economic fireworks. The great artist of tomorrow will go underground.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Thomas Girst, “Marcel Duchamp: A Hagiography,” in *Impuls Marcel Duchamp/Where Do We Go from Here?* Eds. Antonia Napp and Kornelia Röeder. Schwerin: Hatje Cantz (2011), p. 45. In conjunction with the Turner Prize in 2004 the BBC asked 500 international art experts to name the most seminal artwork of 20th century, and Duchamp’s Fountain was their top pick.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 47.

DIALOGUE ON IN ADVANCE OF RESIGNATION STATED AS DEFIANCE

Karun Koernig: Jenni, in your last paragraph you quote Duchamp saying that the audience expects too much from art. But then he predicts that artists of the future will ‘go underground and cast away the expectations of the audience.’ So it seems he is resigned to critique the audience’s expectations of commodified entertainment, instead of enjoining them to have greater expectations for artistic excellence.

Maria Tippett: Duchamp is coming from a different era. Now there are so many people who consider themselves to be artists. But what are they producing? Are they artists? Are they producing art? I don’t know. I think there is some dilution that has happened in the art world and maybe it is because there are so many people producing work.

Jeremy Kessler: Knowing very little about where he was at in 1961 or what the context of the talk was, one could perhaps think it is ironic. But it wouldn’t be that surprising that someone like Duchamp made that statement about the disappointment with the over-democratization and the watering down of culture and the call for an elite, hermetic practice. This is a common trope in the history of culture generally.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Yes, it would be surprising, because the whole paper is about him being the cause of the dilution and the problem.

Jenni Pace Presnell: And there are people like Leo Steinberg who are very vocally speaking out against the impact of Duchamp, although I think that those voices are largely forgotten. So he seems to be speaking to some of his critics.

Jeremy Kessler: This relates to my response to the question about engagement and Andy Warhol earlier. It seems to me that looking at either Duchamp's move with Fountain, or Warhol, the idea that those acts are what is watering down or diluting art doesn't seem very plausible. It seems to me that those kind of works are responding to something much bigger and more structural going on. So there doesn't seem to be much of a contradiction in someone who has already commented upon what he perceives, perhaps, as the dilution of artistic meaning, then saying, art is diluted. To me, it's obviously an elite practice, there was nothing ever democratic about what someone like Duchamp or Warhol was doing. So then to find out that they have a very, in some sense, traditional elite vision, a kind of artistic hermetism, it's not surprising to me.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Duchamp quit making work in 1923. The statement was made in 1961. He doesn't expose until 1966 or 1967 that he's even been working on anything. So in 1961, he hasn't worked since 1923 he's playing chess. So the question

is what right does he even have to pontificate at that particular point, and what was the point of anybody even listening to it?

Jenni Pace Presnell: Except that he's ignited a movement at this point.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Yeah, it's just I honestly don't think he is the enigma that he would like us to believe that he is, and the consequences of quoting him to conclude your essay is that you made him that enigma once more.

James Fox: There's this famous quotation from Walter Pater, who wrote that all art constantly aspires to the condition of music. That quotation was revised by Michael Moorcock to say that all art constantly aspires to the condition of Muzak. He was saying that ultimately popular taste is bad taste, and art is always going to go in a certain downhill direction. This has interesting implications for the very complicated relationship that an artist has with his or her audience. And we were talking about this with Vaughn Neville before: if an artist produces too directly for the audience, he's branded a sell-out. And if he doesn't produce for an audience, he's branded elitist.

Now, I think it's a really difficult position to be in. I don't envy artists who are stuck in this position because on the one hand, you are a cultural producer, you're producing for whatever audience you may have, and often you just need to pay the bills. But at the same time, you're somehow expected to be somehow above these worldly affairs.

So, I think we're being a little bit unfair on Marcel Duchamp. I don't think the problem was Duchamp. I think the problem was people copying Duchamp for 90 years. I don't think he could have believed that people would still be doing these kinds of things now. And I think, in many ways, what he was doing with those original ready-mades was expressing a rather similar objection to Rubinoff's: an objection to the commodification of art in a bourgeois culture. I think he was trying to challenge that. He was challenging it in a cheeky way, of course, but I don't think he expected that people would just carry on and carry on and carry on doing the same thing.

Peter Clarke: He was asking questions rather than providing answers, and that was, in a sense, what he intended to do.

Jenni Pace Presnell: I mean, he contradicts himself several times in this statement. He contradicts his work, in that he has agreed to have duplicates made of the ready-mades. I didn't know what to make of the quote and that's why I put it in because I don't know if he foretold the natural death of a certain movement that still hasn't happened.

I think that aesthetic relations as a practice is, in some ways, informed by the descendents of Duchamp. And what I see in a lot of artistic efforts are really bold claims that they are subverting capitalism. For example, like in knitting bombing the stop sign or something. But there are questions about what rhetoric do we even have if it's used in context like this? For example Instant Coffee does a lot of things, a lot of them are great. It is a listserv of events going on in cities across Canada. There are interventions

at bus stops and at public places, because it is all about creating moments of interaction or capturing moments of interaction somewhat in the way that the computer age has changed the way we think and connect to people. One of their shows was in this historic building, the Western Front. There was stadium seating on three sides with installations, lectures, and knitting classes. But the question or the title, *Feeling So Much Yet Doing So Little*, to me, was so Duchampian I was stunned that that was the title.

Elisha Burrows: I'm just wondering how you would contextualize movements in the late '50s and '60s like Fluxus, Arte Povera and the Situationists, because they were definitely taking what I would consider a more revolutionary stance than the Pop artists in the US. I'm wondering if someone could address that.

Jenni Pace Presnell: I completely agree. Is everybody familiar with the Situationists? Their foundation is in postwar Rotterdam with this art group called COBRA. They're really concerned with needing to evolve and adapt to postwar conditions, and COBRA seeks interventions like building playgrounds in bombed-out lots, so that children have a place for creative play. And also realizing what we talked about last year, that art and science have been broken into separate disciplines, they were finding ways to sort of reintegrate them with murals and social housing and other things.

And so the Situationists are mostly French are in conversation with these groups in Holland. Guy Debord extends on some of Marshall McLuhan's ideas, like Fredric Jameson earlier. They are concerned about this cacophony of images and ideas that distract

people in consumer society. So I think what they are doing is entirely different to Instant Coffee. Their interventions and their efforts to bring these things to life, to me, are really subversive. I do see their basic conceptual component as very different from Duchampian strategies of the same period. The Fluxist strategies really are all rooted in experiments in semiotics in the late 19th century. So they are thinking about the structure of language and how meaning is made. But they're also different, because the Situationists don't expect to have an audience. It's totally outside of the art economy.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: One of the things that makes Duchamp relevant is Rosalind Krauss and her book on sculpture in the 1970s in which she really deals with how dependent Duchamp was on the audience. Now, whether that's true or not, this is Rosalind Krauss's perception of it, and Krauss manages to transfer herself from writing about David Smith to becoming the apologist for the entire Happening movement and everything else that was going on in New York. And she relates it back to Duchamp himself trying a similar dependency on the audience. In the early 1900s he was doing theatrical things in relationship to the audience. She, as a viewer, takes the stance that Duchamp is dependent on the audience, and he's waiting for audience response in almost everything that he does.

So whether or not any of this is true, Rosalind Krauss becomes an icon for speaking of art history in the 1970s based on these configurations she's created, giving the viewer the majority stance over what is art and what isn't art. And she's using Duchamp, whether it's true or not, and her conjecture of his audience dependency. The problem with this is that she legitimates art from the point of view of the "viewer" and she legitimates that which is what we're looking at here in the group creative experience of the

Happenings, for example. So she deals with Allan Kaprow in this particular time.

I can't really say how Duchamp actually felt about any of those things. I don't know whether she made it up. It didn't really matter. But she was given a great deal of credibility in the art world, especially on a number of things we can see in the Whitney Museum still left over from that particular time.

From my perspective what is important to understand is the difference between art and craft. Craft is a process that never reaches completion, but process is everything else that's going on around us. Nature is process. Darwin is process. So if you put art into that position of process, then you remove its actual value, which is completion. And so it's a way of diluting art. Yet my prejudice about Duchamp has to do with Rosalind Krauss's explanation of sculpture in the 1970s. And she prejudiced me once and forever against him because she turned him into an icon. And in turning him into an icon from that particular period, she created a fantastic amount of doubt in me about Duchamp. I always thought he was just kind of funny, and that it ended there ... He was kind of an inside joke, and that was it. She wrote him up as somebody who was extremely serious and gave credibility to the market in the 1970s, especially conceptual art.

Her book takes you the reader and viewer through it as part of the theatre of art and part of the entertainment of art. And so it's very viewer oriented, rather than artist oriented. She interpreted him in such a way that justified her position in the whole art market of the 1970s, which went into the '80s and '90s and arguably now. So I don't know if you've looked at it from that particular point of view.

Jenni Pace Presnel: I think many of the same sort of things can be said of Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns. They took one abstract lesson from Duchamp, twisted it around, drew in something from Clement Greenberg, which was only part of what he meant in the beginning, which is only a partial understanding of abstract expressionists. You know, and so it just goes on and on.

I think it's partly about creating these preconditions or agreeing to the preconditions then agreeing to a set of limitations that the market and critics set out. That's why I included Eva Hesse, even though I know that you're a long ways apart from her work.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: No, actually not. I like her. Her work is complete. She completes her work.

Elisha Burrows: I read an article once that was saying that Abstract Expressionism was really the first capitalized art form, and that Clement Greenberg, who was promoting it as the ultimate expression of the American, even in its attempts to avoid a narrative, allowed it to become locked into sort of a national history. The argument went that it actually became, ironically, this sort of presentation of American freedom in the freedom of its work. It was actually some of the first art to be hung in General Motors and large companies started buying it, and that might have actually started the hypercapitalization in the art market.

Charo Neville That is Michael Fried's *Art and Objecthood* that you're referring to. That was a seminal article.

Maria Tippett: I just wanted to make the point that there has been work recently done on the Abstract Expressionism and the extent to which the artists were funded by the CIA. And of course their work was considered as non-objective art to have no content. All of this was in contrast to what was going on in eastern Europe and in Russia. So I think we should probably see it in that context.

Jenni Pace Presnell: Serge Guibault at UBC actually wrote the book, *How New York Stole Modern Art*, and it's actually, now, almost 30 years old. When he started his research, it still seemed incredibly fresh, that he was just able to go into all these government archives and really track the sort of interactions with dealers and the foreign services offices putting on these exhibitions in South America and Europe with the goal of swaying any remaining communists among the European elite.

But it's interesting, since you brought up Clement Greenberg's support of Jackson Pollock. You know Greenberg leaves out all of the big statements Pollock makes because, because he's just not interested in emotional content at all. He's just thinking about what direction did modern art take beginning with Manet and going through Cezanne. And it ends with complete gesturalism and total abstraction. That's what Clement Greenberg is interested in.

Maria Tippett: Weren't the abstract expressionists involved in exhibiting their work, through America House and institutions like that?

Jenni Pace Presnell: It's a surprising group of works that are in that collection. I was thinking about work that Jackson Pollock was doing in Life Magazine. And it's actually a bit earlier than that. It is a weird group. In conjunction with the CIA exhibitions, Helen Frankenthaler and de Kooning and Pollock are all in Life and other big magazines, and being promoted precisely as proof of democracy.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Yes, but there's absolutely nothing like the Expo '67 pavilion when the Pop artists are writ absolutely large during the Vietnam War. They were just outrightly paid and the trouble was they were going home and talking about how terrible the war was while they were actually being part of American propaganda. Only Mark di Suvero said he wouldn't show, he wouldn't go to Expo '67. There you go. Somebody actually said something.

James Fox: I think it's now widely accepted that there was a connection between abstract expressionist artists and the CIA. There's a book by Frances Stonor Saunders that came out in 1999 and provided further evidence for this. But I don't think that's particularly surprising. The British were doing it with the British Council in the aftermath of the Second World War. Indeed, every country was using art to project its identity abroad. Britain is busy doing this at the moment. We've got the Olympics coming up this summer, and there's a festival of culture and theatre, and Shakespeare coming out in every language. I think there is a lot of scholarship that has demonstrated the connection between the formation of national museums and the way that a nation, and indeed an empire, projects its identity.

But as I said with Duchamp, I don't think you can blame artists, necessarily, for what people do with their work, and that's why, Jeffrey, I think you're in a very good position that you can control how your art is seen, the context in which it is seen. Not many artists can do that, and their work can be misrepresented and used in less than auspicious ways.

Jenni Pace Presnell: I think part of the issue with Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns and their cohort is that they do blame the abstract expressionists for how their work is used. I think something was interesting about the evolutionary model that Jeffrey suggests. Most of the artists until 1874 worked for a feudal lord or the church or similar patron.

But still there was some room to communicate with artists of the past, even within that very strict system. So at least there's some idea that artists can step outside of that system. And that may be the case with the abstract expressionists, realizing their intention in spite of the sort of aura around the work by 1950, which includes being in Life Magazine, and being involved in CIA exhibits. Again they may not have had a direct relationship with the CIA, it might have been more like third-hand.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: If we look at the history of art, especially in Europe and especially in terms of the Renaissance, you can walk into any building and find all kinds of craft. The craft of art was just everywhere. And so somebody was paying these people something to do it because, however little they paid them, they did it and you can find it in every building.

In 1874, when the Independents [Society of Independent Sculptors, Painters and Engravers, later labelled the Impressionists] opened their first show, they didn't answer to anybody. They opened their own gallery, and it was only the artists themselves. They basically had no market either, so they, over time, created a market. Maybe there were a few patrons, but I don't think that they really controlled it. I think even up to World War I, it wasn't controlled by the patrons. The artists were still in control of doing their own shows, and the collectors, whoever they were, came along and helped as patrons up to that point.

And so it's after the First World War that this marketing really starts to happen fast, and you end up with art dealers. Who ever heard of art dealers? Not in modern art. Bernard Berenson and others were buying for the American plutocrats in the 1890s and that work shows up in the National Gallery of Art [Washington DC] and the Met [New York Metropolitan Museum of Art]. But for the artists themselves, you don't hear of any great art dealers in 1910 or 1911. I think that there's a formation of patronage, and the different bankers were coming in, but these were art lovers. These were people who were involved because they themselves had felt the strength of the work. I don't think there was any money in it.

Maria Tippett: In Russia, at the turn of the century and afterwards, we did have great art patrons like Shchukin and Morozov, whose collections, of course, are in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg and Pushkin Museum in Moscow today. So there were big collectors who went to Paris and bought there and then brought the stuff back to Russia as well.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: But they're not known as being in control of art, so they're not the vehicle whereby artists see, right?

Maria Tippett: Well, in a sense. I mean, they certainly shaped visual art in Russia for early contemporary artists, by which I mean early modern artists. It was very important for them to see the paintings that they brought to Russia.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Yes, but they obviously had a very special place. I don't see it in Paris or in Berlin. So it's this growth of an art market all the way around that alters the artist's relationship to that market over a certain period of time. But that's only because, in 1874, the Independents walk away from the academy, they walk away from the salons, and they make a statement of their own, and that is our modern statement. That's where it begins. At least for me, that's the first assertiveness that I talked about, and then it evolves to radical assertiveness.

But it's incredible how, by the 1980s, this statement had deteriorated to the point that the artist wasn't even number five or six on the list of what counts as relevant to the marketing of art.

On the Evolutionary Origin of Artistic Development in the Chauvet Cave Paintings

David Lawless completed his Honours Bachelor of Science at the University of Guelph where he studied ecology with a focus on evolutionary biology. For the past four years, David has worked with Parks Canada as a naturalist and interpreter, using art as a way of connecting visitors to national parks. Recently, his passion for the environment and art led him to the Nahanni River, Northwest Territories, to highlight the importance of this wilderness ecosystem by using diverse artistic media. David will be pursuing an MSc in Biology in the fall of 2012 at the University of Oxford.

Introduction

The Chauvet cave contains the earliest known cave paintings dating back some 36,000 years and is considered to be one of the most significant prehistoric art sites in the world¹. The Chauvet cave also contains evidence of upper Paleolithic life important for understanding the origins of our human ancestors, including Neanderthals and early *Homo sapiens*. Consequently, the Chauvet cave represents an integral component in our understanding of human evolution, both from biological and artistic perspectives. However, evolutionary biology continues to struggle with an empirical understanding of evolutionary origins that also imply development in artistic origins. As a result of examining the evolutionary context of the Chauvet cave, I plan to address Rubinoff's argument that humans are bound far more by natural history than by our cultural history². By integrating these evolutionary origins into our understanding of the artwork of Chauvet cave, I will examine how survival of the fittest might not be the current pejorative for social Darwinism.

Evolution as a directional force

All humans share the narrative of natural history. For more than 2.5 million years since our ancestors first evolved³, our history has been shaped by evolutionary forces. Evolution, as Rubinoff posits, is "*directional and progresses to ever more complex and adapted orders of organization.*"² As a result, he argues, natural history can be considered simply as history since all life on the planet is bound to the fate of evolution by natural selection. Although modern humans diverged from our shared common

1 Clottes, Jean 2001. Return to the Chauvet Cave Thames and Hudson.

2 Rubinoff, Jeffrey. "The Insights that Evolved With and From the Work of Jeffrey Rubinoff." 2008.

3 Groves, Colin. A theory of human and primate evolution. 3rd ed. 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989. 375-390. Print.

ancestors 200,000 years ago³, it still remains unclear how artistic development evolved in modern *Homo sapiens*. Thus, the Chauvet cave represents a vital insight into our understanding of the evolution of art by examining the evolution of our human ancestors during that period.

It is during the Paleolithic age that we encounter the earliest works of art known to us, in the Chauvet cave. The intricate paintings cover the inner walls, showing vigorous outlines of majestic animals as well as subtly controlled shading that lends a bulk and roundness to the forms. As displayed, these techniques show a refinement far removed from any humble beginnings. Unless we are to believe that these cave paintings came into being in a single, sudden burst, we must assume that they were preceded by thousands of years of slow evolution about which much remains unknown.

From Darwin's point of view, 2.5 million years of humans evolving from primate ancestors is sufficient time to create our unique genome. For more than 200,000 years, humans have essentially shared the same genome with our ancestors³ and if we are to accept the pictorial representations as a consequence of our Darwinian nature, that is, bound by the confines of evolution, then we can assume that we are not only looking at ourselves as hunters and gatherers, but also as manifestations of natural selection.

Chauvet cave

Discovered in 1994, the art of the Chauvet cave is by far the earliest evidence of cave paintings, preserving the art of the upper Paleolithic period intact⁴. The artwork in the cave depicts a variety of animals, many of which are extinct, including the

4 Herzog, Werner, dir. *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*. Prod. Erik Nelson. History Films, 2010. Film.

cave bear, woolly rhinoceros, woolly mammoth, bison, reindeer and cave lions. Based on radiocarbon dating, the depictions of these animals fall into two groups: one of 32,000 years BP and one of 26,000 BP⁵. Even more astounding is that some overlapping painted figures within the cave are dated 5,000 years apart⁴. The Paleolithic age was a critical phase in human evolution where two forms of humans, Neanderthals and Aurignacians, were testing their boundaries and perhaps coexisting during an ice age that covered Europe 35,000 years ago³.

Scientists have determined that humans did not live inside the caves and used the caves only for painting and possibly ceremonies⁶. However, there is evidence to suggest that interactions between cave bears, now extinct, and humans did occur in the cave during this period³. Footprints of cave bears are well documented throughout, as well as scratch marks on the walls. A bear skull has been seemingly placed strategically near the cave's entrance, perhaps to signify a spiritual connection to the animals that were being painted³. Nevertheless, Chauvet cave depicts no warriors, gods or priests⁷. However, moving into the Neolithic age, and the beginning of the age of agriculture, there are prominent depictions of war⁶. Therefore, we can assume that an evolutionary event occurred between the late Paleolithic and early Neolithic ages that is responsible for the figurations of war and religion present in Neolithic art yet absent throughout the Paleolithic age of Chauvet cave.

Visual acuity in hunting and art

All the paintings in the Chauvet cave show an uncanny sense of life. One must ask how did this extraordinary art develop and

5 Bocherens, Herve, et al. "Bears and humans in Chauvet Cave." *Journal of Human Evolution* (2006).

6 Janson, H.W. *History of Art*. 17th ed. 1. Japan: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1993. 18-21. Print.

what purpose did it serve? There is no doubt that during the Paleolithic ice age, hunting large animals such as bison, mammoths, horses and bears was vital to survival⁷. We also know that the hunting techniques of these Paleolithic people made use of bone-point wooden shafts that acted as spears⁴. As a result, an adept acuity of spatial relationships necessary for hunting these large animals face-to-face would have been extremely beneficial for human survival and reproductive fitness⁷. The ability to organize time and space visually as well as the counterpoint of space, that is, how objects are organized and orientated in three dimensions⁸, were most likely essential traits also exploited by these humans for artistic expression. Therefore, genes important for hunting and survival might have also been important for artistic development, the two being inextricably linked together and transmitted to future generations.

However, it is uncertain if these two traits evolved separately or if artistic proficiency was simply a byproduct of the evolution of heightened spatial acuity associated with hunting⁹. Scientists today are aware of a cluster of genes that are associated with both heightened athletic perception as well as creativity and it is possible that these sets of genes are those our Paleolithic ancestors passed to modern *Homo sapiens*. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that the acute ability to understand an animal in counterpoint, as well as musical awareness to attract those animals, utilize the same part of the brain for artistic expression¹⁰. As a consequence, if genes associated with greater spatial acuity for hunting are also somehow associated with heightened artistic

7 Rubinoff, Jeffrey. "Art Beyond War: A Discussion About Prehistoric War and the History of Art by Artists." 2010

8 Rubinoff, Jeffrey. Telephone Interview. 29 Dec 2011.

9 Cavalli-Sforza, L.L. "Reconstruction of human evolution: bringing together genetic, archaeological, and linguistic data." (1988).

10 Valladas, Hélène, et al. "Palaeolithic paintings: Evolution of prehistoric cave art." *Nature*. 413. (2001): 479.

ability, then it is not unlikely that artists possess genes with greater evolutionary potential and higher potential for selection. This is not to say that natural selection will act on artistic expression, and hence artists, so as to increase their overall fitness in society relative to other individuals, but rather that artistic expression may be an evolutionary artifact of selection acting on spatial acuity and hunting⁹. This logic would support the argument that, "*art done with the highest evolutionary potential is done with the most mature state of conscience.*"¹¹

From an evolutionary perspective, the ability to hunt these large animals would not only have reflected a greater artistic capacity but, more important, it would have reflected greater survival and reproduction, and hence higher fitness. Evolution by natural selection progresses such that genes are heritable, that is, they must be able to be passed down through generations, and exist in a variable population where certain traits exhibit differential survival and reproduction¹². In the case of Chauvet cave, Paleolithic humans would have expressed variability in their ability to hunt and reproduce, and individuals who displayed traits with higher visual acuity and superior hunting skills would have had greater fitness. Additionally, we know that these genes are heritable because they are being continually refined and altered over many successive generations of artistic achievement, from the Renaissance to Abstract Expressionism, where artists adapt to changing social environments that are reflected in their art.

Evidence for spirituality

The presence of 'artistic' genes, that is, genes responsible for greater spatial acuity, may also incorporate a strong spirituality

11 Koernig, Karun. "The Inherent Value of Art at the End of the Age of Agriculture." 2009.

12 Darwin, Charles. *On the Origin of the Species*. 12th. 11. London: Gramercy, 1995. 214-219. Print.

as well. In order to have survived hunting large animals, often predators, one required great spatial acuity which might have integrated a sense of awe compelling a deep awareness of the spirits of the animals⁸. Arguably, if humans did not understand the spirit of the animal they were hunting, encompassing the animal's perception of the hunter, few of our Paleolithic ancestors would have survived to reproduce. This spiritual presence is highly visible in the animals depicted in the cave. Many lionesses are shown resisting acts of mating and the imagery of fertility is prominent with the painting of a bison fused with a female human form⁴. It is clear there is a unity between man and the animal in the Chauvet cave and it is important that we look at these artworks as a fusion of artist and subject where the man and animal are one⁷. When we are looking at the Chauvet cave paintings, we are also observing the humans who hunted these animals face-to-face and, as a result, there is a strong connection that we, as observers, are witnessing that also speaks to the tremendous spiritual value of this artwork.

Nevertheless, the spiritual nature of cave paintings is not only apparent in Chauvet cave but also extends to Lascaux and Altamira⁶. Anthropologists suggest that these cave paintings were produced as part of a magic ritual to ensure a successful hunt⁶. For the men of the Neolithic age, there was no clear distinction between image and reality; by making a picture of an animal, they meant to bring the animal itself within their grasp and “in killing” the image they had thought they had killed the animal's vital spirit⁶. These insights could help shape our understanding of the evolutionary origins of war and religion since cave art from the Paleolithic age differs from that of the Neolithic age.

For instance, the Chauvet cave paintings depict at least thirteen different species of animals, including some rarely or never found⁴. However, rather than depicting only the familiar hunted animals that predominate most Neolithic cave art, the walls of

the Chauvet cave include many predatory animals including lions, panthers, bears, owls, and hyenas⁴. The departure from depicting only animals of the hunt suggests an evolution for the artist that might have also reflected the ecological environment of the day. Because many of the animals depicted in Chauvet cave are now extinct, some argue that this departure from strictly painting animals of the hunt might have been a recognition of the scarcity of these animals in a climate that was already driving many animal extinctions¹⁰. However, experts seem to agree that the Chauvet cave is not evidence for human-induced species extinction because climatic variables during the ice age as well as disease are likely responsible for these extinctions⁹. Even so, it is still extraordinary that the artwork of Paleolithic humans of Chauvet cave reflects their awareness of their impacts on the animals being hunted.

Social Darwinism and survival of the fittest

In order to better understand the implications of evolution by natural selection, one must distinguish this theory from that of social Darwinism. Social Darwinism posits that, “*the fittest individuals should survive and flourish in society, while the weak and unfit should be allowed to die.*”¹³ This theory, expounded by Herbert Spencer, has been justly criticized as a manipulation of Darwin's theory of natural selection to support Spencer's own ethical theories¹⁴. The concept of adaptation provided by Darwin allowed Spencer to claim that the rich and powerful were better adapted to the social and economic climate of the time; for Spencer, the concept of natural selection provided an argument to support the view that the strong should thrive at the expense of the weak¹⁴. However, evolution by natural selection does not respond differently to social class, race or ethnicity and is fundamentally determined on a genetic basis¹². In fact, “survival of the

13 Hofstadter, Richard. *Social Darwinism in American Thought*. 6th ed. 4. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992. 23-259. Print.

fittest” was coined by Spencer and not Darwin, although Darwin did use it briefly to indicate, “*this principle of preservation, or the survival of the fittest, I have called Natural Selection.*”¹⁴

Given the evidence for the evolutionary origin of artistic development in the Chauvet cave and Paleolithic humans, survival of the fittest may not be the current pejorative for social Darwinism¹⁴. As has been shown, and as Rubinoff argues, “*the best hunters may have had the concentration of genetic characteristics of artists and not warriors.*”¹⁵ In this sense, it is important to distinguish the evolutionary origin of hunters from that of warriors.

In the context of social evolution, where emphasis is placed on the ability of a ruling class to impose its authority on others, the development of warriors is significant. With the advent of agriculture, around 13,000 years ago¹³, humans started to colonize, and this colonization is believed to have facilitated hunters becoming warriors, that is, the hunters of men⁸. Warriors possess the same acuity of the hunters themselves, but over 2.5 million years they have not hunted men because hunting other humans before colonization and large populations would have likely resulted in extinction⁸. It is logical to assume that during the Paleolithic age, around the time of the Chauvet cave paintings, there was a very high value placed on human life because of the inability to colonize and the necessity to ensure genomic conservation in future generations⁷. There was not a habit of hunting men nor was it a value from what we can see in the art of the caves, at least from the artistic manifestations⁸. Therefore, hunting and gathering that improved human survival and overall fitness has had a long genetic history, whereas in the age of agriculture,

and the advent of colonization and war, these skills likely apply to cultural or social evolution¹⁵.

Conclusion

In many ways, the paintings of Chauvet cave represent the beginning of the modern human’s artistic development. As evidenced in these paintings, humans need to adapt to the landscape and to other animals in order to survive. Being able to communicate and transmit information that is more effective than language, as well as to inscribe this memory for the future, is extremely important for our survival as a species. With the development of the figuration of animals, artistic expression was becoming an effective method of communication between humans and the future in order to evoke the past. It is clear that natural history binds us far more than cultural history since we are products of our evolutionary past, and of our ancestors whose genome we have inherited. Nevertheless, although there is considerable evidence to suggest that the evolutionary origin of artistic development is associated with traits considered vital for hunting, that is, heightened visual acuity, this association still remains unclear. Artistic development could be an evolutionary byproduct of natural selection acting on visual acuity necessary for hunting, genetically linked and a target of selection itself, or simply an evolutionary artifact that is conserved within our genome. Regardless, it is evident that the genes associated with artistic expression are heritable, variable in the population, and could have ensured greater fitness and probability for survival during the Paleolithic age. Therefore, these genes are subject to evolution by natural selection. What is known is that artists are continually evolving and adapting their own integrated perceptions of human values in relation to empirical reality, just as empirical reality itself, that is, their environment, continues to change over time.

14 Rubinoff, Jeffrey. “Notes on 2012 Company of Ideas Forum.” Hornby Island: Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park, 2011. 1-3.

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DIALOGUE ON THE EVOLUTIONARY ORIGIN OF ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE CHAUVET CAVE PAINTINGS

Peter Clarke: David, you were very careful to liberate the sort of ideas you were broaching from crude ideas of social Darwinism and a crude Spencerian survival-of-the-fittest model. That's not a model that we want to go back to. And as David implied, the whole concept of the survival of the fittest has always had its own sort of logical trap or its logical circularity because the sort of fitness that we're defining turns out to be rather circular because we just define it by its survival capacity, so we go round and round in circles. It's saying it, in short, much less than it appears to be saying at the beginning.

And this raises, in particular, the question of the traits that we are identifying as crucial, in the paper and, indeed, in Jeffrey's thinking, which informs it to some extent here. We're isolating the fitness for purpose, as it were, of the hunter because that is so basic to survival in the pre-agricultural system. We're also counterpointing that with the fitness, if it's the right term to apply here, of the artist in developing artistic capacities. And as has been said, it may be that the sort of capacities that we identify here may be more interchangeable. They may imply different sorts of ability to adapt here.

Recent work has shown that athletic capacities can be measured and shown to correlate in sometimes surprising ways with other measures of intelligence. So that's one way of broadening the concepts of what fitness is and what we're measuring here and what we're looking at. It seems to me to be an interesting parallel.

Another example that comes to mind would be the increasing use of the term these days, "emotional intelligence." The old concept of IQ intelligence is a very arid and narrow definition incapable of grasping the fullness of the human personality with a range of different sort of capacities which we might be concerned with here.

So in offering these suggestions I am corroborating and agreeing with what David's been putting forward, and in the spirit in which Jeffrey also developed these ideas. I'm suggesting that perhaps it fits within a body of wider truth as we understand the nature of human capacity in general.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: It is really interesting how Eurocentric the art in the caves is. And it is something that fascinates me to no end—that the same lines in the Chauvet cave appear in Michelangelo and in Leonardo. And this, I can't get over because in other cultures from that particular period of time, there is not that 'lifeline'. There's not that [European] line, and it does at least raise the speculation that maybe Dawkins's idea of memes is also at work here. The lifelines in those caves are the same lifelines that we were duplicating in life drawing when I was an art student. Not copying them, duplicating. This is a different thing all together. So I found that that is a really interesting set of possibilities that only increases the depths of understanding of these genetic origins.

Karun Koernig: Jeremy, your paper is on conscience. And the question has been raised about other traits that are inheritable that might have been manifest in the work of the caves. Do you see that there is any kind of link between heritability and

conscience, or is it not really considered to be so in the field that you study?

Jeremy Kessler: So when I hear that these lines that we see in the Chauvet caves have been inherited by Michelangelo, that could mean any number of different things. There are many causal pathways that could bring a certain technique or a certain kind of visual perception or a certain way of doing something down hundreds of thousands, or even a million years.

It could be inheritance in this deep biological sense, and then scientists debate how long does it take for something really to present as a genetic phenomenon. Or it could be just an incredibly resilient and impressive process of cultural exchange from parent to child or artist to apprentice.

Karun Koernig: The question behind that was if there is a model individual in legal philosophy that assumes a person has 'normal' faculties or a person that acts in the 'conscionable manner'. Does legal philosophy consider that 'conscionable manner' is a biologically inherent way, or is it thought to be a socialized way?

Jeremy Kessler: This is a debate that has been going on for thousands of years amongst not just lawyers, but theologians as well. It goes all the way back to the beginning of human society. What legal history shows is that the idea of a normal person, a reasonable man, these sorts of standards are created by ingenious human societies. And obviously the ascription of agency is

difficult. Who is doing the construction of these ideas? But it's quite clear, when you look at the historical scope of the meaning of reasonableness, the meaning of normal, the meaning of lawful, the meaning of sin, the meaning of crime, the meaning of excellence, all of these things change constantly.

I would say that there's more change than there is continuity. That said, there are patterns, the fact that there always are norms is a constant. The nature of the norms change, but the fact that humans are creatures that create norms, that seems to be quite continuous.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: When we deal with conscience as a concept that might be inherited, we must deal with it as a part of a whole continuum—as a number of genes that might be expressed. It is built into Darwin to have these variations so that, should the environment change radically, these clusters of genes are available for humans to keep surviving. So the consequence is you can't point to a cluster of genes and say, "bang, there's the characteristic," but we point towards the evidence of this cluster on a continuum. And conscience is one of those things that reappears in human history over and over and over again.

So it isn't just norms, it's another set of characteristics. The concept of the spiritual is in every society that we know. And so too, the concept of the spiritual can be envisioned as a continuum of genes. But it's the continuum idea that's the most important aspect of this kind of thinking. You can see the error of any type of eugenics. You would have to try and eliminate the continuum, which is absolutely insane.

So when we look at it that way, the expression of the genes is in a continuum itself in a continuum. The norms that we would create

from those blocks of continuums would vary from culture to culture, and whatever the exigency is perceived to be at the given time.

The other aspect of inheritance is concept of memetics, which was first suggested really strongly in *The Selfish Gene* by Dawkins in 1976, and then disappears from all of his books up until he writes *The God Delusion*. This concept is interesting because it addresses the long-term transfer of the European lifeline from the caves to Michelangelo and Leonardo. I don't really see that as genetic, but there is a real possibility of memetics in operation over a very long period of time.

James Fox: I'm invariably suspicious of an evolutionary psychology that explains too much too easily. That discipline seems to be able to explain away almost everything, every behaviour, and suggests that every behaviour, everything that we do as humans serves some biological imperative. And it may be true. I just worry about reducing artistic expression and aesthetic experience to some biological function.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Yes. There are two or three parts to this. The first part is the advent of empiricism itself as a philosophy, which after Leibniz was trying to predict the outcomes of the clockwork universe. That is really important because the concept of the clockwork universe is the reason why art history came about, as I understand it. That Wolffian philosophy even got worse. It got down to mathematical outcomes. It was Baumgarten, as translated by Peter Hanns Reill, who then argued that the information that is contained in art perception can be expressed as something beyond the empirical argument.

What we are talking about here is not predicting the outcomes, rather only the inputs. I think it's really interesting that one can say how a gene is expressed, but not predict the outcome of that expression. The whole concept of Darwin is that you don't predict the outcome of the situation.

Peter Clarke: Would it be possible to say that our genetic endowment is a necessary but not a sufficient condition? It has to be there. In that sense, it's essential, but equally, it is not predictive of a unique outcome in this way.

Jenni Pace Presnell: I think it's interesting to take my own background experience as a case study. I grew up in a place where maybe five percent of the population really ever discussed any issues. You know, everything was just about, "What are you doing tomorrow? This is what we did yesterday." So it was really interesting for me to see that, seemingly with no outside influences, a certain number of people develop this interest in speaking by metaphor and discussing these everyday events within a larger context.

If you grew up in a place where you get used to working harder to gather this information and these experiences, then you really do develop the ability to pick out and immediately identify who else is willing to sit down and have a conversation like that.

Vaughn Neville: The question I have is, all of a sudden there were no more Lascauxs. All of a sudden, it's gone. Is, where did it stop?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: The role of the artist changed in civilization. When civilization became established, the artists began to be the first recorders of history and started to work for the system itself. In either Mesopotamia or Egypt, you will start to see the pictographic job of the artist. The lifeline I was referring to disappears simply because it becomes stylized to the point of almost being a language itself. If you look at the Egyptian work, it becomes very static, and you can just see how that comes down from the pharaonic declarations of who they are, what they are and what's predictable. And that's the other aspect we can't lose here is the concept of predictability. The concept of predictability is attempting to know the outcome and claims to know the outcome, which are essentially the basis of civilization and agriculture. It is the strength of at least pretending to know the outcome.

And so you end up with a priesthood, with the kind of cultural controls that go with that, and then the artists just have a job. If you're born with the ability for memesis, out goes the lifeline and in comes the rigid stylized line that gets passed down generation to generation to generation.

That is why I have a great deal of trouble with so-called primitive art—preliterate societies that pass their culture through their visual material. It's very important to those societies that those ideas remain intact, so the freedom of the artist is really restricted to assuring that what is passed on from generation to generation is consistent. I am sure that this is very true of totem poles, for example. We may look at them as a work of art, but in fact there's no real freedom for the artist at all.

Key to my view of agriculture is understanding the central importance of the granary. It is the center of everybody's life or death because in one hand you have grain, in the other hand you have seed. In times of plenty, everybody eats. But what happens in the

time when there is a long period of drought? If you eat the seed, the village dies and the society and the civilization dies. At that particular point it becomes critical how a person would give up their ability to make a decision as to whether or not their children are going to die or not. And so rationing begins this rigidity of society if it is going to carry on.

The key institution to agriculture that changes everything is the granary, because it is present tense and it is future tense of that village. The artist's job becomes to tell the story of that particular tribe to justify that civilization's future. This becomes a very rigid storytelling because without that rigidity you will lose the fundamental institutions.

And so the fundamental institutions have to be protected by whom? The hunters have a job to protect that granary, and so now you have a defensive posture. You have a priesthood which has the moral responsibility. People will give up that moral responsibility to that priesthood because they can't make the decision about who lives and dies.

Why people stayed in this state of civilization is that they could actually multiply more efficaciously. So in the long term, more people survived and more offspring survived practicing agriculture, than could do so in the wild. This is the Darwinian explanation, but the freedom was gone. And as for freedom for the artist, well, he had a job to do. So that is my explanation for where the lifeline went. And it doesn't return until the freedom of the Renaissance.

The Search for a Nuclear Conscience

Jeremy Kessler is a JD/PhD student at Yale's Department of History and Yale Law School. His work focuses on the legal history of conscientious objection in the United States. He is especially interested in the rise of what is called "selective conscientious objection"—a refusal to serve based not upon one's opposition to war in any form, but upon one's beliefs about the immorality or illegality of particular wars. Such selective objection challenges traditional notions of citizenship and sovereignty. He has subsidiary interests in American and European intellectual history, military and diplomatic history, and the history of human rights. Prior to his graduate work at Yale, he was a Gates Scholar at the University of Cambridge, where he studied the history of science.

In this talk, I'll examine some post-WWII efforts to integrate the moral force of conscience with the unavoidable complexity of the modern world. I suggest that these efforts offer a fresh perspective on Jeffrey's definition of art as "an act of will in accord with a mature conscience," an act that creates a form of "actionable knowledge."¹ Indeed, Jeffrey Rubinoff's own perception of art responds to a historical moment marked by the advent of strategic bombing and the nuclear threat.² Accordingly, I place Jeffrey's definitions of art within a broader history: the history of post-WWII attempts to synthesize conscience and complexity, individuality and interdependence.

In his recent history of American non-violence, Joseph Kosek argues that the years following the Second World War were "an age of conscience, a period deeply concerned with the sanctity of moral action amid the crushing force of destructive mass ideologies."³ This period notably included the first nuclear disarmament movement, decolonization, the Civil Rights struggle, and Vietnam protest. Kosek suggests that these mid-century phenomena continued a tradition of conscientious action dating back to radical Christian opposition to the First World War. And yet Kosek dates the beginning of the age of conscience specifically to August 6, 1945, the day an American bomber dropped its nuclear payload on Hiroshima.⁴

This dating presents a puzzle. If the "age of conscience" unfolded in response to the novelty of nuclear war, why would it be typified by a pre-existing tradition of dissent, one that had arisen to oppose an earlier form of warfare? Kosek does not

1 See Karun Koernig, "Art as a Source of Knowledge" (2012), 2.

2 See Jeffrey Rubinoff, "Through the Lens of Endgame" (2011), 9.

3 Joseph Kip Kosek, *Acts of Conscience: Christian Nonviolence and Modern American Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 192-193.

4 Ibid 193 ("The age of conscience began on August 6, 1945").

squarely address this question, but he does suggest that “the Bomb” acted mainly as an amplifier—making the conscientious politics of the early 20th century more salient than ever. I’d like to complicate Kosek’s story and suggest that the WWII pattern of strategic bombing, a pattern that culminated in the U.S. nuclear strike on Japan, introduced a fundamental discontinuity into the logic and practice of conscience.⁵ The first part of my talk will elaborate upon the conundrum of conscientious objection in the thermonuclear age. The second part will explore new approaches to conscience that arose in response to an awareness of the complexity of the post-WWII world, responses that include Jeffrey’s own.

I. Conscientious objection in the thermonuclear age

In order to understand the dilemma of the conscientious objector in the thermonuclear age, we first must understand the earlier model of conscientious action that failed him. In the wake of WWI, veterans of anti-war protest combined a radical Protestant commitment to individual non-conformity with the spirit and tactics of Gandhian non-violence. The resulting synthesis appealed to “the individual moral compass as guide for social change” and sought to achieve social change by staging “acts of conscience”—public spectacles that celebrated the “sanctity of moral action” in the face of the oppressive forces of modern social organization.⁶ While many people often participated in a single spectacle, at the heart of each spectacle was the exhibition

5 The contemporary belief that the use of the Bomb followed from the logic of earlier WWII bombing campaigns was widespread. Two weeks after the nuclear assault on Japan, for instance, *Life* magazine explained to its readers that “The very concept of strategic bombing . . . led straight to Hiroshima.” Quoted in Boyer 1994, at 215. For similar opinions, see *ibid* 214-217.

6 *Ibid* 192-193.

of a “personal moral witness”—acts of conscience “relied on bold individual action rather than organized mass pressure.”⁷ Acts of conscience, such as ghastly prison fasts and brazen draft-card burnings, offered seemingly utopian—yet **vividly realized**—alternatives to the anonymous violence of contemporary society.⁸

At the origin of this utopian mode of performance was a realist’s intuition: by refusing to fight, the WWI-era conscientious objector could effectively remove himself from the war’s primary mechanism of violence—the drafted army. At the limit, if the vast majority of men became conscientious objectors, the killing power of armed conflict could be significantly reduced. As violence became increasingly rationalized and concentrated in the era of strategic bombing, however, this relationship between individual refusal and the systemic conditions of violence began to break down. The vast majority of men could refuse to fight in a modern air war (especially a nuclear war), and it would not make a whit of difference. Thus, while the strategic bombing of civilians expanded the range of those who suffered from war, it also complicated the relationship between individual action—or inaction—and killing.

Strategic bombing heralded a revolution in the organization of warfare, as combat transitioned from a competition between mass movements to a competition between bureaucracies. Thermonuclear conflict was the apotheosis of bureaucratic combat, involving relatively few decision-makers, increasingly automated decision-making processes, and massive, focused force. Yet

7 *Ibid* 193, 235.

8 This public opposition of individual conscience to mass organization would become, according to Kosek, a bipartisan affair, characterizing both the young man who burnt his draft card in the name of individual freedom and the Holy Spirit, and the old man—such as Whittaker Chambers—who publicly renounced communism in the name of the same freedom and the same God. *Ibid* 199. In both cases, a public spectacle *performed* the efficacy of the individual conscience in the face of crushing, organized opposition.

even as nuclear conflict narrowed the range of lethal decision-makers, it actually made it more and more difficult to remove oneself from the primary mechanism of violence. While killing was now the province of an elite group of specialists, all national policy, including the management of the economy and even the most peaceful of diplomatic efforts, operated beneath the nuclear umbrella. Under conditions of nearly instantaneous annihilation, all national life was conscripted into the game of nuclear brinkmanship. Refusal to participate was no longer a meaningful means of resistance.

Not only did this nuclear system undermine “personal moral witness” as a direct means of reducing killing, it also challenged the power of spectacle as an effective form of political persuasion. The “mode of dissent” preferred by early 20th-century activists—the “act of conscience”—was undermined by “the prevalence of political spectacle in modern life.”⁹ In a society increasingly dominated by mass media and modern policing, spectacular acts of dissent became both less novel and more carefully controlled.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to the spectacular power of the “act of conscience” came from the government’s own deployment of the politics of spectacle. Between 1954 and 1961, the United States conducted “Operation Alert,” a vast program of civil defense drills which Guy Oakes has called “full scale annual rehearsals for World War III.”¹⁰ Nuclear civil defense was “inherently and crucially theatrical,” implicating whole nations in the vivid rehearsal of a well-managed apocalypse.¹¹ Under these surreal conditions, the theater of conscience looked like just one

9 Kosek 2009, at 238.

10 *The Imaginary War: Civil Defense and American Cold War Culture* (1994), 84.

11 *Ibid.* 2.

more performance—not resistance but capitulation to the systemic staging of the nuclear age.

Confronted with the challenges of systematic violence and government spectacle, activists and theorists in the 1950s and 1960s began to experiment with modes of conscientious action that favored complexity over simplicity and that sought to move beyond the model of individual moral witness. In the newly established organ of radical pacifism, *Liberation*, Bob Pickus called for “a marriage between a concern for eternity and the politics of time—between that which compels the single soul and that which speaks to the intelligence of all.”¹² This search for a synthesis of individual integrity and systematic thought would typify the more ambitious approaches to conscience in the nuclear age.

II. Toward the mature conscience

I’ll now survey three attempts to open conscience up to the challenges of complexity.

Universal Human Rights

The first arose out of earlier pacifist protest, and sought to use the legal technology of conscientious objection in increasingly strategic ways. In the 1960s, the specter of nuclear war and the ongoing conflicts over decolonization gave birth to a new figure, the “selective conscientious objector.” While the traditional objector was a pacifist—an individual opposed to all war because of absolute moral or political beliefs—the selective objector opposed particular wars, either because of their ends (such as colonial conquest) or their means (such as nuclear force).

12 Quoted in Maurice Isserman, *If I Had a Hammer: The Death of the Old Left and the Birth of the New Left* (1987), 150.

While the traditional objector opposed his transcendental belief in the immorality of violence to the compromised complexity of the here-and-now, the selective objector argued that certain kinds of war were inimical to existing legal and political systems, and sought to participate in the development and enforcement of those systems.

For instance, when the International Peace Bureau (IPB) met in Reutlingen, Germany, in August 1968 for its annual conference, it signaled a shift from the politics of personal testimony and spectacle to the design of new systems of communication and control. The Bureau was a coalition of major international organizations, including Amnesty International and the Quakers. Members of these organizations produced a working paper, *The Right to Refuse Military Service and Orders*, that served as the agenda for the conference.¹³ The “main intention” of this document was not to declare the individual supreme over the nation or the community of nations, but “rather to stimulate further discussion on the implementation of Human Rights regarding conscientious objectors.” The authors noted that “the vast majority of nations have accepted in principle the Universal Declaration on Human Rights,” and argued that pursuing change within such a pre-existing framework was more promising than individual dissent from all systems of governance.¹⁴

This focus on formalization and systemic reform would mean a break with the “act of conscience” model, which privileged personal testimony. The IPB took leave of the more anarchistic members of the peace movement, those who took “a more or less ‘anti-governmental’ attitude and therefore, do not ascribe much relevance to the question of institutionalized recognition.”

13 International Peace Bureau, *The Right to Refuse Military Service and Orders: A Working Paper Prepared for the International Peace Bureau Conference in Reutlingen/ Stuttgart, Germany, 25-30th August 1968* (Geneva, 1968).

14 Ibid 5.

Seeking to move beyond the dyad of the human v. state, the IPB report interposed an international legal order that could mediate both inter-state conflicts and conflicts between citizens and their countries.

In this model, the conscientious objector was no longer an absolute pacifist but a subtle legal agent, capable of embodying and enforcing the mandates of a universal system of law, applicable to all states and individuals. The modern, selective conscientious objector sought not to vindicate his personal allegiance to transcendent principles, but to integrate his own life in a global order.

Beyond the realm of law, other activists and theorists pursued similar projects of integration in the 1960s and 1970s. I will briefly consider two: Gregory Bateson’s pursuit of an “ecology of mind” and Paulo Freire’s project of “conscientization.”

Ecology of Mind

Gregory Bateson was trained as an anthropologist but quickly branched out into a wide-ranging investigation of the relationship between the human and his environment, both social and natural. In the post-WWII era, Bateson came to believe that an array of “catastrophic dangers” had been created by humans as a result of errors in the Western theory of knowledge—**errors in our understanding** of the relationship between the individual mind and the complexity of the world.¹⁵ Among these dangers, Bateson listed “insecticides ... pollution ... atomic fallout ... the possibility of melting the Antarctic ice cap.”¹⁶ Writing in 1971, Bateson’s student, Mark Engel, identified Bateson’s ecology of mind as particularly vital for the “generation born since Hiroshima ...

15 Bateson, “Pathologies of Epistemology,” in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (1972), 487.

16 Ibid.

who are searching for a better understanding of themselves and their world.”¹⁷ Bateson’s basic insight was that mind and environment were mutually constitutive. The more an individual tried to impact the world around him, the more both he and his environment would be transformed—often in ways contrary to his narrow purposes and vision.

Bateson posited three systems that constituted human life on earth: “the individual human organism, the human society, and the larger ecosystem.”¹⁸ It was the work of consciousness to somehow establish a steady state—survival—among these three systems. In order to do so, however, consciousness—initially lodged in the individual human—would have to expand. Bateson thought that modern consciousness had indeed been expanding, but often in pernicious ways.

First, human consciousness was capable of exacting massive, rapid changes on its environment—for instance, through the use of nuclear weapons. Such potency threatened to short-circuit learning processes. By the time the true effect of human consciousness on the environment had been understood, it might well be too late for consciousness to adapt. Second, humans had constructed a variety of “self-maximizing entities” such as “companies, political parties, unions, commercial and financial agencies, nations.” These entities had the status of “persons” under the law but were, in “biological fact,” neither persons nor “aggregates of whole persons” but “aggregates of *parts* of persons.”¹⁹ These artificial entities thus exacerbated the *partiality* of consciousness—their growth only blinded consciousness to the total relationship among person, society, and world. National consciousness, corporate consciousness, class consciousness—all

17 Engel, “Preface,” in *ibid* at vii.

18 *Ibid* 440.

19 *Ibid* 446.

of these partial consciousnesses obscured vital causal relationships between human action and environmental change. To try to break through these partial consciousnesses, Bateson recommended love, art, interaction with animals, and religion.²⁰ In each of these activities, the really existing biological human could expose herself to the true interdependency of her organism and its surroundings.

In Bateson’s model, therefore, the problem with modern social systems—such as nations, corporations, even war—was not that they were too totalizing, but rather that they were too partial. The goal of Bateson’s account of human life was not to preserve the integrity of the individual over against the complexity of the system, but rather to open up individuals and their societies to the vast complexity of the relationships that bound them together. As with the new approach to conscientious objection, Bateson’s post-WWII ecology of mind insisted that individual life could no longer be preserved by solitary witness, protest, or performance. Rather the integration of the individual perspective into increasingly complex systems of order was essential.

Conscientization

A contemporary of Bateson, Paulo Freire also argued that individual integrity could be achieved only through a process of learning that implicated the individual in a vast network of social relations. While Bateson’s approach situated learning within the expanse of the biological world, Freire addressed the situation of education itself, the social system that had arisen to impart knowledge about reality and to change human consciousness. Writing in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Freire was particularly interested in the education of the oppressed—of those billions of people who were increasingly marginalized by the complex

20 *Ibid* 446-447.

technological, political, and economic systems that had placed the vast majority of killing and purchasing power in the hands of relatively few elite actors.

Freire distinguished between two forms of education: education for domestication and education for freedom.²¹ Education for domestication involved the “mere transference of knowledge” from an active subject, the teacher, to a passive object, the student.²² In this model, the work of education was merely to accommodate the student to the reality of the teacher. This model only perpetuates the condition of the oppressed, making their oppressed status seem inevitable, even natural. Education for freedom, on the other hand, involved a dialogue in which both teacher and student realize they are “unfinished, uncompleted beings [within] a likewise unfinished reality.”²³

Education for freedom thus quickly breaks the boundaries of any particular classroom and takes on a form of historical action, as teacher and student work together to transform their reality—to organize new forms of knowledge, to establish new “facts on the ground.” Freire called this recognition that one’s reality is indeterminate and can be transformed, “conscientization.”²⁴

Given the theatrical definition of the “act of conscience” discussed above, it is striking that Freire criticized the *alternative* to “conscientization”—**education as domestication—for its theatricality**. He explained that “[c]ultural action for ‘domestication’ ... implies the existence of actors who exercise their action upon

21 Freire, “Education as Cultural Action: An Introduction” in *Conscientization for Liberation*, ed. Louis Colonnese (1971), 112-113; Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000 [1972]), 65.

22 Freire 1971, at 112; Freire 1972, at 71.

23 Freire 1972, at 84.

24 *Ibid.* 67.

‘spectators,’ thus maintain[ing] the status quo and preserving the social order of domination.”²⁵ The problem with the traditional act of conscience, according to Freire, is that it is an ineffective mode of education. Even if the actor’s version of reality is somehow “better” or “truer” than other versions, isolated acts of conscience cannot hope to transform reality writ large, especially when the actor’s version of reality is opposed by the hyper-organized status quo. Rather than seeking to communicate or enforce a particular viewpoint in a theatrical manner, acts of “conscientization” begin a “problem-posing” conversation, a conversation that addresses humans as “unfinished” and seeks to remind humans of “their incompleteness.”²⁶ In short, acts of conscientization do not provide answers, but instead remind humans that they are historical creatures, in the midst of an ongoing, and potentially unending, process of natural and social development. It is this awareness of incompleteness that can spur humans to their own historically conscious responses to present-day realities, their own attempts to create new modes of organization.

While visual art seems especially suited to the logic of spectacle that Kosek associates with the “act of conscience” and Freire with “education as domestication,” it does not seem impossible for visual art to engage in the alternative mode of education—education as conscientization. Such art would begin a process by which viewers come to understand their own lives as radically problematic and incomplete—as part of ongoing processes of development in which the viewers themselves can intervene. This awareness that the individual is necessarily implicated in larger systems is what Gregory Bateson’s ecology of mind sought to foster. In a similar manner, post-WWII advocates of conscientious objection sought to re-conceive of the relationship between individual objectors and complex legal systems, such that the

25 Freire 1971, at 113.

26 Freire 1972, at 84.

objector would no longer just be a dissenter to but a shaper of systems of law.

III. Conclusion

In 1945, upon hearing the news from Hiroshima, the poet Randall Jarrell wrote to a friend: “I wish I could become a naturalized cat or dog.”²⁷ Confronted by the possibility that man—his species, his own kind—could destroy nature, Jarrell imagined retreating back into a pre-conscious, pre-human form of life. Jeffrey Rubinoff, in keeping with an important if neglected tendency in post-WWII thought, sought an alternative approach, a re-imagining of human interiority that would be capable of confronting the complex brutality of the nuclear age. Jeffrey has written:

Nature, by the passage of time and the genetic sculpting of life, has created a history that is crushingly honest and constantly probing the future. It is simultaneously innocent and guilty of the most destructive crimes that lead to the most magnificent creations. Without life there is no witness to this awesome and terrifying creative unfolding of the universe.

As far as we know, we fragile humans are the only cognizant witnesses. With this capability comes the great responsibility of knowledge. This responsibility is a priori in those who are born artists. The act of will [in accord with a mature conscience] that I describe in my definition of art is the act of witnessing and recording this knowledge. This is the highest of human values—

27 Paul Boyer, *By the Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (2d ed. 1994), 196.

the recognition of the value of life itself. Therein resides the mature conscience.²⁸

I've attempted to place Jeffrey's notion of the mature conscience in a slightly wider historical field. In response to the systematization of violence introduced by WWII strategic bombing and postwar nuclear strategy, a variety of thinkers and activists sought new conceptions of conscience that integrated the individual perspective with the complexity of modern knowledge. This tendency in post-WWII culture, I suggest, can be understood as a search for what Jeffrey has called the “mature conscience.” While the traditional “act of conscience” emphasized individuality and witness, the mature conscience introduced the problem of knowledge, the problem of natural and technological complexity. To be sure, the mature conscience, like earlier notions of conscience, stands witness to “the value of life itself.” The “mature conscience” also recognizes, however, that “life” is no simple, irreducible substance, but the product of massive feats of organization.

In the nuclear age, individual witness would no longer be enough to affirm the value of life itself. Instead, humans would have to contend with the systems they had produced and that had produced them—contend with the fact that human life had created systems capable of ending the history of life itself. Only by bearing witness to—and participating in—this level of complexity could humans claim to be truly conscientious. I suspect that it is this kind of witness, a witness that attests not just to the individual perspective but its irreducible embeddedness in the history of human life, that Jeffrey seeks to provide with his art.

28 Jeffrey Rubinoff, “Art Beyond War: A Discussion About Prehistoric War and the History of Art by Artists” (2010), 10-11.

DIALOGUE ON THE SEARCH FOR A NUCLEAR CONSCIENCE

Karun Koernig: What I found quite fascinating is that you counterposed Jeffrey's conception of maturity, and other conceptions such as the individual moral witness, against what Kosek says is the 'crushing force of destructive mass ideologies.'

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Because conscientious objections and the growth of conscience is so strongly linked to the American draft, the ending of the American draft allows this to fade into the background because the pressures of bringing conscience to bear were removed. And it was almost exactly what Nixon wanted, to remove the protest from the streets.

So what is so important about what you are doing here is you are bringing the history up to a certain time and a certain maturity. But as the draft disappeared, so too did the issues that brought about the occurrence of acts of mature conscience. So I'm wondering whether or not you've thought beyond that as a means of how this can keep moving?

Jeremy Kessler: There is a real irony in that the medium of the draft, that the legal structure of conscription, was actually a remarkable way of organizing not just armies but of organizing various kinds of social thought and social action that were very important to producing most of the really crucial social movements of the 20th century.

So even going back to World War II, many of the techniques that we then see in the Civil Rights Movement in the '50s and '60s were actually developed by conscientious objectors who were in prison during World War II. For example Bayard Rustin, who organized the March on Washington in 1963, was in a federal penitentiary.

So it was actually an incredibly fruitful way of organizing and inciting dissent. The post-draft history of American war is clear; not having the draft does not impede military action. It reshapes it.

The question of where does conscientious objection go after the draft is an interesting one. There is a very literal answer I'm fascinated by, is that where conscientious objection is invoked today in American law is in the medical and the reproductive rights context. So that is where modern-day conscientious objectors are recognized by law. Most of them are doctors, nurses, and pharmacists who either refuse to provide contraception or refuse to perform abortions. So this is a fascinating change from conscientious objection being a mode of critique of the warfare state to being a mode of critique of a certain version of the welfare state, of a certain provision of reproductive health services.

And much of the Supreme Court debates over Obamacare—the American attempt to become a slightly more welfarist country—was a conservative critique, very much articulated in the language of conscience, that the expansion of the welfare state will enter these private areas of individual medical and biological choice.

So no doubt conscientious objection is a protean concept. People respond to the law that is out there. So when the law changes, the nature of social response to the state will also change.

Peter Clarke: Can I follow up on that by just pressing you about the definition of conscientious objection. It is important to be very clear about what we mean by it in order to continue this discussion.

If one just takes the literal meaning of the words, it's an objection motivated by conscience. Should we see this as an objection to the state engaging in this activity at all, whether it be military or whether it be some sort of welfare function? Or should it be seen as a more principled, individualistic type of objection which says, "Personally, I opt out of this"? That I don't want to be a part of it, and if my refusal to be a part of it brings me into conflict with the law, that doesn't matter. It's overwritten by conscience. But the nature of the protest is still individual to that extent, rather than what we might call political in trying to stop the activity itself. Is that an important distinction?

Jeremy Kessler: I think it is a very important distinction, and at times it has been an important distinction within the law itself. But I think you're right to look beyond just the narrow confines of the legalisms. The evolution of conscientious objection over the 20th century is precisely an historical movement between these two concepts as you've articulated them.

In the early 20th century, the Christian theological two kingdoms analysis is still influential. It argues that there are two sovereignties: one is the sovereignty of the state, and one is the sovereignty of God. Where the sovereignty of the state impinges upon the sovereignty of God, it is simply negated, and you then are operating under the dictates of God. At that moment you are beyond political questions. There are certain questions that are not political questions, and they are answered by reference to divine command.

And that understanding, particularly in the post-Reformation tradition, does not involve attempts to change the state. Quite to the contrary, the two kingdoms analysis involves total non-intervention in the state. The most extreme form of this in America and Germany were the Mennonites who descended from one particular Reformation thinker, Menno Simons. They take no part in any political activities, they refuse to fight in war, they don't even vote. The fact that they were conscientious objectors, was really just an adjunct of this more general retreat from political life in order to better preserve the integrity of God's command.

What you see as the century goes on is that conscientious objection becomes increasingly a mode of critiquing the state, of saying that there are certain practices that the state must not engage in, and it is on the individual conscientious objector to do something about it. And I think you're right, just looking at it inductively, the meaning of the phrase actually changes.

Karun Koernig: Your analysis leads to the Civil Rights Movement, so I wonder what you see the role of civil society is, because, we had this debate last year about the individual versus social aspects of conscience. One of your definitions of conscience is integrating one's individual sense of conscience with a sense of responsibility to act. Not just to remove yourself personally from what you see as a harmful behaviour, but to influence group action.

I don't see the end of this second type of behaviour, this conscience in social activism. I definitely see it continuing, very specifically in group action. So I would like you to comment on what you see the connection is between individual conscience and group action, specifically related to civil rights.

Jeremy Kessler: There are two different questions in there. The first is, what is the relationship between the experience of, “Oh, I have an individual conscientious edict to do something,” and how does that relate to group action? I think there are some models of conscience where it really was just a purely individualistic commitment where the person would absent himself from the problematic processes that are going on. But I think generally that is actually the marginal case.

Usually when people are feeling passionate about something, they do try to organize themselves in various collectivities. And maybe that’s partly because the causality’s actually the other way around. The reason why we feel passionately about things is because we’re participating in communities where, where we experience certain edicts. So you’re socializing with a group of people, whether in a church or a college or a university or an oppressed area of a city, and you all start to experience, collectively, the same kind of pang of conscience. So I don’t think in any way that conscience is opposed to collective action. I think generally, we see it emerge in patterns of collective action.

The second point I think you’re referring to is, how, after the draft, maybe the specific language of conscientious objection fades or goes to different places all over the world. We see mass movements, we see groups of people engaging in what very much seems to be conscientious action. And I think that’s undeniably the case. I am interested in trying to piece apart different kinds of social movements and different kinds of protest movements. And one dimension on which you could piece them apart that I think relates to this question of conscientious objection as a particular form of social action, political action, or moral action, is what is the relationship between the movement and the state?

Because conscientious objection as a term was not used by 15th, 16th, 17th century Christians. It is a term that dates from the

mid-19th century in England. Its original use interestingly, has always been legal. The original use of the term ‘conscientious objection’ was in response to compulsory smallpox vaccination laws that were passed by the British parliament in the 1850s. Vaccination used to be a very gruesome endeavour, not just a nice little syringe. It involved real horrible gouging of the flesh. And the folks they would usually do this to first were poor children. So understandably, the families of these poor children resisted and developed this term, conscientious objector, and actually went into court and got equitable relief from being forced to offer their children up to these vaccinations. Since then, it migrated into the war context and now we’ve seen it migrate back into a medical context.

But the commonality between all of those things is a very conscious relationship between people in civil society and organs of the state. So not just saying, “We don’t like the state,” actually going into court, actually trying to change the way bureaucrats were operating, often making arguments that might have been more antinomian and more spiritual, but engaging in the state.

I think it’s interesting that starting in the ’60s after the Civil Rights Movement reached its height, you begin to see social movements that are more anti-statist, that are not so much making claims on the state, but saying we’re tired of the state, we’re upset with the state, we want to get rid of it.

That’s actually quite funny because that critique has often been a Libertarian fantasy. So there is this shift that I actually would date in the 1960s right after the fulcrum of the Civil Rights Movement, when social movements begin to become more anti-statist. Yet the end of the Civil Rights Movement saw the establishment of massive federal bureaucracies that enforce civil rights laws.

So in amongst these big social movements there is a greater anti-statist element today than you saw in the mid-20th century, as far as I can see.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: There's something interesting that underlies another area of your paper. Civil defence drills were a very important part of the plan for deterrence, especially in the earlier times of it, because it was considered critical to have your population be able to survive by leaving the city and moving into areas of safety. The case for civil defence was argued as a necessity by Herman Kahn, both in *On Thermonuclear War* and in *Thinking About the Unthinkable*, so it was a very important part of deterrence. By 1962, it seems to disappear. And this is my question about this underlying aspect of it, because Kahn still pleads for it in his 1983 book.

When I was a student in the United States after 1962, it was as though once the Cuban Missile Crisis happened, nobody would ever pay attention again. I'm trying to work out a concept of trauma in 1962 of which you're raising, and I'm wondering whether or not you had looked at the reason why civil defence disappears after 1962. The policy of deterrence doesn't change. But I know from living through that period that nobody believed that civil defence was going to actually protect them for a moment when it really came down to the crisis.

Jeremy Kessler: That history is a fascinating movement from the intense ten-year immediate post-World War II period where you had the original formulation of the idea of deterrence. The idea was the reason why you needed to have civil defence drills was not because anyone would actually be saved in a nuclear

attack, but rather, you needed the population to be committed to the strategy of nuclear deterrence, the idea that there could be a limited nuclear exchange and that everyone would not be wiped out. And it was thought that that was the only condition under which the population would go along with this idea of accumulating larger and larger stockpiles of nuclear weapons.

After the Cuban Missile Crisis, people caught on to the fact that if this goes down it doesn't matter where you'll be hiding or how many supplies you've stored up, we're all going to be wiped out. So I think there is that trauma, and I actually think that that realization, that the government can pursue policies that in no way will protect or sustain the population, is actually a piece of the generally increasing anti-statism that you see in the 1960s. This move from a politics of either seizing control of the state or reforming the state, to a politics of rejecting the form of the state altogether. I definitely think that this trauma, as Jeffrey called it, is a part of that, at least in the movements of the 1960s in the United States.

Bob Anderson: I study the nuclear business from the inside, and I'm interested in the way it's insulated or inoculated against the penetration of conscientious objection.

I'd like to talk about my experience when I came to work with the Society of Friends in 1972, working for the Americans, the Canadians, the British, the Australians. What I learned was that the North American anti-statist sentiment of the 1960s, which included "Off the pigs, smash the state," had a long and complex afterlife into the '70s. Groups like the Society of the Friends (the Quakers) had already learned how to engage with American, Canadian, British legal systems and, in fact, legislative systems. Offices in Washington linked into wider movements, and were hives of activity, doing counter-military research, then informing

legislators, then influencing legislators, finding a fulcrum of legal leverage first against the Vietnam war, then against the military-industrial complex itself.

And those very people float a few years later, around 1975, into the Carter movement. Carter came to power in small part as an 'anti-nuclearist,' and 'environmentalist' too. And those people, trained in anti-war methods, found a new arena from 1976 onwards—limiting U.S. exports of nuclear materials like enriched uranium; appearing before the Nuclear Regulatory Commission; intervening in the legislative process; blocking the construction of fast breeder reactors in the southern US. So I think it wouldn't be fair to hold to this concept of a weakened anti-statist movement too tightly. Those ideas were still alive and well in the Carter world in the U.S. in 1979, but were gradually diminished by the efficacy of surveillance, and eclipsed by the greater public attraction of a more effective quasi-state intervention after 1980; this was about military preparation and engagement, vis-à-vis Iran and Afghanistan.

Jeremy Kessler: I was trying to point to this increasingly subtle professional cooperation with the state from the late '60s as an avenue for the continuance of conscientious objection, as long as it lasted.

There is debate that is going on quite fiercely in the area, not so much among those who study anti-nuclear policy, but within another and quite related Carter era innovation: the innovation of international human rights law. Even though the Universal Declaration of Human Rights goes back to 1948, the recent history shows us that the modern day concept of human rights, as it is incorporated in all these new constitutions in the third world, really dates to the mid '70s. And President Carter and the

U.S. State Department at that time were very influential in putting that on the agenda.

Some people argue that this is a great victory for the expansion of what once was a more individualistic, personal kind of moral critique of politics to this institutionalized form of morality that comes to constrain states. Others are more sceptical, and argue that human rights law really just doesn't do that much. So in a sense, the kind of moral force of the old critiques of conscience have been formalized, but in a rather ineffectual way.

I'm not a participant in that debate, but I've read it very curiously, because it is a fascinating question. There are always these moral critiques of politics. How can they be leveraged most effectively? Is the best way to do it formalizing them in forms of new law? Is the way to just engage in wild, bacchanalian protests? And I'm not sure there's one answer to the question of efficacy when it comes to constraining forms of state power.

Karun Koernig: I want to remind us of the fact that conscience or conscientious objection can be to other forms of overwhelming social power other than state power. I want to refocus our minds what can be or what has been the role of the artist both collectively and individually. Having worked within an activist group, what ended up happening is that I came to it from a experience of conscience individually; however, to be effective, you realize that your own participation or lack of participation in what Kosek calls destructive mass ideologies won't make much difference to the outcome. So for me it seems that group action was imperative once the need to act became conscious. However, group action always brings with it a danger of getting locked into a group mentality or groupthink. Once that happens it is very

difficult then to, as an individual, inject any kind of new perspective into that practice.

So once you're committed to "off the pigs," "down with the state," your analysis becomes very narrow and it becomes very ideological and it then becomes very operational and instrumental.

So my interest in Jeffrey's work was that it offered me a valuable new perspective for me to take a step back just to re-evaluate my assumptions. However, the work and ideas had to be powerful enough for me to take them seriously. So I was able to accept the gift, which Jeffrey speaks of. The artist can provide this because their action is directed at an idea hegemony, rather than a physical force hegemony. In this way the individual moral witness, as you say it, Jeremy, can still be effective.

Charo Neville: I just think it's interesting that you brought it back to that point, because I was just sitting here scribbling a bunch of notes about this. And you brought up seeing the tableau of youth projects in Nairobi and how they were addressing their immediate situation in a visual way. I have been trying to figure this out in my own practice as a curator, because I lived in the Downtown Eastside for a long time, and so I was always intersecting Downtown Eastside Vancouver activist practices and a lot of street artists. I was always trying to figure out for myself what I could consider art within that, and what was just activist or community related practice.

Just within the last year while watching the Occupy Movements and the Arab Spring, this radical transformation of consciousness around the world, I have been trying to figure out how to address that in an exhibition. This resulted in an exhibition in the fall called "An Era of Discontent: Art as Occupation." I have been

trying to imagine what that could be, without it being about the Occupy movement, but addressing more of a shift in consciousness in general, and thinking about how an individual artist might deal with that within their practice. But also not excluding what it means to get that shift in consciousness across a group.

I'm finding that in my research, I'm leaning more towards artists who have practices that are more philosophically based instead of looking at the street-based practice. I have decided to think about occupation more as a question, not of geographical occupation or political occupation, but as ideological occupation.

One of the works that I want to include is by the curator of the Berlin Biennale, which is a multi-channel video installation where he's staged and used actual documentation of protests around the world and conflated them all together. You are in this room with this cacophony of sound of just mass protests, so it really gives that sense of you being in that space and witnessing the theatre of it. So there are various artists who are dealing with this issue, but through maintaining it being art.

One question that I still have is what the capacity of that kind of work is to shift consciousness in the viewer, which is what I want to do, to bring the political into the gallery space.

Karun Koernig: My question for you would be what is the additional value of that art.

What is the additional value of that art to the efficacy that either the artist is trying to have or that movement is trying to have, or those other people being affected by their individual conscience are trying to have?

Charo Neville: It in part depends on the audience. I'm interested more in an art-going audience and looking at how contemporary artists are dealing with the political. Because during this forum I've gotten a sense like that's not happening, but in fact, it is. It's constantly happening. It might take a little while until we really see that appear in exhibitions, which is why I really wanted to have this show. But I'm not entirely sure the extent to which it actually enacts social transformation. I think that there are two different things going on. I think there are contemporary artists who are working within their world, and then there are people who are really on the ground.

Karun Koernig: The problem is that there are a lot of artists that amplify a message of their particular milieu, whatever social, political milieu they have, and so there's not that much difference in their perception and the perception underlying a group's existing political activity. Whether it's "Down with the pigs," or "Up with the whales," or "Sideways with the trees," or whatever it is, that's what they're going to do, and they're just restating a political statement in a different medium.

So that was my point. Is there something additional or different or more valuable or differently processed by those artists.

Charo Neville: If you look through the history of protest movements, there's always been art. So it's protest through visual metaphor. I'm also trying to figure out whether to have a whole room dedicated to protest poster art. Art is so effective at getting messages across, that I think there are always some form of visual communication within those movements.

Jeremy Kessler: It seems, Karun, that you are pointing to a tension that always plagues the question of art and politics and the relationship of art and politics. I thought James said nicely that art teaches you patience. In dealing with complex art that challenges one's received beliefs and actually slows down processes of ideological communication of political projects.

On the other hand, art throughout history has also worked to bring people together and create new collectivities and give people the energy to pursue common projects. I think that's one of the most fascinating things about art, is this double-sided nature, while on the one hand, it interrupts our commitments and makes us pause and reconsider, on the other hand, it's actually very good at energizing people and getting them to recommit to their beliefs.

Karun Koernig: Well, I would pose that question to James and Jenni, I'll just put it bluntly: do you see art mainly as propaganda in the service of mass destructive ideology, as Jeremy puts it, or do you see the art of the recent forty or fifty years, more like Charo puts it, as a truly constituent of part of a group effort at conscientious objection to some kind of power hegemony?

Jenni Pace Presnell: Sometimes it can be more problematic to say that this project only seems to serve the spectacle and numb our response to media imagery, whereas that project seems to be much more effective. I think it's better to understand that many of these projects work in multiple ways at different moments and serving different audiences. I think there has been some incredibly effective work in the last ten years. For example, one of the works of Lebanese artist Walid Raad is interesting this way. He

mapped out all of the bullet marks on a block of buildings over the period of the revolution and in this recent outbreak in fighting.

James Fox: Another example of this recently was a protestor in London called Brian Haw who set up a mass protest on Parliament Square and lived there in a tent for years after the Iraq war. And then the government passed a shameful piece of legislation that prevented him being able to do this. They said you weren't allowed to protest within a mile of Parliament. So an artist called Mark Wallinger, quite a highly regarded artist, decided to take the whole protest and reassemble it in Tate Britain along a line which happened to be exactly one mile from Parliament. I thought it was very successful.

But in general, I feel that political art is quite a difficult thing to make work, because I think often the sole purpose of the art is simply to make a political point, and sometimes the art itself suffers. I think art has to work on its own terms as well. That said, there have been artworks that are fantastic works of art and have had huge political impact. Guernica is one of the most famous examples. Goya's Disasters of War is another. But if art is being used simply as a tool to make a very political and un-artistic point, there is a risk that the art simply becomes a means to an end.

JEFFREY RUBINOFF

Existential Realities of Post Agriculture

Rubinoff completed his B.A. and M.F.A. in the 1960s in the United States, returning to Canada in 1969. His one-man shows included The Helen Mazelow Gallery, The Ontario Science Center, The Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park, Queen's Park Toronto, York University, and Two Sculptors New York.

In the past two decades he concentrated on group historical exhibitions including works by sculptors David Smith, Alexander Calder, Anthony Caro, Mark di Suvero, Nancy Graves, George Rickey, Beverly Pepper, Tony Smith, and Robert Murray.

In 1973, Rubinoff purchased an 80-hectare farm on Hornby Island, off the west coast of British Columbia, Canada, for the eventual establishment of a sculpture park. Living and working on site he has created almost a hundred sculptures, constructing each piece alone in his studio from CORTEN or stainless steel. Located in the former barn, the studio is uniquely equipped with a one-man steel foundry, making it possible to cast the complex shapes seen in his later series.

I was born in the shadow of the endgame.

I am an artist.

Art is an act of will in accord with a mature conscience.

There can be no resignation.

The artist is witness to existence itself.

Art is the celebration.

So ended my 2011 presentation¹.

This year's conversation progresses to post agriculture. As I have stated, my insights do not in any way imply a new ideology or any other prescription. There is no new grand narrative.

Art is valued by the artist's unique perception that might provide original perspectives. This was most certainly the value placed on art as a source of knowledge by the great German philosophers, Baumgarten, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and above all, Hegel. They in turn influenced the evolution of modern academic art history.²

Art is existential to the artist.

This raises the questions:

What is art's relationship to the existential realities of the artist's time?

1 2011 Yale Forum at the JRSP.

2 Kultermann, Udo, 1993. *The History of Art History*, Abaris Books Inc.

What are those existential realities?

What is art's value if it fails to address those realities?

Institutes and corporations are subject to the standards of plastic conventional morality.

Can art become the fulcrum for the reconciliation of science with history to lever the value of conscience beyond the plasticity of morality?

I perceive three existential realities that characterize post agriculture:

Art. Nuclear Deterrence. And Transgenic Engineering.

I have not included Global Warming although it is a major and obvious issue. However, it is only possible as a mass choice and that choice is made with the input of vast amounts of readily available information. As a mass conscious choice, the continuance of the production of greenhouse gases will eventually force a mass adaptation to the changed conditions. As such I do not categorize this as an existential reality.

Art is self-contained truth. A work of art is perfection by completeness. This is also how I describe metaphor.

My perception of art is that it is an act of will in accord with a mature conscience. Nuclear Deterrence is the abrogation of conscience. Unlike global warming there is no mass choice. The weapons were developed and deployed secretly and then those secrets were leaked by stealth to the Soviet Union who had a secret development of their own. By 1949 the Soviets exploded

their first bomb.³ Thus both the weapons and Deterrence were born out of stealth and perfidy.

Here we have the strongest example of the difference between individual conscience and the mouldable nature of morality. Individual conscience is repelled by the inherent game strategies of mega death. On the other hand our day-to-day survival depends on the exercise of those strategies.

Less predictable players have already entered the arena. It is thus unrealistic to expect that nuclear weapons will be given up in any foreseeable time as Deterrence addresses these new circumstances.

Still it can be argued that there is a moral imperative in maintaining Deterrence as the least worst option. Certainly moment-to-moment peace is better than the historical predictability of the exercise of these weapons.

By “Transgenic Engineering” I refer to the advent of recombinant DNA and resulting transgenic organisms. Transgenic refers to “... *an organism containing genetic material into which DNA from an unrelated organism has been introduced.*”⁴ This was realized in the early 1970s and Transgenic Engineering is to traditional plant and animal breeding as nuclear weapons are to conventional weapons.

Genetic Engineering also involves gene manipulation within species. Although this may revive the issues of eugenics, in the main it involves such things as gene therapy in individual humans. Personalized medicine will doubtlessly be a huge tech-

3 Badash, Lawrence, 1995. *Scientists and the Development of Nuclear Weapons*, Humanity Books, Amherst, New York. Page 79

4 *Shorter Oxford University Dictionary*, 6th Edition, 1993, Oxford University Press

nology boom. Transgenic crops have already arrived. Therefore transgenic modification of the human genome appears to only be a matter of time.

There are obviously no lessons of history for Genetic Engineering, but it is necessary to understand the brief evolution of Nuclear Deterrence and understand the pitfalls of continuing to allow a similar evolution for transgenic organisms.

Both the reality of art and Genetic Engineering rely on the continued tenuous working of Nuclear Deterrence and that it does not escalate to its ultimate reality of mutually assured destruction. This depends on rationality prevailing among competitive nations and hegemonies. Stability exists only moment to moment and the necessity for indefinitely continued rationality among the existing bodies has had no historical precedence.

Therefore Nuclear Deterrence exists beyond the lessons of history. No major powers have in the past invested so much in the preparation for war and not succeeded in going to war.

History, then, rules against Nuclear Deterrence.

Corollary to this soul-destroying path is the Military Industrial Complex⁵. It is important to trace the historical sources of:

“Akin to, and largely responsible for the sweeping changes in our industrial-military posture, has been the technological revolution during recent decades.

“In this revolution, research has become central; it also becomes more formalized, complex and costly. A steady

5 See copy of Eisenhower’s Farewell Address in Appendix A of this essay.

increasing share is conducted for, by, or at the direction of, the Federal government.

“Today, the solitary inventor, tinkering in his shop, has been overshadowed by task forces of scientists in laboratories and testing fields. In the same fashion, the free university, historically the fountainhead of free ideas and scientific discovery, has experienced a revolution in the conduct of research. Partly because of the huge costs involved, a government contract becomes virtually a substitute for intellectual curiosity. For every old blackboard there are now hundreds of new electronic computers.

“The prospect of domination of the nation’s scholars by Federal employment, project allocations, and the power of money is ever present and is gravely to be regarded. Yet in holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite ...”

In 2011 I spoke of how the Enlightenment had turned on the humanity that it had meant to liberate.

Interestingly, in tracing the descent of the military-industrial complex, we encounter the foundation of academic art history and its antecedent, art as a source of knowledge.

Giorgio Vasari was the first art historian. His book *The Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* was written in 1550. His life 1511-1574 makes him a contemporary of Michelangelo (1475-1564). A painter himself, this comprises the first written artists’ art history.

In review of Vasari’s book *The Encyclopedia Britannica* states:

“ ... Vasari’s work in *Lives* represents the first grandiose example of modern historiography and has proven to be hugely influential. The canon of Italian Renaissance artists he established in the book endures as the standard to this day. Moreover, the trajectory of art history he presented has formed the conceptual basis for Renaissance scholarship and continues to influence popular perceptions of the history of Western painting ... ”⁶

Exactly two hundred years later, philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714-1762) published the first edition of his book *Aesthetica* (1750) in the midst of the German Enlightenment or “Aufklärung.”

Peter Hanns Reil in *The German Enlightenment and Rise of Historicism*⁷ states:

“ ... By the beginning of the eighteenth century there was an increasing demand for a reassessment of both philosophy and history ... One of the major goals of the reassessment was to evolve a strategy of analysis capable of joining history and philosophy in order to open up new vistas for man’s understanding of himself and his milieu. In Germany this movement became dominant with the decline of Wolffian philosophy, beginning about the fourth decade of the eighteenth century.”⁸

“ ... [Christian] Wolff strove to apply mathematical and syllogistic logic to all fields of knowledge. For him, mathematics, which

6 Vasari, Giorgio. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2012. Web. 27 Apr. 2012

7 Reil, Peter Hanns, 1975. “*The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism*”, University of California Press.

8 *Ibid*, Page 30

he equated with syllogistic reasoning, was the propaedeutic to all understanding ...⁹

“ ... Baumgarten sought to compliment traditional Wollfian philosophy by evolving what he called ‘sensitive knowledge’, the type of knowledge conveyed by art. He invented the word ‘aesthetics’ to describe this activity. Cognizant of the pitfalls of an aesthetics founded either on universal norms or on pure effect, Baumgarten tried to devise a method of observation which would mediate between positive and empirical modes of apprehension. Instead of obliterating the concrete by divesting it of its qualitative elements—the ultimate goal of [Christian] Wolff’s ‘universal knowledge’ [*mathesis universalis*]—the aesthetic method directed the observer to dwell upon concrete phenomena while attempting, at the same time, to understand them philosophically ... ”¹⁰

“ ... By the 1760’s the Leibnizian idea of perfectibility had become one of the central concepts of German aesthetics. In 1755, three years before the second volume of Baumgarten’s *Aesthetica* appeared, Moses Mendelssohn had applied the idea of perfectibility to artistic understanding ... Mendelssohn drew a distinction between the perfection of man’s physical nature, which is generally complete, and the perfection of his inner nature, which is potential ... ”

This is background to Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel.

I have included the work of Peter Hanns Reil, not only for his obvious erudition but because he is able to translate Baumgarten from Latin into English.

9 *Ibid*, Page 33

10 *Ibid*, Pages 60-61

Before I add a few lines from and about Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel, I would like to make something clear.

These great philosophers legitimized art by attempting to accommodate their own art perception into their perception of knowledge. One must have art perception—a genetic gift—to address the meaning of art and the drive to express its importance not only for oneself but the gift to knowledge itself.

However, it is critical to understand that aesthetics and academic art history are from the perspective of the viewer and add to viewers’ knowledge. I have found that through art I am able to come to the understanding of these philosophers and academic art history but I cannot through these philosophers or academic art arrive at creating it.

As an artist my understanding of art comes from the innate gift and the experience of witnessing art by both creating it and directly perceiving the art of others.

Because these philosophers are coming to terms with their own art perception, there are valuable concepts that describe the actions of artists.

In 1790 Kant introduces to academic Art History the concepts of freedom and genius and could be said to pave the way to Modernism.

Regarding *Art in General*¹¹:

“ ... By right it is only production through freedom i.e. through an act of will that places reason at the basis of its action, that should be termed art ... ”

11 Kant, Emmanuel, 1790. *Critique of Judgement*, Oxford University Press, 2008 Ed., Page 132

And further along:

“ ... A product of fine art must be recognized to be art and not nature. Nevertheless the purposiveness in its form must appear just as free from constraint of arbitrary rules as if it were a product of nature ...”¹²

And under *Fine art is the art of genius*¹³:

“ ... *Genius* is the talent ... which gives the rule to art. Since talent, as an innate productive faculty of the artist, belongs itself to nature, we may put it this way: *Genius* is the innate mental aptitude (*ingenium*) through which nature gives the rule to art ... ”¹⁴

Johann Gottlieb Fichte in *The System of Ethics*, published in 1798, states:

“ ... Unlike the scholar, fine art does not cultivate only the understanding; and unlike the moral teacher of other people, it does not cultivate only the heart. Instead it cultivates the entire unified being. It addresses itself neither to the understanding nor to the heart but to the mind as a whole, in the unity of its powers. It constitutes a third power, composed of the other two ... ”¹⁵

In 1800 F.W.J. Schelling wrote:

“ ... The fact that all aesthetic production rests upon a conflict of activities can be justifiably inferred already from the testimony of all artists, that they are involuntarily driven to create their

works, and that in producing them they merely satisfy an irresistible urge of their own nature; for if every urge proceeds from a contradiction in such wise that, given the contradiction, free activity becomes involuntary, the artistic urge must proceed from such a feeling of inner contradiction. But since this contradiction sets in motion the whole man with all his forces, it is undoubtedly one which strikes *the ultimate in him*, the root of his whole being (the true in itself). It is as if, in the exceptional man (which artists above all are, in the highest sense of the word), that inalterable identity, on which all existence is founded, had laid aside the veil wherewith it shrouds itself in others, and, just as it is directly affected by things, so also works directly back upon everything. Thus it can only be the contradiction between conscious and unconscious in the free act which sets the artistic urge in motion; just as, conversely, it be given to art alone to pacify our endless striving, and likewise to resolve the final and uttermost contradiction within us. Just as aesthetic production proceeds from the feeling of a seemingly irresolvable contradiction, so it ends likewise, by the testimony of all artists, in the feeling of an infinite harmony ... Now every absolute concurrence of two antithetical activities is utterly unaccountable, being a *phenomenon* which although incomprehensible by mere reflection, yet cannot be denied; and art therefore, is the one everlasting revelation which yields that concurrence, and the marvel which, had it existed but once only, would necessarily have convinced us of the absolute reality of that supreme event.”¹⁶

Hegel’s *Lectures on Fine Art* of 1823, 1826, and 1828-9, now comprise two full volumes. These were edited from original manuscripts and transcriptions after Hegel’s death in 1831.¹⁷

12 *Ibid*, Page 135

13 *Ibid*, Page 136

14 *Ibid*, Page 136

15 Fichte, Johann Gottlieb, 1798. *The System of Ethics*, Translation by Daniel Breazeale and Gunter Zoller, Cambridge University Press, 2005. Page 334.

16 Schelling, F.W.J., 1800. *System of Transcendental Idealism*, University of Virginia Press 2001 Ed. Pages 222 & 223

17 Knox, T. M., ‘Translator’s Preface’, 2010. *Hegel’s Aesthetics, Lectures on Fine Art*, Oxford University Press. Page vi.

The motivation for these lectures is that Hegel is dissatisfied with the art of his time and he seeks to be able to restate art's value:

“Sculpture in general comprises the miracle of spirit giving itself an image of itself in something purely material. Spirit so forms this external thing that is present ... in it and recognizes in it the appropriate shape of its own inner life.”¹⁸

About “The Artist” he states:

“ ... This gift and this interest in a specific grasp of the actual world in its real shape, together with a firm retention of what has been seen, is thus the *first* requirement of an artist. On the other hand bound up with the precise knowledge of the external form there must be an equal familiarity with man's inner life, with the passions of his heart, and all the aims of the human soul. To this double knowledge there must be added an acquaintance with the way in which the inner life of the spirit expresses itself in the real world and shines through the externality thereof.

“ ... Yet this not to say that the artist must grasp in a *philosophical* form the true essence of all things which is the general foundation in religion, as well as in philosophy and art. For him philosophy is not necessary, and if he thinks in a philosophical manner he is working at an enterprise which, so far as the form of knowing is concerned is the precise opposite of art. For the task of imagination consists solely in giving us a consciousness of that inner rationality, not in the form of general propositions and ideas, but in concrete configuration and individual reality. What therefore lives and ferments in him, the artist must portray to himself in the forms and appearances whose likeness and shape he has adopted, since he can so subdue them to his purpose that

18 Hegel, G.W.F., 1823-29. *Hegel's Aesthetics, Lectures on Fine Art, Volume II*, Oxford University Press, 2010. Page 710.

they now on their side too become capable of what is inherently true and expressing it completely.”¹⁹

In the transition from Natural Philosophy to the concentrated research of modern science, Wilhelm Humboldt selects Fichte to be the first Chair of philosophy at the founding of the University of Berlin in 1810. Hegel accepts the Chair in 1818, four years after the death of Fichte. Hegel holds that position until his death in 1831.

Thus is born what will become a model for the modern research university that addresses Humboldt's vision as “ ... the pinnacle where everything that happens directly for the moral culture of the nation comes together ... ”²⁰

Here we are to have state-supported free pursuit of “the pure idea of science”²¹ under the moral constraint of philosophy.

Liotard speaks extensively about this in *The Post Modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* originally printed in French in 1979²². He attacks Humboldt's concept of science “as subject ... by itself.”²³

Liotard contends that this philosophical position is knowledge for its own sake and not in the service of the state as he claims for the French universities after Napoleon.²⁴

19 *Ibid*, Volume I. Page 282.

20 Humboldt, Wilhelm von, 1810. *On the Internal and External Organization of the Higher Scientific Institutions of Berlin*, German History in Documents and Images.

21 *Ibid*

22 Lyotard, Jean-Francois, 1984. *The Post Modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, University of Minnesota Press. Pages 33 & 34.

23 *Ibid* 21

24 *Ibid* 23

However, unlike Lyotard's argument concerning the contemporary state of Humboldt's "metanarrative", Humboldt's vision was not sustainable.

According to Claudius Gellert, after the advent of the Second Reich led by Bismarck (U. Of Berlin, 1835) was a period "characterized by an ever increasing orientation of research to military and industrial demands. State expenditure on military research comprised two-thirds of all Imperial expenditure for scientific purposes after 1871 ..."²⁵

The evolution of scientific research was now clear. Supported by the Kaiser Wilhelm Society, the Kaiser Wilhelm Institutes were founded in 1911. Here scientific research could be directly moulded to the moral dictates of the state and placed directly into the service of war.

The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Physics was not advanced enough to contribute to World War I. This was not true for the Institute for Physical Chemistry and Electrochemistry led by Fritz Haber.

In collaboration with industrial giant BASF, chemist Fritz Haber was instrumental in the research and development of the industrial-scale production of ammonia—the Haber-Bosch process in the early 1900s. Essential in both the manufacture of fertilizer and munitions, this became critical for the German war effort.

In 1911 Haber was named head of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry and Electrochemistry. In his biography of Haber, Dietrich Stoltzenberg clearly states that "There is no ques-

25 Gellert, Claudius, 1993. 'German Model of Research and Advanced Education', *The Research Foundations of Graduate Education*, Burton R. Clark Ed., University of California Press. Page 10.

tion that Fritz Haber was the initiator and organizer of chemical warfare in Germany. He never denied this. Instead even after the war, he continued to defend the use of chemical weapons as a feasible means of warfare."²⁶

Haber also had the position of head of the Chemistry Section in the Ministry of War.²⁷

Major players were the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry and Electrochemistry, BASF, and Bayer in the production of the chemical weapons.

In 1925 BASF, Bayer, Hoescht, and AGFA among others merged to become the notorious IG Farben.

This of course is not Haber's story. He allows the focus on the integration of research, industry, government and war in the 20th century. It is the full realization of the military-industrial complex.

Under the drive of the military-industrial complex, art as a source of knowledge was simply dismissed in the exigency of war. Yet in the time of the German Enlightenment, and followed by the German Idealists, the best thinkers in the world held the importance of art as a key source of knowledge in the face of bald empiricism. A priori knowledge sounds very much like the genetic inheritance of natural history. Darwin's perspective on evolution was yet to come.

In the years 1874 to 1914 in the time of the independent artists' periods of what I described at the 2011 Yale Forum as

26 Stoltzenberg, Dietrich, 2004. *Fritz Haber. Chemist, Nobel Laureate, German Jew*, Chemical Heritage Press. Page 133.

27 *Ibid*

Assertion and Radical Assertion, the artists in their independence once more proclaimed art a source of knowledge. And once again this was dismissed in the absurdity of war.

In the period from 1918 to 1962 the defiant statement of art is in the statement of existence in the face of absurdity; it is the statement of completeness in the face of process. Process is about incompleteness—the missing pieces of lost dreams. The world marched to complete the lost war, the lost souls, lost conscience: so continued the horrible 31-year war—never to be resolved. Nuclear war led to the endless absurdity of Nuclear Deterrence.

In 1962 the short history of Deterrence almost ended abruptly in all-out nuclear destruction. I described the experience of this in my 2011 presentation. It was followed 13 months later by President Kennedy's assassination.

America chose to escape the mass trauma. In this vacuum of America's lost world, art filled a so far unrecognized need for meaninglessness. Rampant consumerism thrived. The empty attacks of Duchamp on the witlessness of the museum audience found a niche in filling the shallow needs of America's soul. Apparently the rest of the world was willing to follow.

For fifty years the art world has been an empty history of craft and anti-craft. Craft is the perception of perfection as faultlessness. It too is the path of process without completion. It is the joy of consumerism—always to be continued. Craft like science is truth by analogy. It is a hunger for perfection, always growing by perfection's elusiveness and never to be satisfied.

From time to time anti-craft pretends to the depth of self-criticism.

It is a void attempting to fill a void.

Addressing the absurdity of Deterrence requires a narrative of total rage that is a statement of completion for the artist. This is not a prescriptive narrative; absurdity knows no prescription. It is *Catch-22* in literature, *Dr. Strangelove* in film, and the works of Edward and Nancy Reddin Kienholz in sculpture.

Defiance in the face of absurdity of course does not require this overt narrative. Rage can be manifest in the nature of art itself. This is where I position myself.

Can art become the fulcrum for reconciliation of science with history to lever the value of conscience beyond the plasticity of morality?

We can now begin to answer this question, but first we need to examine the other questions where we began.

The three existential realities of Art, Nuclear Deterrence and Transgenic Engineering have been identified.

Art's relationship to Deterrence is clearly impossible. Deterrence by its nature is the abrogation of conscience. Put simply, Art relies, as all of us do, on the continuation of Deterrence but Art cannot speak to it.

Transgenic Engineering is potentially another matter. I will discuss it more thoroughly a little farther on.

The next question from where we began is "What is Art's value if it fails to address those realities?"

As has been described, the present art world, itself rebuilt on soulless venality and the escapism of the 1960s, cannot address any of the three existential realities.

Art then must separate its identity from that art world. This is the artist's problem if the work is *of* the art world.

The attempt at art that is bound to its audience or identified as process, will never find perfection as completeness. As such, the attempt is actually the essence of entertainment. Entertainment at its best is craft, certainly not art.

Art's value is in its self-contained truth. It is perfection defined as completion. Perfection must be first perceived by the artist as his own audience. This is also true when a narrative is projected beyond the work's own internal historical narrative.

Perfection is the spiritual essence of Art. This level of perfection has historically been attributed to only God. The artist would be a fool to claim to be God. That is why I have included key arguments of the German idealists and their predecessors to Leibniz.

Darwin and Spencer conceived of the inherited nature of "moral sense" or in my terminology, conscience. So too we may add spiritual sense and art perception as products of natural history. Certainly these are human qualities evidenced in every culture. Inherited traits are likely clusters of genes so that the variations that are necessary to assure propagation under the conditions of natural selection are inherently present. That is, these traits exist on a continuum within their own identities and therefore among individuals.

What we are witness to are these philosophers, who have centered their spiritual being on the Supreme Christian God, remarkably struggle and make room for their art perception in the realm of spirituality.

What I find so interesting is that a sculptor on Hornby Island 200 years later without any connection to these ultra-rational

German thinkers other than art perception has arrived at the same spiritual coding for art. I have experienced this with artists of the past in the coding for Original Art. And I have been intellectually aware of these philosophers, but it is only recently that I have taken an interest in their perspective on art.

If we regard spiritual sense as an identity with God or gods, we will rapidly broach the theological differences that readily lead to divisiveness and war.

Original Art is not only unique in itself but it is unique in that it has the deep connections to the evolution of humans concerning the spiritual without the baggage of theology.

For Deterrence to work, theological decisions must be banished from the decision making process. Arguments about God are rational only within their own framework. For deterrence to work, it must maintain an agreed rational framework independent of God or gods.

For reasons already stated, Art cannot approach the reality of Deterrence.

It is a critical purpose of this paper to restore art as a credible source of knowledge. We have seen that in the time of the German Enlightenment and through the time of the German Idealists, art and science were at one with philosophy as sources of knowledge.

This has been lost with the separation of science and its exploitation by industry and in the service of war. Transgenic Engineering is far too close to deciding the future of human values. This is easily made a false statement should Nuclear Deterrence fail. For should it fail, massive destruction and nuclear winter will surely be the measure of humanity's fate.

But should Deterrence continue to hold with even an increasingly remote chance of full nuclear disarmament—then we have to turn our attention to Transgenic Engineering.

As we have seen in the creationist arguments and those about stem cell research in the United States, theology holds little weight in the drive for genetic technology. If the technology is limited by one state, institution or individual, it will simply continue by another. Theological arguments become red herrings obscuring scientific issues and further drive the research from the public purview.

Art with its unique characteristics and its unique history as a source of knowledge may have something critical to offer.

When we look at Evolution as History, the History that we share is many orders of magnitude larger than the Histories that divide us. Transgenic Engineering is not about creating hybrids. It is about humanly manufactured creatures that can procreate. The division between Non-Transgenic and Transgenic will grow significantly and rapidly compared to the long history of natural selection. What values will be considered human? What values will disappear?

It is my obligation and that of the Sculpture Park to pass the values of Art inherent in the Sculpture to future generations. This is an obligation that I recognize in my ability to create Original Art. My debt is to the History of Art and to future artists. This requires an obligation to History itself as these values are an inheritance of Nature.

Clearly there is a need for an influential dialogue concerning essential human values involving the scientists who are leading this field. Experience has shown that it will be necessary to begin with those who have art perception.

Art not only represents perfection but strength of conscience and the spirit. Those who share these values will need to defend them if they are not to become unrecognizable. Art as a source of knowledge may have been ignored but it has not yet been lost.

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Appendix A of Existential Realities of Post Agriculture

Military-Industrial Complex Speech, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1961

My fellow Americans:

Three days from now, after half a century in the service of our country, I shall lay down the responsibilities of office as, in traditional and solemn ceremony, the authority of the Presidency is vested in my successor.

This evening I come to you with a message of leave-taking and farewell, and to share a few final thoughts with you, my countrymen.

Like every other citizen, I wish the new President, and all who will labor with him, Godspeed. I pray that the coming years will be blessed with peace and prosperity for all.

Our people expect their President and the Congress to find essential agreement on issues of great moment, the wise resolution of which will better shape the future of the Nation.

My own relations with the Congress, which began on a remote and tenuous basis when, long ago, a member of the Senate appointed me to West Point, have since ranged to the intimate during the war and immediate postwar period, and, finally, to the mutually interdependent during these past eight years.

In this final relationship, the Congress and the Administration have, on most vital issues, cooperated well, to serve the national good rather than mere partisanship, and so have assured that the business of the Nation should go forward. So, my official

relationship with the Congress ends in a feeling, on my part, of gratitude that we have been able to do so much together.

II.

We now stand ten years past the midpoint of a century that has witnessed four major wars among great nations. Three of these involved our own country. Despite these holocausts America is today the strongest, the most influential and most productive nation in the world. Understandably proud of this pre-eminence, we yet realize that America's leadership and prestige depend, not merely upon our unmatched material progress, riches and military strength, but on how we use our power in the interests of world peace and human betterment.

III.

Throughout America's adventure in free government, our basic purposes have been to keep the peace; to foster progress in human achievement, and to enhance liberty, dignity and integrity among people and among nations. To strive for less would be unworthy of a free and religious people. Any failure traceable to arrogance, or our lack of comprehension or readiness to sacrifice would inflict upon us grievous hurt both at home and abroad.

Progress toward these noble goals is persistently threatened by the conflict now engulfing the world. It commands our whole attention, absorbs our very beings. We face a hostile ideology—global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method. Unhappily the danger it poses promises to be of indefinite duration. To meet it successfully, there is called for, not so much the emotional and transitory sacrifices of crisis, but rather those which enable us to carry forward steadily, surely, and without complaint the burdens of a prolonged and complex struggle—with liberty the stake. Only thus shall we remain,

despite every provocation, on our charted course toward permanent peace and human betterment.

Crises there will continue to be. In meeting them, whether foreign or domestic, great or small, there is a recurring temptation to feel that some spectacular and costly action could become the miraculous solution to all current difficulties. A huge increase in newer elements of our defense; development of unrealistic programs to cure every ill in agriculture; a dramatic expansion in basic and applied research—these and many other possibilities, each possibly promising in itself, may be suggested as the only way to the road we wish to travel.

But each proposal must be weighed in the light of a broader consideration: the need to maintain balance in and among national programs—balance between the private and the public economy, balance between cost and hoped for advantage—balance between the clearly necessary and the comfortably desirable; balance between our essential requirements as a nation and the duties imposed by the nation upon the individual; balance between actions of the moment and the national welfare of the future. Good judgment seeks balance and progress; lack of it eventually finds imbalance and frustration.

The record of many decades stands as proof that our people and their government have, in the main, understood these truths and have responded to them well, in the face of stress and threat. But threats, new in kind or degree, constantly arise. I mention two only.

IV.

A vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that

no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction.

Our military organization today bears little relation to that known by any of my predecessors in peacetime, or indeed by the fighting men of World War II or Korea.

Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry. American makers of plowshares could, with time and as required, make swords as well. But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense; we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions. Added to this, three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment. We annually spend on military security more than the net income of all United States corporations.

This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society.

In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.

We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery

of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together.

Akin to, and largely responsible for the sweeping changes in our industrial-military posture, has been the technological revolution during recent decades.

In this revolution, research has become central; it also becomes more formalized, complex, and costly. A steadily increasing share is conducted for, by, or at the direction of, the Federal government.

Today, the solitary inventor, tinkering in his shop, has been overshadowed by task forces of scientists in laboratories and testing fields. In the same fashion, the free university, historically the fountainhead of free ideas and scientific discovery, has experienced a revolution in the conduct of research. Partly because of the huge costs involved, a government contract becomes virtually a substitute for intellectual curiosity. For every old blackboard there are now hundreds of new electronic computers.

The prospect of domination of the nation's scholars by Federal employment, project allocations, and the power of money is ever present and is gravely to be regarded. Yet, in holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.

It is the task of statesmanship to mold, to balance, and to integrate these and other forces, new and old, within the principles of our democratic system—ever aiming toward the supreme goals of our free society.

V.

Another factor in maintaining balance involves the element of time. As we peer into society's future, we—you and I, and our government—must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering, for our own ease and convenience, the precious resources of tomorrow. We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without risking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage. We want democracy to survive for all generations to come, not to become the insolvent phantom of tomorrow.

VI.

Down the long lane of the history yet to be written America knows that this world of ours, ever growing smaller, must avoid becoming a community of dreadful fear and hate, and be instead, a proud confederation of mutual trust and respect.

Such a confederation must be one of equals. The weakest must come to the conference table with the same confidence as do we, protected as we are by our moral, economic, and military strength. That table, though scarred by many past frustrations, cannot be abandoned for the certain agony of the battlefield.

Disarmament, with mutual honor and confidence, is a continuing imperative. Together we must learn how to compose differences, not with arms, but with intellect and decent purpose. Because this need is so sharp and apparent I confess that I lay down my official responsibilities in this field with a definite sense of disappointment. As one who has witnessed the horror and the lingering sadness of war—as one who knows that another war could utterly destroy this civilization which has been so slowly and painfully built over thousands of years—I wish I could say tonight that a lasting peace is in sight.

Happily, I can say that war has been avoided. Steady progress toward our ultimate goal has been made. But, so much remains to be done. As a private citizen, I shall never cease to do what little I can to help the world advance along that road.

VII.

So—in this my last good night to you as your President—I thank you for the many opportunities you have given me for public service in war and peace. I trust that in that service you find some things worthy; as for the rest of it, I know you will find ways to improve performance in the future.

You and I—my fellow citizens—need to be strong in our faith that all nations, under God, will reach the goal of peace with justice. May we be ever unswerving in devotion to principle, confident but humble with power, diligent in pursuit of the Nation's great goals.

To all the peoples of the world, I once more give expression to America's prayerful and continuing aspiration:

Source: Public Papers of the Presidents, Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1960, p. 1035-1040

Appendix B of Existential Realities of Post Agriculture

Humboldt University of Berlin Associates and Nobel Prize Winners

Theodore Dyke Acland, surgeon and physician

Alexander Altmann (1906–1987),
rabbi and scholar of Jewish philosophy and mysticism

Gerhard Anschütz (1908-). leading jurist and “father of
the constitution” of the Bundesland Hesse

Michelle Bachelet (1951-), pediatrician and epidemiologist,
President of the Republic of Chile

Azmi Bishara (1956-), Arab-Israeli politician

Bruno Bauer (1809–1882), theologian, Bible critic and philoso-
pher

Jurek Becker (1937–1997), writer (Jakob the Liar)

Olaf Simon (1929-), writer (Law of the fist), martial artist

Eliezer Berkovits (1908-1992), rabbi, philosopher and theologian

Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), first German chancellor

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945),
theologian and resistance fighter

Max Born (1882–1970),
physicist, Nobel Prize for physics in 1954

Michael C. Burda, macroeconomist

George C. Butte (1877-1940), American jurist

Ernst Cassirer (1874–1945), philosopher

Adelbert von Chamisso (1781–1838), natural scientist and writer
Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911), philosopher
W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963),
African-American activist and scholar
Paul Ehrlich (1854–1915),
physician, Nobel Prize for medicine in 1908
Albert Einstein (1879–1955),
physicist, Nobel Prize for physics in 1921
Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), journalist and philosopher
Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach (1804–1872), philosopher
Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814),
philosopher, rector of the university (1810–1812)
Hermann Emil Fischer (1852–1919), founder of modern
biochemistry, Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1902
Werner Forbmann (1904–1979),
physician, Nobel Prize for medicine in 1956
James Franck (1882–1964), physicist, Nobel Prize for physics in
1925
Ernst Gehrcke (1878–1960), experimental physicist
Jacob Grimm (1785–1863), linguist and literary critic
Wilhelm Grimm (1786–1859), linguist and literary critic
Fritz Haber (1868–1934),
chemist, Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1918
Otto Hahn (1879–1968),
chemist, Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1944
Sir William Reginald Halliday (1886–1966), Principal of King's
College London (1928–1952)

Robert Havemann (1910–1982), chemist, co-founder of
European Union, and leading GDR dissident
Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), philosopher
Heinrich Heine (1797–1856), writer and poet
Werner Heisenberg (1901–1976),
physicist, Nobel Prize for physics in 1932
Hermann von Helmholtz (1821–1894), physician and physicist
Gustav Hertz (1887–1975),
physicist, Nobel Prize for physics in 1925
Heinrich Hertz (1857–1894), physicist
Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907–1972), rabbi, philosopher, and
theologian
Jacobus Henricus van 't Hoff (1852–1911),
chemist, Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1901
Max Huber (1874–1960), international lawyer and diplomat
Christoph Wilhelm Hufeland (1762–1836),
founder of macrobiotics
Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835),
politician, linguist, and founder of the university
Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), natural scientist
Jane Ising (1902-), economics
Hermann Kasack (1896–1966), writer
Gustav Kirchhoff (1824–1887), physicist
Robert Koch (1843–1910),
physician, Nobel Prize for medicine in 1905

Albrecht Kossel (1853–1927),
physician, Nobel Prize for medicine in 1910

Arnold von Lasaulx (1839–1886), mineralogist and petrographer

Max von Laue (1879–1960),
physicist, Nobel Prize for physics in 1914

Wassily Leontief (1905–1999),
economist, Nobel Prize for economics in 1973

Karl Liebknecht (1871–1919),
socialist politician and revolutionary

Friedrich Loeffler (1852–1915), bacteriologist

Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979), philosopher

Karl Marx (1818–1883), philosopher

Ernst Mayr (1904–2005), biologist

Lise Meitner (1878–1968),
physicist, Enrico Fermi Award in 1966

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809–1847), composer

Theodor Mommsen (1817–1903),
historian, Nobel Prize for literature in 1902

Edmund Montgomery (1835–1911),
philosopher, scientist, physician

Max Planck (1858–1947),
physicist, Nobel Prize for physics in 1918

Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886), historian

Robert Remak (1815–1865), cell biologist

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775–1854),
philosopher

Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher (1768–1834),
philosopher

Bernhard Schlink (1944-), writer, Der Vorleser (The Reader)

Carl Schmitt (1888–1985),
German jurist, political theorist, and professor of law

Menachem Mendel Schneerson (1902–1994),
rabbi, philosopher, and theologian

Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860), philosopher

Erwin Schrödinger (1887–1961),
physicist, Nobel Prize for physics in 1933

Georg Simmel (1858–1918), philosopher and sociologist

Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903–1993),
rabbi, philosopher, and theologian

Herman Smith-Johannsen (1875–1987), sportsman who
introduced cross-country skiing to North America

Werner Sombart (1863–1941),
philosopher, sociologist and economist

Hans Spemann (1869–1941),
biologist, Nobel Prize for biology in 1935

Max Stirner (1806–1856), philosopher

Gustav Tornier (1859–1938), paleontologist and zoologist

Kurt Tucholsky (1890–1935), writer and journalist

Rudolf Virchow (1821–1902), physician and politician

Alfred Wegener (1880–1930), scientist, geologist, and
meteorologist, early “Continental Drift” theorist

Karl Weierstraß (1815–1897), mathematician

Wilhelm Heinrich Westphal (1882–1978), physicist

Wilhelm Wien (1864–1928), physicist, Nobel Prize for physics in 1911

Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1848–1931), philologist

Richard Willstätter (1872–1942), chemist, Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1915

40 Nobel Prize Winners are affiliated to Humboldt University:

1901 Jacobus Henricus van 't Hoff (Chemistry)

1901 Emil Adolf von Behring (Physiology or Medicine)

1902 Hermann Emil Fischer (Chemistry)

1902 Theodor Mommsen (Literature)

1905 Adolf von Baeyer (Chemistry)

1905 Robert Koch (Physiology or Medicine)

1907 Albert Abraham Michelson (Physics)

1907 Eduard Buchner (Chemistry)

1908 Paul Ehrlich (Physiology or Medicine)

1909 Karl Ferdinand Braun (Physics)

1910 Otto Wallach (Chemistry)

1910 Albrecht Kossel (Physiology or Medicine)

1910 Paul Heyse (Literature)

1911 Wilhelm Wien (Physics)

1914 Max von Laue (Physics)

1915 Richard Willstätter (Chemistry)

1918 Fritz Haber (Chemistry)

1918 Max Planck (Physics)

1920 Walther Nernst (Chemistry)

1921 Albert Einstein (Physics)

1925 Gustav Ludwig Hertz (Physics)

1925 James Franck (Physics)

1925 Richard Adolf Zsigmondy (Chemistry)

1928 Adolf Otto Reinhold Windaus (Chemistry)

1929 Hans von Euler-Chelpin (Chemistry)

1931 Otto Heinrich Warburg (Physiology or Medicine)

1932 Werner Heisenberg (Physics)

1933 Erwin Schrödinger (Physics)

1935 Hans Spemann (Physiology or Medicine)

1936 Peter Debye (Chemistry)

1939 Adolf Butenandt (Chemistry)

1944 Otto Hahn (Chemistry)

1950 Kurt Alder (Chemistry)

1950 Otto Diels (Chemistry)

1953 Fritz Albert Lipmann (Physiology or Medicine)

1953 Hans Adolf Krebs (Physiology or Medicine)

1954 Max Born (Physics)

1956 Walther Bothe (Physics)

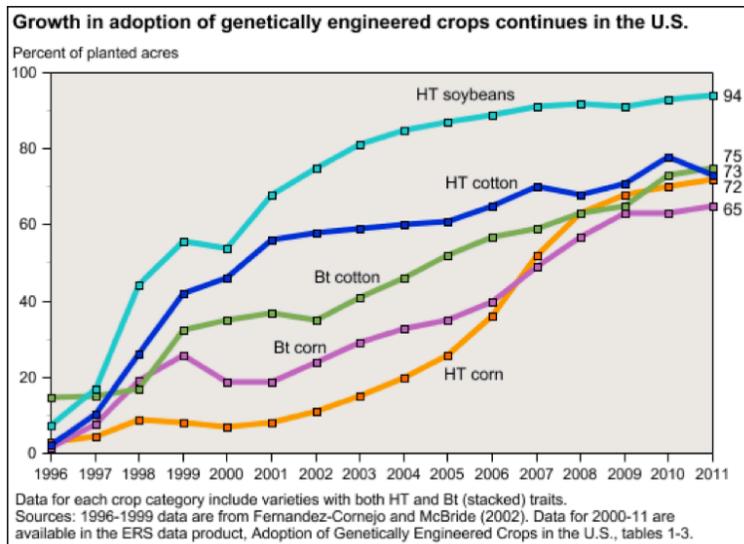
1991 Bert Sakmann (Physiology or Medicine)

2007 Gerhard Ertl (Chemistry)

Appendix C of Existential Realities of Post Agriculture

Statistics related to genetic engineering and nuclear weapons

Growth in the Adoption of Genetically Engineered Crops



Source: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/BiotechCrops/>

Status of World Nuclear Forces



More than a decade and a half after the Cold War ended, the world's combined stockpile of nuclear warheads remain at a very high level: more than 19,000. Of these, some 4,800 warheads are considered operational, of which nearly 2,000 U.S. and Russian warheads are on high alert, ready for use on short notice.

The exact number of nuclear weapons in each country's possession is a closely held national secret. Despite this limitation, however, publicly available information and occasional leaks make it possible to make best estimates about the size and composition of the national nuclear weapon stockpiles:

| Status of World Nuclear Forces 2012* | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Country | Operational Strategic | Operational Nonstrategic | Reserve/ Nondeployed | Military Stockpile | Total Inventory |
| Russia | 1,800 ^a | 0 ^b | 3,700 ^c | 5,500 | 10,000 ^d |
| United States | 1,950 ^e | 200 ^f | 2,850 ^g | 5,000 | 8,000 ^h |
| France | 290 | n.a. | ? ⁱ | 300 | 300 |
| China | 0 ^j | ? ^j | 180 | 240 | 240 ^j |
| United Kingdom | 160 ^k | n.a. | 65 | 225 | 225 ^k |
| Israel | 0 | n.a. | 80 | 80 | 80 ^l |
| Pakistan | 0 | n.a. | 90-110 | 90-110 | 90-110 ^m |
| India | 0 | n.a. | 80-100 | 80-100 | 80-100 ⁿ |
| North Korea | 0 | n.a. | <10 | <10 | <10 ^o |
| Total:^p | ~4,200 | ~200 | ~7,000 | ~11,500 | ~19,000 |

* All numbers are estimates and further described in the Nuclear Notebook in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, and the nuclear appendix in the SIPRI Yearbook. Additional reports are published on the FAS Strategic Security Blog. Unlike those publications, this table is updated continuously as new information becomes available. Current update: May 7, 2012.

a. This number is higher than the aggregate data under the New START treaty because this table also counts bomber weapons at bomber bases as deployed. Detailed overview of Russian forces is [here](#).

b. Of Russia's total inventory of an estimated 3,000-5,000 nonstrategic warheads (down from 15,000-21,700 in 1991), only 2,000 are thought to be assigned to military forces, with the rest awaiting dismantlement. All are declared to be in central storage.

c. Includes all non-strategic warheads, strategic warheads assigned to delivery systems in overhaul, and most bomber weapons.

d. In addition to the 5,500 in the military stockpile, 4,500 retired warheads are estimated to be awaiting dismantlement. Details are scarce, but we estimate that Russia is dismantling approximately 1,000 retired warheads per year.

e. This number is higher than the aggregate data released under the New START data because this table also counts bomber weapons on bomber bases as deployed. See [here](#) for analysis of aggregate data.

f. Some 160-200 B61 bombs are deployed in Europe at six bases in five countries (Belgium, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Turkey). For details, see [here](#).

g. Non-deployed reserve includes an estimated 2,290 strategic and 560 non-strategic warheads in central storage. Some 260 non-strategic warheads for the Tomahawk land-attack cruise missile (TLAM/N) are being retired.

h. In addition to the nearly 5,000 warheads in the military stockpile, approximately 3,500 retired warheads are awaiting dismantlement. In addition, nearly 14,000 plutonium cores (pits) and some 5,000 Canned Assemblies (secondaries) are in storage.

i. France has stated that it has no reserve, but it probably has a small inventory of spare warheads. For an updated over of the French nuclear posture, see pp. 27-33 of this report.

j. Chinese warheads are not thought to be operational but in storage. Many "strategic" warheads are for regional use. The status of a Chinese non-strategic nuclear arsenal is uncertain. Additional warheads are in storage from retirement

or new production, for a total stockpile of approximately 240 warheads. Detailed overview of Chinese forces is [here](#).

k. Only 50 missiles are left, for a maximum of 150 warheads. "Less than 160" warheads are said to be "operationally available," but only one submarine with "up to 48 warheads" is on patrol at any given time. The number of "operational missiles" on each sub will be reduced to "no more than eight" with 40 warheads in the next few years. By the mid-2020s, the stockpile will be reduced to "not more than 180." Detailed overview of British forces is [here](#).

l. Although Israel has produced enough plutonium for 100-200 warheads, the number of delivery platforms and estimates made by the U.S. intelligence community suggest that the stockpile might include approximately 80 warheads. Detailed overview of Israeli forces is [here](#).

m. The U.S. intelligence community estimates that Pakistan has produced 90-110 warheads. None of these are thought to be deployed but kept in central storage, most in the southern parts of the country. More warheads are in production. Detailed overview [here](#).

n. Indian nuclear warheads are not deployed but in central storage. More warheads are in production. Detailed overview of Indian forces is [here](#).

o. Despite two North Korean nuclear tests, there is no publicly available evidence that North Korea has operationalized its nuclear weapons capability. A 2009 world survey by the U.S. Air Force National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC) does not credit any of North Korea's ballistic missiles with nuclear capability.

p. Numbers may not add up due to rounding and uncertainty about the operational status of the four lesser nuclear weapons states and the uncertainty about the size of the total inventories of three of the five initial nuclear powers.

Source: <http://www.fas.org/programs/ssp/nukes/nuclearweapons/nukestatus.html>

DIALOGUE ON EXISTENTIAL REALITIES OF POST AGRICULTURE

Maria Tippett: Jeffrey, might I ask just one question? It's probably banal, when you say original art, why not just art? Why original art?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: The pathway for me, from the time when I got back to work and reconnected with art history, was the coding that I saw being passed from artist to artist for original art. I don't know how else to explain it, because it's evolutionary in itself. So you pass through a threshold where what you're doing is evolutionary. So that makes original art very different because once you've crossed that threshold, you are no longer able to go back.

James Fox: I was very interested by how you say that those great philosophers, the German idealists, legitimized art by attempting to accommodate their own art perception into their perception of knowledge. I think a number of people would agree with you on that, that this is seen as the birth of aesthetics in the 18th century.

But some people have drawn a line, particularly from Immanuel Kant, and his critique of pure reason, practical reason and judgement, to a very different conclusion. Some say that what he not only legitimized art, but separated it from metaphysics and from ethics. So you end up with three branches of philosophy,

metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics—the true, the good, and the beautiful, as they call them. The consequences of this through the 19th century was that each of those spheres ended up being isolated from the others. One ended up being professionalized in science institutes, and the other one went into law courts and the other one went into museums. And I wonder whether this separation and this creation of the field of aesthetics may have led to the isolation of art that you are, yourself, critical of?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: When we get to Fichte who is a contemporary of Kant we see that he already reunites it. It's Fichte who brings them all together. "... Unlike the scholar, fine art does not cultivate only the understanding; and unlike the moral teacher of other people, it does not cultivate only the heart. Instead it cultivates the entire unified being. It addresses itself neither to the understanding nor to the heart but to the mind as a whole, in the unity of its powers. It constitutes a third power, composed of the other two ..." I think he's answered the question, hasn't he?

James Fox: Yes. Let me come back to Immanuel Kant as well, because I think Kant would have loved your work because he loved form, linearity, and counterpoint. But he would have probably been very reluctant to admit these discussions and ideas into his interpretation of your work. He thought that aesthetic perception should be disinterested. You have to push out all these external things and just focus on the form of the object and see whether you think it's beautiful or not. And I wonder whether you would find that frustrating, if he were to come here and insist that he didn't think about your ideas or wider context, but just looked and decided?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: He already gave himself away. He finds music frivolous. How would I explain that the sculpture is music in plastic space?

Azmina Kassam: I just want to quote Jürgen Habermas on this. He said there is “a split occurring between art and culture where narcissistic values increasingly perpetrate everyday life and become rationalized under pressures of economic and administrative imperatives,” which he believes leads to a hedonistic society where social and moral values begin to break down. Habermas explains that the modernist attempt to segregate knowledges like cultural knowledge, where science, morality, as well as art become largely the concern of experts, leads to an impoverished society. This is disengaged from its vital heritages. Habermas argues that communication processes like art need a cultural tradition that involves cognitive meanings, moral expectations, subjective expressions and evaluations that relate to one another. Therefore, art should be brought out of institutionalized spaces of museums and restricted discourses of galleries, and be brought into neutral spaces where its meaning depends on how people are able to interact with it from their own perspective.

But what I understand what you are saying, Jeffrey, is that art needs to be reconnected to science and history. This is what led to a fragmentation of society, with art going into its own corner. Is this in line with what you were saying?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: No, because I can't generalize the way Habermas does. He's very prescriptive, and I have no prescription. So if I have no prescription, I can't address somebody else's prescription. I don't see art as prescriptive. So the consequences

are as the viewer sees art as prescriptive and argues that art is prescriptive, I can't engage in that argument. It is a different frame of reference. So I can't argue with him.

Would I like to communicate in the same frame of reference as science? Yes, I would, because I think that we have some strong arguments in terms of human values that have to do with the position of transgenic engineering in the future. That dialogue hasn't begun. As far as I understand, no one has really begun the dialogue. What we do know is in the very near future, it will be the leading technology of the world because what more could medicine sell you other than another five years of life or ten years of life? And who wouldn't trade for that, whatever you happen to have for that? So it makes iPods look silly, indeed.

So as this goes ahead, the way that I see it is we're not going to create monsters. The way that I see it is that we're going to accelerate evolution in such a way that we'll start with one or two transgenic changes, and when those work and everybody's happy with those, we'll go to the next ones and next ones and next ones until in very short order, perhaps in a generation or two, we are going to have a very different being that has so many transgenic changes that they are not necessarily who we are. And we are going to have the difference between non-transgenic and transgenic beings, perhaps within a generation. That's how fast it'll go, because you can see how fast this moved once they broke the barriers of transgenic engineering in crops.

And they're coming very close now. It's a question of whether or not it's done in humans. Obviously, it's done in plants, it's done in other animals. One thing I tried to point out so strongly was the difference between morality and conscience. With the question of deterrence, you can see there is a moral obligation to keep the world going day to day, but it's unconscionable at the same time.

We then have to look at the conventional morality of the scientist or the doctors who are leading this transgenic change. Those leaders are basing their continuation on the automatic good that comes from their own conventional morality. And so they will mould that reality to their purposes on the automatic good of their profession and on their group moral certainty, but mainly on the fact that they can justify making an enormous amount of money doing it. They will convince us all that we're better off for it.

That may also be true. I'm not even arguing with that possibility. Perhaps we will have a super-being. But what we haven't had is the discussion of values. What values do we want that super-being to have that we non-transgenic folk would like to see continue? I don't want to see art gone. I don't want to see spirit gone. I don't want to see conscience gone.

So we have to have an argument as to who we are. And as you can see, the unification of philosophy, science and art hasn't been around for a very, very long time.

One of the things that Jeremy said is people with conscience haven't thought of this before. So I say with people with conscience, once this is brought into their consciousness, they won't be able to stop thinking about it. And so part of our obligation, is to bring this into people's consciousness.

We're not helpless yet. This is not the military-industrial complex. We are not lost, as we were as far as nuclear war was concerned. That was all done in secret. It had the patina of security, and we were all very passively involved. This is moving on its own, it's moving in everybody's university. And no one has really brought up this conversation as far as we know. It needs to begin. What are the human values that are there?

Jeremy Kessler: This is a wonderfully rich talk, something of a page-turner as it went along, and I'm hesitant to throw another name into the mix, but I can't resist, particularly with respect to three aspects of your talk, that seem to me intriguingly related. So the first is the intellectual continuum from Leibniz, stopping with Hegel. And the next is the interlinking of the rise of the nation state, international warfare, the elite, and the elite control of technology. And then the third is the critique you have brought up many times, the critique of a form of artistic production that depends for its meaning or its value on audience reaction.

All three of these aspects, seem to point to the question of Karl Marx, because clearly this is where Hegel goes, and the search for this vision which is synthetic, which does not seek to hive off politics, ethics, metaphysics, aesthetics. It tries to see them all as linked in some way. The critique of the nation state as the source of warfare and the consolidation of technological control, and then this worry about production being subordinated to a kind of fluid, consumerist determination of meaning. And so I just wonder, if you see Marx's thought as a continuation of this intellectual trajectory you have given us?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: It would be out of my league because I ended up concentrating on art rather than trying to deal with Marx. As an undergraduate, I avoided it and as an artist I avoided it. Not because I knew anything about it and had any judgement on it, it was because I just couldn't bring it into the realm where I was living or working. So I can't really say. Someone else might be able to comment much more strongly on it.

Peter Clarke: Let me suggest a position that I don't think is your actual position, but which might very well be taken by people as being what you're saying. That would be one in which we have a polarity between science and art, and it is science that has been subverted by the sinister forces in society, and it's art which stands like the knight in shining armour that is going to rescue us with its sword of truth.

I'm thinking of the passages in the middle of your paper, where you were giving us your view of the development of science in Germany and the extent to which it was meshed into the military imperatives of the Reich. And I thought the story you were telling us about the time just before the First World War, might have been subtitled, "Science in the service of war." Now, I say that next to my neighbour, Maria Tippett, who wrote a book on the First World War called "Art in the Service of War," showing the extent to which art, too, could in a sense be corrupted, could be implicated in this process.

I want to link that slightly mischievous suggestion with another one which really would redraft your very final paragraph on page twenty-three. Suppose it were allowed that art, too, could be corrupted by its paymasters, by its sponsors, by the instrumental uses to which it was put in just the same way that science could, and that equally, science could be regarded in its pure form as the liberating influence. Using the intellect and using the commitment to these disinterested endeavours, couldn't you redraft your last paragraph in a very simple way to read, "Science not only represents perfection, but strength of conscience and the spirit. Those who share these values will need to defend them, if they're not to become unrecognizable. Science as a source of knowledge may have been ignored, but it has not yet been lost"?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: In 1810, when the University of Berlin was founded, they were equal, and those paragraphs would have been interchangeable in 1810, except for how they became corrupted. So what we've watched, and this is the part that's so difficult, is that Humboldt's ideal is created as a statement of art, philosophy and science being equal. That was the statement in 1810.

And that was why I wanted to show how the sense of the research university came about, science became far more applied research oriented rather than pure research oriented. Some years ago, I was at an innovation conference and I was really disillusioned because what was called "pure research" when I was in university had become "curiosity research" and it was used in such a pejorative way. They wanted to institutionalize technology right within the universities and go directly to the companies to pay.

I was just watching this corruption of what I once thought of as pure science. As far as the corruption of art is concerned, that's mostly what this argument is about. As far as the art world is concerned, it says it's already been corrupted.

So what I am trying to do is return to the concepts that existed in 1810, not because we will ever go back to 1810, but because at that particular time, a dialogue with science was conceivable. This is very important if we are going to prevent transgenic engineering from getting away from us as nuclear engineering did. Our own psychology is so passive about it because our sense that the military-industrial complex and nuclear warfare is beyond our reach. That is why we have allowed transgenic engineering to go on.

At the National Academy of Sciences meeting in 1977 in a place called Asilomar on the west coast of United States, scientists got together to discuss recombinant DNA as it was called then, because transgenic engineering hadn't quite been done yet.

So in 1977 almost every question that you can conceive of wanting to ask of these people, were asked among themselves. None of them were answered. Certainly the public's involvement was not there, and one of the scientists from MIT stood up and said, "You know, I'm looking at who the people who are going to address this conference are, and sixty-six percent of them are scientists who already have a self-interest in it. And when the New York Times publishes what happened here, they're going to say there was a minor amount of objection."

Janet LeBlancq: Jeffrey, are there artists that you know of who responded to Eisenhower's farewell address? You've seen the artwork that's been done since that speech was given. My question is who do you think really got it?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Every artist that I know of from that particular period of time heard the speech. We all heard the speech. Everybody sat around and listened to it. The other thing is to turn your question around a little bit. Who directly dealt with the narrative as a complete artist? And I named three people: Kubrick in *Dr. Strangelove*, and *Catch-22*, which dealt with the question of deterrence and the absurdity of deterrence, and the Kienholzes. That is both Nancy Reddin Kienholz and Ed Kienholz. And I was going to show the pictures, but people would have a tendency to laugh because they don't quite get the seriousness of these people. They did big, theatrical pieces that are three-dimensional pieces that you walk through.

And the reason why they could deal with it is because they were so outraged, and I know that in each one of those cases, those

pieces were completed for the artist. They weren't completed for the audience. That artistic concept of perfection existed for them.

And what I point out is that I have a great deal of rage. That's the way it is. I can't think of an artist who doesn't. And so the rage towards making a statement of existence is the nature of art itself. So what they did is they took the narrative and looked at it with such incredible outrage that they could complete those pieces for themselves. They didn't need the audience. So if you read *Catch-22* what you'll see in it is somebody who's writing to come around to the satisfaction of what he actually had to say to himself. And as far as *Dr. Strangelove*, that, I would argue, is for the satisfaction of Stanley Kubrick, and probably also for Peter Sellers, because the genius of Peter Sellers comes absolutely alive in it. And I don't think that Kubrick thought he had any market for doing that. I think he just did the movie and it so resonated with the public that it actually became successful. Because it's so outrageous that it's success was inconceivable.

And if you look at the Kienholzes, they simply weren't marketable. I mean, the truth is that this work could only go into museums because those were the only people who could actually stomach owning those works.

Karun Koernig: In your essay you posit a dialogue with the scientists that are responsible for the progress of transgenic engineering who have art perception. This raises two questions. Are the research scientists really the people that are a position of responsibility? Or isn't there really a funding matrix or interest alignment, or other structure that compels them to research specific things?

And the second question I have, perhaps for David, is that I have noticed that the scientists I have met have a curiosity and joy of discovery that can easily become decoupled from any moral, ethical or conscionable constraint.

As long as there is this fundamental curiosity, I wonder what external structure is really going to make any difference. If it's not transgenic engineering, science will move to some other thing. Could a mature conscience actually constrain this possibility in the face of that fundamental curiosity?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: In my 2011 paper I recalled a statement from Simone de Beauvoir that I have, since I was 19 years old, attributed to her about the trains going to Auschwitz, that "our existence depends on our acts of individual conscience."

Now no one stopped the trains by these acts. But maybe somebody who did act on it ended up perceiving their own existence. And that may be as far as we can go. But what is essential in that statement of existence or non-existence, is the question of an act of individual conscience that may be the difference to you, whether you measure your own existence or you lose your soul. And that's the aspect that I'm saying.

The concept of making a difference should not be the purpose of doing this. If others find that it makes a difference to them as well, then it will have a life of its own. If they decide not to, it will not alter the fact that you have acts of individual conscience and you didn't stop one train. You might have saved one life. But you didn't stop one train.

Karun Koernig: Conscience as a way of realizing your existential statement is a method or strategy that you propose we consider. It's at least implicated. And art is implicated as a way of cultivating that, or awakening that, or at least enhancing that faculty.

I think there are many, many people who would say that they are in the dirty business of the management of moral dilemmas, and that they don't have the luxury of that kind of purity. Maybe they're the people that have their fingers on the bomb or have to mine the tar sands or whatever it is they're doing, and they don't perceive themselves as having that luxury.

You might say, "Well, I know very well that there's climate change, but I need to move on with my life, I don't feel like I have a choice." And so for you, the moral choice is weighed differently. Even the conscionable choice might be weighed differently. So my question is, with the perceived lack of efficacy of your individual conscience, what is to prevent many people gravitating to incremental moral action?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: How can you call it a lack of efficacy if in fact what you're doing is recognizing your own existence by that act of conscience? Don't say it's not effective. It's entirely effective. And that maybe as far as you can go in your entire life is to find that your own conscience and your own self and your being is effective. Its effectiveness is the recognition that you have to find internally. So if you can't find that, then nothing you do is efficacious. And if you can find that, then you are being efficacious. So those are the two different slants on that.

So if you can't find it, well, forget your efficaciousness. Whatever else you're going to do is only going to be morally correct in other

people's eyes, but you never find the root of your own soul. This other way at least you find that root of your own soul. That may be all that you're ever going to be able to expect.

Karun Koernig: That is what I would suggest is the challenge of that strategy, because many people who have conscience expect to be efficacious outside their own statement of existence.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Well, what is more efficacious than their own statement of existence? Well, there's nothing more efficacious than that. Either exist or don't exist under the conditions of that argument. And if you exist, then you're being efficacious. If you don't exist, your efficaciousness simply is a non-entity. It's not there. So you cannot expect any more. That's the existential reality that I'm trying to present. If people share that perception with you, or if they don't share that perception, but at least find a perspective that's suitable to them, then that's being even more efficacious. But it's only a matter of being efficacious or not efficacious in the immediate sense. And that's the limit of expectation.

Jeremy Kessler: I think when it comes to the question of a person's responsibility or a person's existential understanding of themselves, the individual artist will have to come to terms with that with him or herself, just as the individual scientist will have to come to terms with his purpose and his function. So yes, on one level there is the search for authenticity that every human goes through.

I think one thing that heats these debates so much and that I think was driving some of Karun's questions, is this kind of desperate search for, what's going to change the world? If you're telling me that the point of art is just sort of the individual recognition of one's own existence, how is that morally responsible? It's not going to change the world. Or if you're telling me that the point of science is contemplation of the natural universe, how is that responsible? It's not going to change the world.

There was the famous *Two Cultures* lecture by C.P. Snow that gives us the current framing of the science versus art debate at Cambridge in 1959 during the Cold War. It was about well, what will save us? Literature. Or what will save us? Science.

To me, that debate is a symptom of a very particular startling turn after World War II that has accelerated after the '60s and into the 1970s and that we are currently living in today, which is no one actually talks about politics anymore in any serious way. Why would anyone think that either art or science were the two practices, one of which had to pursue justice or good governance or any of these things? It's actually historically a very peculiar idea, you know, what about statecraft?

Karun Koernig: Well, Jeremy, you answered that question, though, in the failure of the state to offer any kind of satisfying protection of the population.

Jeremy Kessler: I spoke of the failure of states at a certain point. States have had very disappointing results. But there it does seem to me to be a kind of abandonment of political action, political thought, political analysis, to say, "Well, it's either going to be

the lab scientists or the artists who will solve all of our problems, and if they do not solve our problems, then we should be disappointed in them.” That seems to me to be a very peculiar historical moment we’ve reached. Which is not to say that artists and scientists can’t do so much, but certainly they can’t do everything.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: I would like to see the beginning of a conversation. Once the conversation begins then it expands, hopefully, to statecraft.

Jeremy Kessler: Absolutely.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Statecraft is not an abandoned area. It’s only an area that right now is not the initiator of the solution. They haven’t initiated anything. The state’s sitting back passively waiting for this to happen. But they should be involved, that they aren’t involved is absolutely crazy.

Carole Chambers: I wondered, Jeremy, if it isn’t that in fact we have, as we know it, exhausted politics as an option, in the West, anyway? It really isn’t functioning well at all, and I think the people have Weltschmerz with it.

I think that, Jeffrey, when you talk about acts of individual conscience, what you’re talking about is a state of being which has no strategy and there are no ‘deals’. It’s another state of being that it’s very hard for our egos to let us get to. But I think that is

the paradigm shift. About the only thing that we can do now is evolve, or it’s over the cliff with the lemmings.

Unknown speaker: I just feel compelled, as a scientist, to say that I don’t think scientists are only working from curiosity, and I certainly think in the medical field, many of them are working to prolong life.

What that then leads to is going to be human engineering. And that’s huge. It’s a huge area. But I don’t think it’s done out of a non-thoughtful motivation. It’s being done to prolong life.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: The question that arises is a more objective question. After a number of iterations of transgenic changes, what happens very, very slowly in Darwinian terms, maybe a hundred thousand years, a hundred and fifty thousand years, is likely to happen, as with genetic foods, in a very short order.

And the question is, who’s going to confront this? Yourself, your children, your grandchildren, your great-grandchildren. I just am not aware right now where transgenic engineering stands with human beings. I would like to have some scientists answer that particular question.

So, there is a moral imperative that scientists, especially medical people have, that goes without saying. And that’s the problem, that it is a moral imperative that goes without saying. Because those moral imperatives are stripped of conscience, they become a rote thing that is automatically accepted as true. “That after all, I’m a doctor. I’m doing good. I’m prolonging life. That’s good.”

I am thrilled that we have a scientist here who has strong art sense, and therefore, these are not alien questions to him, and this is not an alien conversation. My hope was that we would have another scientist come, but it really was an alien conversation with him, and as a consequence, he couldn't address these issues.

So what we are looking at from my point of view as an artist is to initiate the conversation. But the conversation, once it's initiated with people with conscience, means they become aware of these questions, and hopefully they are going to be haunted by them until they actually figure out what might be done about it. And for people without conscience or people who have a conventional morality, this will just go in and out of consciousness and they will go on as before. But we don't know the number of people who do have conscience. So you don't know who you reach when you put this information out.

Heather Goldman: I certainly know for a fact that the Indian government was very about having to import genetically modified food. Extremely unhappy. And the Rwandans blocked genetically modified food coming in. I don't know whether they still do. But I think people are incredibly worried, and farmers were saying, "Look, I don't want this stuff over in my field here. I just want our pure, untouched wheat."

Jeffrey Rubinoff: And what are we going to do with the transgenic people when people say, "We don't want them."

Heather Goldman: Well, I know, Jeffrey, that's the big dilemma.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Does anybody really care if you dump genetically modified soybeans? Probably not.

Heather Goldman: Well, do you leave everyone with diabetes or not?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: But if you start dumping genetically modified people, that might be a serious question.

Heather Goldman: That's exactly one of the big issues, Jeffrey. I mean, would you say, "Okay, we don't want to understand about insulin. We're not going to help people not be diabetic anymore from birth, and you know, you just live with your diabetes."

Jeffrey Rubinoff: But there are two different forms of modification here. There's modification within species, and there's transgenic, which is cross-species modification. I'm not sure about treatments for diabetes, whether it's transgenic or not, or simply a modification within the species. Twenty years ago, genetic engineering really meant recombinant DNA and transgenic engineering. But since then, there's been the modification within a species. And I have no direct objection to that, other

than it does bring the danger of eugenics, that people start planning the genetics of future generations.

Again, I'll bring back the warning on eugenics that comes from Thomas Huxley, which is that you could conceivably build much weaker species by doing this, because natural selection has taken three and a half billion years and you have probably the strongest genetic pool based on that test of time. So as you start cultivating breeds as you do within your garden, you are building weak species that have no real chance of surviving in the long run under natural selection.

On the other hand, if what you're talking about is the immediate life of a child? I don't have any argument with that.

Unknown speaker: Yes, I think your point is that you have to be conscious that it can go in different directions.

Rowan Helliwell: With food, the Canadian government has chosen not to label which food is genetically modified on the shelves. In the UK, isn't it commonplace to see if food has been modified? In Canada the government doesn't offer that choice. I mean we eat food all the time and we don't even question where it comes from. So isn't that the first step of becoming conscious of this?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Once it is in your head, it becomes part of your reality. Are you prepared to act on it?

THE INSIGHTS THAT EVOLVED WITH AND FROM THE WORK OF JEFFREY RUBINOFF²⁸

Tribalism

Tribal behavior is an ancient evolutionary trait. By definition, a human tribe recognizes descent from a common ancestor. From this recognition, rules of membership are created. As populations grow and genetic distance evolves, the tribe becomes wholly metaphorical.

At the metaphorical level, tribalism is realized in religion, nationalism, and racism.

Tribal myths of origins are distributive memories of existence that substantiate the rules that separate tribes.

The End of the Age of Agriculture

The domestication of animals is believed to have begun 13,000 years ago. However, with crop cultivation 9,000-10,000 years ago, a large majority of the population was required to be bound to the land. Cultivation leads to the first continuously settled villages and to civilization itself.

Security and continuity, rationalized by predictable food production, originated specialized political, civil, religious, and military institutions. Institutionalizing a warrior class was the most dangerous necessity of this social sea change. If the military were not directed outward, it would threaten the stability of the

²⁸ First published in 2008 unless otherwise noted. These insights were available and are at times referred to by the authors preparing presentations for the 2012 Forum.

non-military institutions. Thus, a constant state of war became inevitable, and indeed the history of city-states and empires appears to confirm perpetual states of war.

The feasibility of escalating war has become absurd with the advent of strategic bombing and nuclear weapons. No military institutions can claim to guarantee security of territory.

Moreover, at the end of the age of agriculture only a minute fraction of the population is required to produce the current surpluses of food and thus the fundamental assumptions of the age of agriculture, security of territory as the means to secure food production, must be revised to the era of global vulnerability.

Resurgent Tribalism

Agriculture not only failed to supplant tribalism, it extended tribalism through periods of technological development. As agricultural and civil practices advanced, continuously larger populations could be supported and larger armies with more sophisticated weapons deployed.

From the Renaissance through the mid-20th century, Europe led the world to modernity, scientifically and technologically, warring endlessly in ancient and re-invented tribal rivalries. Finally, much of Europe lay in smoldering ruins bearing the moral degradation of the Holocaust: mass theft and murder precisely organized and recorded by collaborating modern states.

The culmination of World War II was the profoundly ironic gift of nuclear weapons, given to us by science. With the reality of mutually assured destruction (MAD) becoming the ongoing policy of the nuclear-armed nations, modernity would have to adapt to a balance of terror if the human experiment were to survive.

As nation-states recognize the potential suicide of all-out war, the danger is that extant tribalism can continue to trigger genocide and continue the attempt to draw modernist nations into apocalyptic confrontation.

The Importance of the History of Science:

The history of the universe is the collective memory of the universe. The science of cosmology probes the limits of what we can know of the collective memory. At the root of science is the simple idea that there can be a methodology by which intelligent people can agree on what they observe and, as a corollary, agree to disagree without murdering each other. Science itself evolved in the West as a necessity for stopping the ongoing murderous tribal wars lodged in separate arguments about divine truth and divine favor. Science is a process that creates conventions of truth. It is the process that itself must be either accepted or denied. Necessarily, to accept science is to accept the process that has led to the scientific concept of evolution. The evolution of life is the collective memory of life on our planet, and it determines what, at any point in history, we are capable of knowing of the collective memory of the universe.

Evolution

Evolution is directional and progresses to ever more complex and adapted orders of organization.

Quite elegantly, the concept is constantly evolving rigorously validated evidence of itself. As rigorously validated evidence expands the idea of evolution, the human mind itself can evolve, thereby contributing to the collective memory of life itself. Arguably, the theory of evolution supports the concept of the potential value of

all humanity, as opposed to theistic or other rationalizations for the ascendancy of specific tribes.

Importance of the History of Art

Art is the map of the human soul; each original piece is proof of the journey. As the artist navigates the unknown, his art adds to the collective memory.

The artist's journey on the path of art history takes him to the farthest reaches of his predecessor as his point of departure. The artist who follows that history then possesses the chart for evolution, which he in his turn is obliged to extend to his successors.

In its turn, art history is one strand wrapped around the historic cable of Modernism.

Carryovers from Modernism to the Post-agricultural Age²⁹

There are important carryovers from Modernism to the articulation of human values for a post-agricultural age.

Modernism addressed the entire social spectrum implied by the evolving history of science, including natural history, which continues to yield evidence of important biological drivers of human behaviour.

However, the acceptance of the history of science by Modernism doesn't imply acceptance of blind biological determinism. Indeed, that conscience is manifest in all societies points to the likelihood that it is genetic in origin. Conscience, as well as violent upheaval,

can be a prime mover of cultural evolution. Modernism was by its nature progressive, valuing the ability and effort to envision and effect a conscionable future.

Humanism and Integration

In a post-agricultural age, political territories can no longer promise security. Globalization demands a common basis of understanding and action over both geographic and ideational space. Humanism is the conceptual thread with which to weave this common understanding.

Cultivated Ignorance

The easy view that truth is only subjective leads to cultural lethargy. This view of reality does not represent ideas but opinions. These opinions are merely a means to intellectual and moral conformity and to the avoidance of the effort required by independent thought. For some, there is just a cessation of growth, for others a deliberate security of stasis.

Leadership

The highly successful in any field are the masters of convention. In marketing, they are also the masters of the conventional. Learning from original art, true leadership is the quality to navigate beyond the boundaries of convention and to return with the charts of the newly explored. Leaders as navigators continually return to a vision beyond the horizon of convention. Like original art, the highest purpose of leadership is to serve the evolution of human consciousness.

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Evolution of Mind

Evolution of mind results from the dynamic engagement of truth with both analogy and metaphor.

Science has created conventions for truth by using analogies to model material reality. For much of their history, artists have been bound by their innate analogical ability to portray external reality. By science externalizing models of underlying structures of material reality and photography replacing the demand for illustration, art has been liberated to address the internal, intuitive reality of the collective human memory.

Analogies are tools, and as such they are accepted conventions; they are by their nature repeatable, measurable, and predictable. Metaphors exist beyond logic in the realm of intuition; they are the basis for truly original thought and are by their nature unique. Metaphors are self-contained truth, and they cannot be used as analogies.

A New Humanism Beyond Prescriptive Narrative¹

The social relationships necessitated and maintained by the advent of agriculture have been a central component of structuring human society for over 10,000 years. Seriously considered, the concept of the End of the Age of Agriculture is highly consequential and requires a deeply thoughtful and thorough re-examination of the essential assumptions of our institutions and their evolutionary direction.

A philosophy based on our evidentiary knowledge of evolution and our consequential place in nature can provide a basis for the development of the order of consciousness necessary

to overcome the virulent metaphorical forms of tribalism such as racism, nationalism, and religion. Overcoming this socially atavistic, dangerous reliance is exigent given the advent of nuclear weapons.

Modern humans have evidently demonstrated a deep historical sense of awe manifested in perception of the sublime and the sacred.

Tribalism—metaphorically transformed and self-inflated by myths of monopolized divine favour—thrived through the Age of Agriculture by prescriptive narrative. Prescriptive narrative, so used, perpetuated the rule and continuous reward system of the warrior class. In spite of the Enlightenment in the West, this system remained extant through the terrible resurgence in the 20th century until it was finally and abruptly ended among technologically advanced nations by the deterrence of nuclear war.

Art provides a means to experience the sacred beyond prescriptive narrative.

Prescriptive narrative will continue to yield ethical as well as analogical solutions for specifically identified localized systems.

However, a new philosophy for the End of the Age of Agriculture cannot overcome tribalism if it attempts to become universal prescriptive narrative.

Judgments made with the weight of individual conscience encourage the evolution of consciousness and reduce our atavistic dependence on ideologies and other dogma. We have learned in our recent history that there are times when individual conscience must overwhelm group moral certainty.

¹ Added by Jeffrey Rubinoff in 2009, revised in 2011



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