

M



Leonora Carrington *The Palmist (detail)*, 1980. Lostwax bronze casting, 102 x 49 32 in.
Courtesy: L'SPACE, New York, New York

M

3	Forward
9	Art In Review
27	Poetry
34	Theatre
36	Opera
38	Film
41	Music
58	Records
59	Social

Forward

People often ask how we decide what to write about in M. Now that we have added several new categories, *Music*, *Film*, *Theatre*, *Opera*, *Poetry*, in addition to reviews of art exhibitions, I thought it may be helpful to layout our policy for all to see.

Assuming a show has already caught our attention — this could come from our own listings service, an intriguing press release, or visiting art openings — several factors come into play.

First we consider, is the exhibition newsworthy? Did the gallery, art venue provide enough material from which to develop a substantive art review? Are there sufficient hi-res images available, with full captions? This is very important.

Also taken into consideration may be the thematic focus of a particular issue. For example, if the previous issue veered towards contemporary art, we may look for a figurative painting show.

How does an image get on the cover?

Because this space falls under the category of news and editorial coverage, as with art reviews, it cannot be bought.

The decision is made according to what seems newsworthy at the time and appropriate for the identity of the magazine.

How do theatre, opera shows get reviewed?

Well, it certainly helps to send our writers theatre and opera tickets! Especially invites to previews, where there may be an opportunity to speak with a director, and others involved with the production.

How do we choose what poems to publish? We try to visit poetry readings, events in the

M

intheArtworld.com

Vol. 29, No. 4, 2026
ISSN 1534-5394

Publisher/ M. Brendon MacInnis • *Executive Editor/*
M. Brendon MacInnis • *Graphic Design/* Rikki
Driver • *Writers/* Camille Hong Xin/ Elga Wimmer/
Gulsen Calik / Rikki Driver

The M magazine is published by MBM Publications.
All requests for permission and reprints must be made in
writing to editor@intheArtworld.com.

M

intheArtworld.com
Tel: 212 956 0614 editor@intheArtworld.com



Left Page: M. Brendon Macinnis in Kassel, Germany, 1986. Photograph by Angelika Angermam. Bottom: New York at the Whitney Museum, 2024.

city, to discover new poets. Also, we encourage both aspiring and established poets to send us writing, even short stories and ideas to: editor@intheArtworld.com

How are live music performances and record releases reviewed in M? Concerning live performances, it certainly helps to put our writers on your guest list. That being said, we prioritize free performances to maximize the possibility for wider engagement with our readership. Since the magazine is New York based, we focus on live acts in this region.

As for recorded music, given the high cost of making vinyl records and other physical media, a simple link to an online download is fine, to get our attention. Along with a press release about the musical artist. Put *Records* in the subject heading, and email to: editor@intheArtworld.com

How are films reviewed?

We focus on art cinema, though not to the exclusion of commercial releases. As with theatre and opera, sending us a press ticket helps, especially an invitation to a media preview where there may be the opportunity to meet the film director, curatorial team.

Beyond art reviews, we have also introduced a new writing category that we call, *Social*. As the title suggests, here we publish writing that is of a social nature.

This could be practical information, such as restaurant and hotel reviews for the art traveler. An unassuming artisan bread recipe, a pictorial fashion spread, accompanied by an essay. We are constantly looking for ways to engage, inform, and inspire the reader.

Where can I find a copy of M?

We are both a trade publication and a consumer magazine, which means we partner with a top international art fairs, to sell subscriptions, while at the same time, M is sold





VIP presentation of M / intheArtworld at private event, Shanghai, China, 2009

in niche, art focused bookstores, including museum retail venues. Such as the MoMA gift shop, or ARTBOOK @ SWISS INSTITUTE, a curated pop-up bookshop at the Swiss Institute's contemporary art center in New York. We also host our own pop-up VIP events for special releases.

You can also find M at the front desk of select art galleries and auctions houses, available upon request. To subscribe, visit our website: intheArtworld.com

People also ask, what does the M stand for? I got the idea from Fritz Lang's 1931 German Expressionist film noir titled M.

There is something about that red, Helvetica M. The subheading has changed over the years, from The Chelsea Art Guide to The New York Art World, and finally, intheArtworld.

We begin this new issue with essentially a new team, fresh ideas.

Some background: I started the magazine, M / intheArtworld a couple decades ago, as a listings guide, unique for combining quality art journalism, with art listings.

Before the age of the internet, we printed 10,000 copies every month, distributed to hundreds of art galleries, museums, auction houses and top hotels, mostly in New York, as well as through our participation in prestigious international art fairs around the world: Art Basel, in Basel, Switzerland,

then in Miami, and The Armory Show, in New York, FIAC, Paris (which has since been rebranded as Art Basel Paris), and Art Taipei, KIAF in Seoul, South Korea.

As our editorial content grew, and the listings were moved online, we switched to a quarterly publication, to have more time to develop in-depth content for each issue.

During this time out, I gave further thought to how we could take our writing to a new level, expanding the platform to encompass more than the visual arts.

I think a great magazine should take the reader on a journey. I looked at the work of Milton Glaser, the art director of the French magazine, *Jardin des Modes* in the 1950s, and later Marc Ascoli, who took that magazine to new heights from 1977 on into the 1990s.

There is something to be said for a paper of record. A tangible thing fixed in time. This is what we do. Each copy of M is registered with the United States Library of Congress, issued an ISSN.

As such, each magazine is a historical document that fixes a moment in time.

Going forward, you can look forward to more coverage of multidisciplinary art genres, such as *Film* (art cinema), *Theatre*, *Opera*, *Poetry*, *Music*, including record reviews, and a new category we call *Social*, which

is a platform to explore new topics in each issue, that have a social theme.

Then there is intheArtworld.com, and the M web app, where you can find gallery and museum listings, and more.

If you might be curious as to my background in the arts, I became involved in the art world in New York first as an art gallery owner, MBM Gallery. The initials stand for my full name, Michael Brendon Macinnis. In the 1990s, I had three locations (not all at the same time). First in Midtown, then in Soho, before moving to Chelsea, among the first wave of galleries to transform the once gritty industrial area into an art destination.

This is when I got the idea to create an arts listings guide, which eventually became M / intheArtworld.

In addition to the magazine, this year we have launched a YouTube channel called the M Art Scene.

Our first video is a mini-documentary that surveys the live music scene in New York, which is surprisingly robust, despite the often doom and gloom stories we here when a beloved historic music venue closes, in the rough and tumble of the city's real estate jungle.

The M Art Scene is a companion to the magazine, bringing an immediacy to our coverage of the arts. Feel free to let us know how we are doing.

MBM

M. Brendon Macinnis
Publisher



Orin Buck, graphic designer, and Jaseen Goodrow, Webmaster for M / intheArtworld, at private art event in New York.

Clockwise: A history of the M covers over the years, from the first prototype design, October, 1997, through the current issue, Summer, 2026.



curated

L'SPACE

Leonora Carrington Shape of Dreams

By Rikki Driver

Mysticism and the occult, recurrent themes across the centuries, have gained traction in popular imagination in these post-pandemic times, mirroring an air of the surreal — of a world slightly off kilter since

While Carrington's paintings have been featured in the collections of major intuitions for quite some time, this show, Lenora Carrington & Shape of Dreams, explores her magnificent sculptures, eerie bronze works imbued with supernatural, mystical, esoteric vibrations.

Carrington is a rare breed: a jack-of-all-trades and a master of all, she was a novelist, playwright, even a puppeteer, and this previously untapped portfolio has been seemingly waiting for this moment since her passing in 2011.

This reexamination of Lenora Carrington's body of work is one thread in the ongoing cultural overhaul of the 20th century's surrealist movement.

Many institutions, including New York's Whitney Museum,



Leonora Carrington, *Unknown*, 2010, lost-wax bronze casting. 108 x 49 x 52 cm Edition: 7/10 + 2 A/P
Courtesy: Leonora Carrington



Leonora Carrington, *Cocodile Bench (Cocodrilo)*, 2011 lost-wax bronze casting. 75 x 200 x 66 cm Edition: 6/10 + 2 A/P
Courtesy: Leonora Carrington

have put on exhibitions with the core thesis to expand cultural awareness of marginalized artists. Carrington's own work focuses on empowering women through the "witch" or "mystic" archetype.

Lenora Carrington & Shape of Dreams starts with *The Ship of Cranes* 2010 nestled in a bed of plants. Potted plants placed around the gallery blend the indoor and outdoor worlds, similar to how Carrington blends the world of dreams with the real world.

In a room across from *The Ship of Cranes*, the Tarot Room, we see the walls of a house from her illustrated tarot deck, a tradition for many surrealist artists. In one corner there is the classic fortuneteller's table scattered with tarot cards, while in the other corner sits an old wooden phone box, with three rotary dial phones.

The visitor chooses a card, is given a four-digit code, and then uses the phone box to "call" the code. All three phones ring, each representing past, present, and future. Then you choose which call to answer, and are met with A.I generated version of Carrington's

voice, relaying a personalized spiritual message.

This is an especially remarkable innovation of the exhibition. The A.I recreation of Carrington's voice does not flow the way a human's voice would, and can alienate the listener from what is the most intimate aspect of the exhibition. We are, of course, in the infancy of AI whose acronyms, lest we forget, mean Artificial Intelligence.

The show finishes in a tour de force of sculptures, showcasing Carrington's Surrealist canon. It is hard to not feel as if one is walking through an abandoned church, from some ancient religion. Each sculpture is accompanied by a text referencing the painting the character is featured in. There is a dreamlike quality to seeing these sculptures face to face, in person. Those familiar with Carrington's work will likely recognize at least one sculpture from her prolific portfolio.

The Palmist (see cover) stands tall, formable, almost dominating, while other works in the show, such as *Cocodrilo* (a bench in the shape of a

crocodile) have a playful air. There is considerable variation in scale as well, from the miniature to the monumental. Similar to her paintings, the form and shape of these 3-dimensional works have a delicate, nimble quality, though at the same time they feel more stoic, less fluid than her paintings.

The Shape of Dreams alternates between two worlds, to be sure, dream and reality. Classic themes of mysticism and the dream world are presented in a novel fashion, utilizing traditional techniques that embrace AI technology, in a formal exhibition space that allows for audience interaction. For both Carrington fans and the uninitiated alike, this show offers an immersive, deep dive into the artist's life work. **M**

Ed. Note: Concurrent to the L'SPACE show, Leonora Carrington's work can also be seen at New York's Morgan Library in the exhibition, *Tarot! Renaissance Symbols, Modern Visions*, which runs through October 4, 2026.

Moreover, in conjunction with that exhibition, on September 18, 2026, the Morgan Library will hold a symposium to discuss the elaborate techniques used to make fifteenth-century tarot cards for the court of the Dukes of Milan.

**La Biennale
di Venezia 2026**
Trouble in Paradise

By Elga Wimmer

This year's 61st edition of Biennale de Venezia, 2026, got off to a shaky start. There were several issues. First, losing the curator, Koyo Kouoh, last year due to illness. Then in early May, the five-member jury resigned, amid a furor over a decision to exclude countries whose leaders were under investigation for crimes against humanity by an international court.

After one excluded artist from Israel threatened legal action, a compromise was reached whereby the jury would be replaced by taking a popular vote among Biennale visitors, to determine who would be awarded prizes.

Then the European Union and Italian government challenged the decision to let Russia participate, while still pursuing its "special military operation" against neighboring Ukraine.

There was yet another complication, on the third press preview day, when I went back to the Giardini to visit the Pavilions, which I had not seen on the opening day because of severe weather, heavy rains. Almost all of the Pavilions were closed, due to a "strike for Palestine."

While in the area, I followed the sound of mystical Sufi music and ended up in front of the Australian Pavilion where musicians were playing on the terrace, as part of opening ceremonies. Finally, a welcome respite amidst these initial setbacks!

After the announcement was made that the Russian Pavilion was going to be open only during the press preview, because the organizers of the Biennale worried about likely anti-Russian protests, the press and invited guests of course rushed to see the Pavilion while they could.

The Russian Pavilion held a beautiful, moving presentation, *The Tree is Rooted in the Sky*, whereby some fifty young musicians, poets and philosophers from Russia and other countries — Italy, Brazil, Cote d'Ivoire, China, France — performed classical, folk, and sacred music on historic Russian musical instruments.

Mikhail Shvydkoy, the Russian delegate for international cultural exchanges and the country's former culture minister pointed out that this multilingual polyphony of cultures is further proof Russian culture is indeed European culture.

The joyous atmosphere, with vodka and champagne flowing, was marred however by an anti-Russian protest held by provocative, semi-nude



Florentina Holzinger: SEAWORLD VENICE: Eudes 2026. Courtesy: Nicole Marianna Mytyczak

Ukrainian artists outside of the Pavilion who held up banners that read, "Death in Venice," while making middle finger gestures, screaming obscenities. One would think that a Biennial of this caliber would be the perfect setting to bring Ukrainian and Russian artists together, far removed from the battle lines. Here, Hakim Bey's "poetic terrorism" comes to mind, meaning protest for the purpose of peace.

Peter Lamborn Wilson, who worked under the pen name of Hakim Bey, lived in the Middle East in the 1970's, working at the Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy and explored Sufism, mysticism and Persian literature. Which brings us to the Australian Pavilion today.

Inspired by the 12th Century Tasawwuf (Sufi) poem, The Conference of the Birds, Khaled Sabsabi's work places audiences at the center of the Australia Pavilion, curated by Michael Dagostino, inviting all to listen, breathe, and reflect on the shared human experience.

Born in Lebanon, the artist took his philosophy and artistic work

to Australia in 1976, and grounded his meditative experience in multicultural, multifaceted encounters. This exhibition, censured by the Australian authorities, was reinstated after important supporters of the Biennale de Venezia stepped up.

Among the most spiritually resonant presentations, both at the Australian Pavilion and the Arsenale's In Minor Keys by the late curator Koyo Kouoh, artist Khaled Sabsabi and curator Michael Dagostino placed eight monumental paintings on an octagonal structure, projecting moving images with a meditative soundtrack that unfold across the paintings.

Thus creating an immersive environment that evokes spiritual passage, enlightenment, with the number eight functioning as a symbol of harmony and transcendence.

Outside on the terrace of the Australian Pavilion, the group of musicians I mentioned earlier enhanced this spiritual aspect by playing Sufi and mystical music. A film of the entire performance and installation is in the making.



Georg Baselitz, (left) Elke drei flächen, 2025. Oil and gold paint on canvas 300 x 215 cm. (right) Hält sich in der Mitte auf, 2025 Oil and gold paint on canvas 300 x 215 cm. © Georg Baselitz 2026. Photo: Stefan Altenburger. Courtesy: Thaddaeus Ropac gallery, London / Paris / Salzburg / Milan / Seoul

The spiritual theme continues with Marina Abramovic's *Transforming Energy* at Gallerie dell' Accademia, Venice, from May 9 to October 19, 2026. The pioneering performance artist is the first living female artist in history to fill this unique space with a major exhibition.

Past artists who exhibited here include William de Kooning and Anish Kapoor. Abramovic's quest for uniting the body, mind and spirit and her research on crystals transcending that unity, already began with *Departture – Brasil Project*, 1990-1992, under the auspice of Galerie Enrico Navarra, Paris. Aided by minors in the Amazonas in Brasil working in a tough climate, and her own sense of adventure, Abramovic started using crystal, rose quartz, amethyst, tourmaline, iron and copper in her work.

There in the jungles of Brazil the artist created "helmets for departure" and "shoes for departure" with crystals, to use the body as transformer of the energy and enlightenment of this material.

Fast-forward 35 years, *Transforming Energy* is a continuation of the artist's quest and research of the return to pure, raw energy, using objects for communicating with the divine. The viewer is taken on a journey of discovery, through the healing, spiritual power of crystal, containing water that dates to 35 million years old, primordial water.

Abramovic sees these crystals as a gift of the Gods. For Gallerie dell' Accademia she created transient, performative devices that require the presence and active participation of the viewer. Triangles covered by crystals, crystal bars above benches, and chairs placed in front of crystals



Marina Abramovic, *Dozing Consciousness (Eyes Open)*, 2016-18. 90 1/4 x 45 3/8 Inches
Photo by Reto Gunli

tals at the height of the forehead and chest demonstrate how raw energy can be channeled and transmitted, transforming the passive observer into a true co-creator of the artistic experience. Images of the artist's own performance, the entire body covered in crystals, framed or at times in light boxes (by Swiss photographer Reto Gunli), complete the concept of the show visually.

Georg Baselitz's *Eroi d'Oro* (Golden Heroes) at Fondazione Giorgio Cini, from May 6 to September 27, shows the last body of work by the master before passing away this year. Curator Luca Massimo Barbero introduced the exhibition at the preview opening as a poignant goodbye to Baselitz, not only in his work, but also with the artist's statement pre-recorded for the audience.

The artist explains how he started a new series two years ago that would be the summary of his life's work.

The title, *Eroi d'Oro*, recalls his early work, the *Heldenbilder* (Hero's Images). The presentation of the *Avignon Series* at the 51st Biennial (2015) marked the start of his debate with his own transience. The title refers to Picasso's show in 1970 at the Pope's Palace in Avignon, and announced Baselitz's last phase of his creative work.

He describes this latest body of work as follows. "Since I am close to the end of my painting, I'd have to draw some kind of conclusion. In other words, a culmination of the paintings made in the course of many years."

Baselitz paints the figures upside down, on an abstract golden yellow background. Sometimes one figure, a self-portrait, sometimes with a female figure, his wife, to which he adds color splashes as a homage to his painter friend, Willem de Kooning.

The golden color in his paintings is for Baselitz a clin d'oeil to art history and his

own, as he used gold color over forty years. In these large formats he gives a last goodbye, combining monochromatic gold paintings with delicate and sensitive drawings.

Mysticism, spirituality, and otherworldly awareness are all of a piece, in the utopian vision of these artists chosen for this 61st Venice Biennale. As such, it seems the intent of the curator was to offer an antidote to the political and social unrest of our times. "Art is a form of nourishment of consciousness, the spirit," a 31-year-old Susan Sonntag wrote in her diary in 1964.

Half a century earlier Russian painter and art theorist Wassily Kandinsky published *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, which to this day serves as an exploration of the deepest and most authentic motives for making art, the "internal necessity" that impels artists to act on spiritual impulse, and audiences to admire art as the spiritual hunger it truly is. **M**

Austria Pavilion Venice Biennale 2026

By Rikki Driver

In *Minor Keys*, the theme of this year's Venice Biennale inspired many works on a personal level with individual, even isolated narratives. In keeping with the island-esque theme, much of this artwork feels very intimate. In this regard, the Austrian Pavilion is a notable standout.

Curated by Nora-Swantjie Almes, *SEAWORLD VENICE* is hard to define. Even the terms used to describe the exhibition are not entirely accurate. This is not a sea world, and the "pavilion" is not really a pavilion.

SEAWORLD VENICE focuses on the discomfort of water as sea levels rise, while at the same time clean water becomes scarce in many parts of the world.

Austrian artist Florentina Holzinger has constructed a sewage water treatment facility within the pavilion structure, whereby all of the water used for *SEAWORLD VENICE* comes from waste, primarily from human excrement produced within the exhibit grounds. The live presentation starts off with a bell toll, on the hour, where we see a female nude performance artist emerge from the pavilion, climbing up a rope and into a large bell, which dangles from an aerial lift.

She is violently swung, from side to side, causing the bell ring out. Visuals taken of this performance have become some of the most iconic images from the entire Biennale so far.

Entering the pavilion is equally jarring, as you are greeted with

a sign under your feet that reads, "I live in your piss." The gallery enclaves are flooded with filtered wastewater. These pools house the other performances, such as a nude performer riding a jet ski in circles.

The focal point of the exhibit is the courtyard, where a live performer resides inside a glass tank filled with the aforementioned water.

One now realizes the author of the epigraph has been watching the audience the whole time. As the group of onlookers are ushered into the courtyard, they are invited to "make use" of the two portable toilets placed next to the glass tank, hammering home the message, "I live in your piss."

Holzinger pulls out all the stops, in an obvious effort to shock. There are echoes here of Andres Serrano's National Endowment for the Arts supported, *Piss Christ*, whereby a crucifix was submerged in the artist's urine, generating the predictable outrage, and subsequent viral press coverage.

It appears this show is essentially the same game, with new actors, new causes. Will it work a second time around? The jury is still out. **M**

Ed Note: *SEAWORLD VENICE* will be on view at Amant, a non-collecting contemporary art center in Brooklyn, in the spring of 2028.



Florentina Holzinger SEAWORLD VENICE 2026. Courtesy: Nicole Marianna Myczak



Andro Vekua. *Untitled, from Some Pheasants in Singularity*, 2014. Fake hair, silicone, wax, polymer plaster, PU foam, steel, glass, synthetic rope, aluminum cast, fabric, motors, electronics, mechanics. 168 x 60 x 161 cm. Courtesy: Gladstone Gallery and Sprüth Magers, New York.

The New Museum New Humans: Memories of the Future

By Rikki Driver

New York's New Museum has reopened after an extensive expansion project that took four years, starting in November 2022. The innovative art institution emerged from its hibernation in a brave new world, with an impressive rechristening show, *New Humans: Memories of the Future*.

The ambitious exhibition plays catch-up, addressing themes and motifs that have come to the fore during this period of the museum's closure.

Multiple floors of the newly expanded museum are dedicated to *New Humans*, and there is much built-in

excitement in the long awaited addition.

The show is essentially a survey of art spanning the past century that investigates changes to our perception of humanity and the human body. Each floor is centered around a specific theme. Machine bod-

The innovative art institution emerged from its hibernation in a brave new world



Pierre Huyghe, *Human Mask*, 2014 (video still). Singlechannel video, color, sound; 19 min.
Courtesy: Hauser & Wirth, New York

ies on floor two, the 20th Century's nebulous humanity on floor three, and new cities and pop culture on the final floor.

A defining question of the 2020s, who owns the definition of what it means to be human, is explored in depth here.

This "era-defining exhibition" draws a parallel to the 1959 exhibition, *New Images of Man*, at MoMA, which also investigated the anxiety and solitude inherent in contemporary life. Indeed, *New Humans* includes several pieces from the 1959 MoMA exhibition, and directly references this in its *New Images of Man* gallery.

Many possible connections to this past go unexplored, however, in particular the "post-unprecedented event" anxiety. The viewers of *New Images of Man* in the 1950s were living in postwar (WWII) America, whereas today we view *New Humans: Memories of the Future* from the perspective of post-covid America.

In trying to be all things to everyone the show is a bit bloated, even cluttered. Because of this sensory overload, many works can be missed in a walk through.

There is a sense here that the show wants to make a statement, only for the sake of making a statement.

To be sure, one might be suspicious, after all, of an exhibition that discusses Cao Fei and Francis Bacon in the same breath. **M**

Paris Koh Fine Art
EunYoung Park
The Abyss as Metaphor

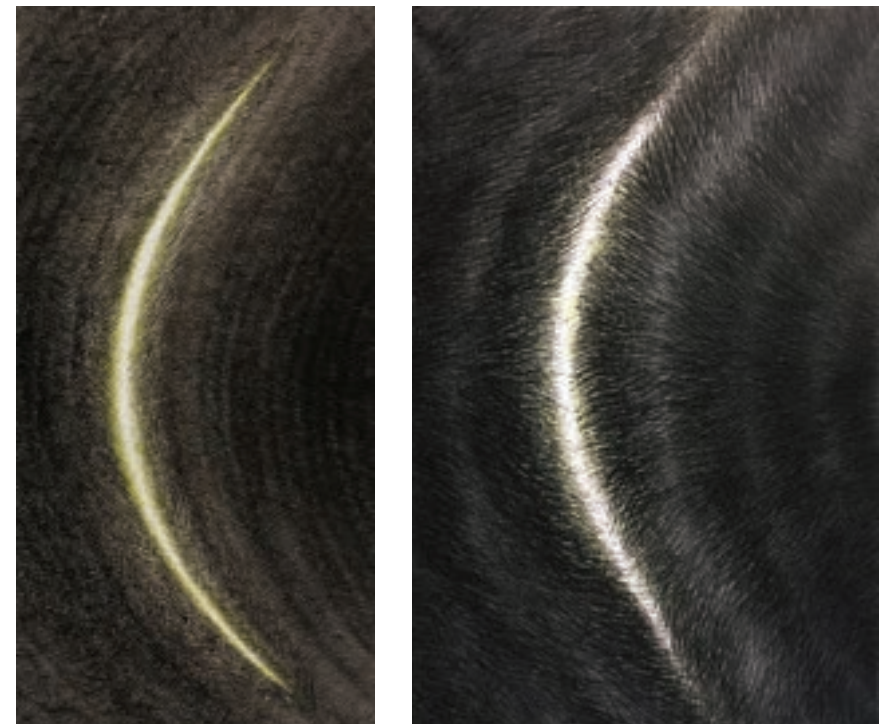
By Elga Wimmer

In her second one-person show at Paris Koh Fine Art, EunYoung Park's *Sumuk: The Infinite Depth*, the Korean born artist who resides in New York continues her exploration of surface and depth, light and darkness, often with an abyss symbolizing the infinite subconscious.

Among the smallest, conversely strongest works in the show, the *Empty Gaze* series: *Crescent Moon 1*, 2023, and *Crescent Moon 2*, 2015 (Made with Sumuk, a mixture of ink and oil on Korean paper), tiny superimposed strokes of ink that look almost like fur, reveal the slice of a bright moon crescent, as cut by a knife, and the waves of light emanating from it.

The effect is hypnotic. In its poetic play of darkness and light this work recalls Caspar David Friedrich's romantic era, and Abstract Expressionists Barnett Newman and Marc Rothko with typical large fields of dark vibrating colors that draw the viewer into a meditative state. To the same effect Park chooses to use the color black, which in its many variations defines light and darkness in a fleeting transparency.

Her technique draws on her South Korean roots, using ink as medium and the repetition of form in cal-



EunYoung Park. *Empty Gaze* series: *Crescent Moon 1* & *2*, 2023 - 2025. Sumuk on Korean paper, 4 x 5 inches
Courtesy: Paris Koh Fine Art

ligraphy. Repetition of form, evolving into automatic drawing and painting—écriture automatique—inspired early 20th Century artists as the Surrealists Andre Mas-

son and Joan Miro, and Mid-Century artists as Agnes Martin with grid paintings, Yayoi Kusama with Infinity Nets and Bridget Riley's optical illusions.

Likewise, Park uses rhythmic repetition of lines and waves to create striking optical effects that seem to vibrate and move on the canvas. Through repetition

of form used from calligraphy, to écriture automatique, these artists achieved mastery to excel in characters, shapes, strokes and lines to express a mood, a symbol, a figure, a landscape.

In the diptych, *Light and Darkness 1,2*, 2006, a white circle surrounded by black waves of ink strokes appears as a moon in a blackened sky, while the right side panel shows darker particles floating on a golden background gravitating towards a darkened center, again an abyss that seems to swallow the floating parts. It is not very apparent which side represents light and which darkness, the title could refer to both sides of the diptych.

EunYoung Park's work is much rooted in Eastern philosophy, the Yin and Yang, the light that becomes darkness, and vice versa, and the abyss that becomes an opening to a new world.

That notion is probably best expressed in the title, *The Dilemma of the Abyss*, 2026, where an accumulation of Zen garden stones appears at the entrance to a cave-like abyss in front of a golden white sky. Is it a promise of a better world, a brighter future?

Leaving that question open for now, this work utilizes a visual language that is both philosophical and contemplative, in the artist's own distinct vocabulary. **M**

Ed. Note: Paris Koh Fine Art is located at 526 W 26, Suite 211 in New York's Chelsea art district.



EunYoung Park. *The Dilemma of the Abyss*, 2026. Sumuk on Korean Paper, 48 x 60 inches
Courtesy: Paris Koh Fine Art

poetry

EATING ICE CREAM IN AUGUST

It was a fuck you dirty socks kind of rain,
left everything feeling damp, unwashed.
No dewy smells like long island rain,
no summer storms sprinkling flowers with names

Without a tulip I sat on a strung out bench
in front of the methadone program
eating an ice cream cone from a dingdong truck

Usually, my posture and game face prevent
the random ninety milligram remarks
like does that taste good? que lengua
can I get a lick of that ?

But brown liquid clouds have covered the city.
There is no etiquette on this syringe of a street.
I struggle to conduct myself with dignity,
to regain my withering looks, my Miss Lady sneer

I can still strut the hell down an avenue.
chocolate in the corner of my lip.
sprinkles clinging to my right breast.

Puma Perl



Nicca Ray

REMEMBERING BEAUTY

Remember the day
You looked at yourself
In the mirror
And you knew you
Were beautiful?
Forty years ago.
Did you then?
Show your skin
With aplomb
Or does your memory
Play tricks?

Remember your hair
Long, blonde, flowing
Midway down back
And you knew you
Had it going on?
Seventeen years old.
Did you then?
Comb fingers
Through your mane
With twinkle in your eye
Capture.

Remember your breasts
Your nipples through
A sheer black slip
And you knew you
Held eyes captive?
Thirty-two years old.
Did you then?
Place your hand
On stomach
Flat. Sensuality
Exposed.

Remember being proud.
Naked body
Your panties slide
And you knew you
Were empowered
How old were you then?

Did you then?
Know the lies
You held close
To your chest, in your heart
Shielded.

Remember tricking
Thinking into
Believing you
And you knew you
Were powerful
How old were you then?
Did you then?
Embrace it
The lying
When confusion set in
The fog.

Remember conquest
Capture, control
Thinking, stopping
And you knew you
Had the power
Twenty-four years old
Did you then?
Stop the past
From shredding
Future aspirations
Of love.

Remember expose
Not who you are
But projection
And you knew you
Projected
How old were you then?
Did you then?
Project the
Wrong image
Of a woman being free
Body.

Remember the fog
Remember fear
Trapped your body
And you knew you
Were running
Twenty-eight years old
Did you then?
Sit still for
The nude pose
Or was that you squirming?
With hand

Remember resting
Hand on hip side
Eyes? Look under
And you knew you
Were hiding
Twenty-nine years old
Did you then?
Know you hid
Yourself from
You and him and body
Naked.

Remember posing
Forever love
Forgetting past
And you knew you
Were changing
Thirty-three years old
Did you then?
Feel your skin
Rub against
His torso? Climatic.
Heaven.



Daeja Sutherland *Purple Dive*, Watercolour and pen. 2026

A POEM I WROTE IN THE FUTURE

I was in my 40s when the days started disappearing
life became long nights, days shorter and shorter

I would wake, in minutes the day would be over,
only my most strict habits would be accomplished

I made coffee I never got to drinking
wrote for my novel, unedited it grew without shape

spent time listening, watching, loving my three children
failed at getting them to bed before 10 PM

I did yoga, my house was clean, beds made
Christmas decorations stayed up over a month

I practiced my songs and kept up with correspondence
fell behind at work, missed weird charges on my credit card

The sun rose and set as if the planet had shrunk
days blurred, night stretched, and I hungrily occupied it

Only the dark body of night could hold me
I became daytime's orphan and looked for my mother

I saw her face in the mirror, heard her voice from my throat
I felt my grandmother's expression on my mouth

My body has been replaced so many times this lifetime
I have done so much but so much more is undone

Can a human unbecome, lose the sun?
When did the rays become poison? Sunblock in everything

All those that made me, surface through my skin,
my children look just like me when I was that age

The calendar makes no sense and hours are erratic,
the math doesn't work out, the problems static, unsolved

selves shed, ghosts surround, mourning morning,
it gets harder to differentiate between victory and defeat

I stand like my dad, my husband recedes into his computer,
our children raveled into adults, we lost the apartment,

the phone replaced everything, the America experiment
failed, no one smokes cigarettes or cares about high-fidelity

I am as lonely as I was as a child, as I was all along,
the dream, the night, goes on and on and on

Jane LeCroy

Peoples Improv Theatre ARMTOWN

By Rikki Driver

A series of theatre vignettes that captures the uncanny, often absurd life beneath the veneer of suburbia, with a satirical edge, *ARMTOWN* at the Peoples Improv Theater in the Garment District, follows an overarching plot in which the mayor of a fictional city suburb, "Arm Town," is depicted as an animal, in the form of a deer. The anthropomorphic deer mayor and his translator (because every deer mayor needs a human who can talk to the animals), run a very corrupt government.

Here the work echos somewhat George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, with a touch of Eugène Ionesco's Theatre of the Absurd.



From left: Max Miller, Jordan Jaffe, JQ Hennessy, Margaret Riley. The Peoples Improv Theater (PIT), New York.

Much of the humor here is based on clichés we associate with the stereotypical American suburb, where people aspire to one day leave the suburbs for the big city, only to languish as a big fish in a small pond as the years stealthily slip away.

The whole production is a collaborative effort, where the actors contribute sketches to the script. Which leads to

The whole production is a collaborative effort, where the actors contribute sketches to the script



The Peoples Improv Theater (PIT), New York.

the common pitfall of sketch-based ensembles: high-highs and less memorable sketches.

While the cast are all strong actors, some of the writing lacked the rhythm and timing

which is fundamental to absurdist humor.

A few sketches at the midpoint dragged beyond the natural end point, which may taint a strong start.

However, the energy did pick-up towards the end, bringing the audience to go home with a laugh. **M**

Ed. Note: The Peoples Improv Theater (PIT) is located at 154 W. 29th St, between 6th and 7th Ave.

This work is extraordinary on many levels, from its stage setting, storyline, music, casting

Metropolitan Opera Lincoln Center

INNOCENCE A contemporary opera By Elga Wimmer

Contemporary operas are often received with reticence, skeptical anticipation. At its premiere at the Grand Theatre de France, Aix en Provence summer festival in 2020, and later at the New York Metropolitan Opera this year, silence gave way to resounding applause for *Innocence*, the haunting opera by composer Kaija Saariaho, written by Finnish author Sofu Oksanen with dramatic adaption in English provided by multilingualist Aleksis Barrière.

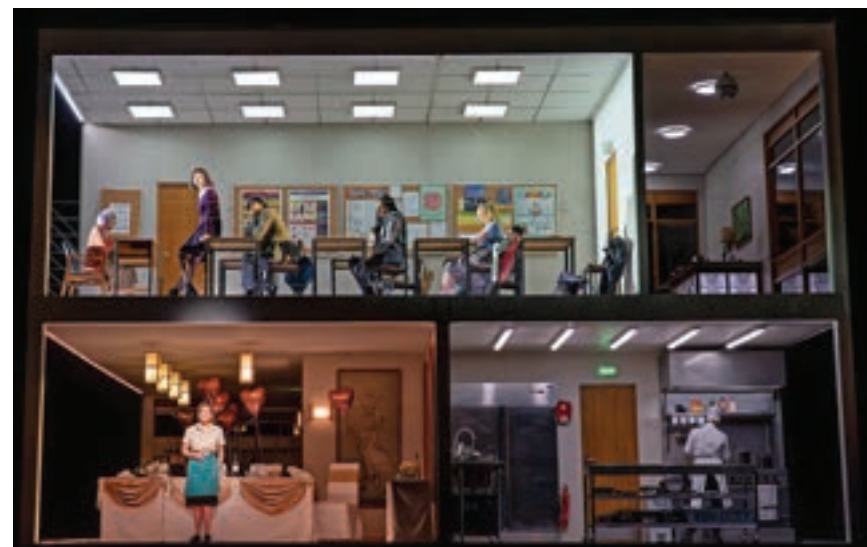
This work is extraordinary on many levels, from its stage setting, storyline, music, casting. All the seemingly disparate elements combined to create a sum greater than the whole.

Innocence opened at New York's Metropolitan Opera on April 6, 2026. Directed by Simon Stone, with conductor Susanna Mülkki and choreographer Arco Renz, the timely storyline explores the aftermath of a mass shooting event at an international school in Helsinki, Finland.

The location is deliberately not indicated in the storyline, to emphasize the universal nature of the tragedy. After



Jacquelin Stucker as the Bride in Saariaho's *Innocence*.
Photo: Karen Almond / Met Opera



Vilma Jää (above) as Marketa and Joyce DiDonato (below) as the Waitress in a scene from Saariaho's *Innocence*.
Photo: Karen Almond / Met Opera

composer Kaija Saariaho passed away in 2023, her son Aleksis Barrière oversaw the stage work, with musical matters taken over by his father Jean Baptiste who is also a composer.

The stage set by Chloe Lamford, with its stark geometric school architecture presents a box with two levels, allowing for quick shifts between timelines and depicting two eras simultaneously where past trauma intrudes into the present.

The story unfolds in several countries across Europe. We see a joyous wedding reception in Helsinki, juxtaposed with a school shooting that

occurred at the same venue a decade earlier. The bride, Stella, is unaware that her groom, Tuomas, has a brother who was released from prison after orchestrating a mass shooting at an international school a decade earlier. The groom's family has kept this hidden.

A waitress hired for the wedding at the last minute discovers that her employers are the family of the shooter who killed her daughter Marketa. Ultimately the joy of the wedding unravels, as the story focuses on the surviving students and their parents' ongoing trauma.

If all this sounds too depressing to sit through, the power of the performances and the musical score will keep you holding onto your seat.

Notable newcomers at the Met include soprano Jacquelin Stucker, as the bride, tenor Camilo Delgado Diaz, as Jeronimo and the outstanding soprano Vilma Jää, as Marketa. Veteran opera stars, mezzo soprano Joyce di Donato, as the waitress, and soprano Lucy Shelton as the teacher, round out this extraordinary production. **M**

Museum of Modern Art and Fordham University

The Melt Goes on Forever
directed by Judd Tully
and Harold Crooks

By Elga Wimmer

Seven years in the making, directed by Judd Tully and Harold Crooks, *The Melt Goes on Forever: The Art & Times of David Hammons*, takes its namesake from a snowball sculpture the artist, David Hammons sold on the streets of New York one wintery day in 1983, in a *Blizzard Ball Sale*, that would serve as a metaphor in the depiction of Hammons' unconventional, whimsical career, spanning generations through to today.

Where biopic films often tend toward hagiography, Tully and Crooks have crafted a kind of hide-and-seek adventure film, grafted onto a documentary, that engages the viewer to chase down the melting snowball which by the end of the film transforms into a priceless, maddeningly unattainable work of art. Sorry for the non-spoiler alert.

David Hammons rose to global art world prominence through his participation in the 1992 edition of *Dokumenta 9* in Kassel, Germany. Alongside the Venice Biennial, the quinquennial *Dokumenta* — because if biennial is good, quinquennial



David Hammons on 125th Street, New York, 1981. Photo: Michael Blackwood

must be twice as good — has launched the careers of many an art world rising star. And it seems at 81, Hammons' star is still rising.

It is fitting that *Dokumenta*, taking place only once every five years, an art world event defined more by its cultivated absence from the seemingly endless cycle of annual and even seasonal art fairs, would serve as the platform to call attention to an artist whose own cultivated absence has become his calling card.

Indeed, only a rarified few even know where the illusive artist lives today, much less how to reach him. The more Hammons ignores the art world, the more top movers and shakers want a piece of him. Even if that piece is the ephemeral, conceptual idea of a snowball that once existed, exchanged for currency, placed in the kitchen freezer of a curious passerby, only to accrue more and more, and then staggeringly more value in the minds of would be collectors. **M**

Village East by Angelika New York

Make Me Famous
directed by Brian Vincent
producer: Heather Spore

By Michael Macinnis

The little film that could, *Make Me Famous* — the first feature length independent film by the director, producer couple, Brian Vincent and wife, Heather Spore — has struck a chord with artists and the art-going public. A whimsical art documentary, the film relies on a treasure trove of real videotape from the 1980s that captures the scrappy artmaking scene of largely unknown artists hustling to make it in New York. There is nothing particularly special about the film's protagonist, Edward Brezinski, an aspiring painter flocked to the city's then notorious East Village, a desolate landscape of burnt out, falling down buildings, populated by artists and makeshift galleries.

Therein lies the charm of the film; Brezinski could be anybody. Any one of the hundreds, thousands of artists who regularly make the rounds of gallery openings, after parties, carrying a stack of art invitations hoping to catch the attention of a collector, an art dealer, a big time curator who could open the door to fame and the good life.

Skillfully mixing past, present and the afterlife — spoiler alert, Brezinski is no more — the film shows how little, if at all, the dynamic of artist/dealer/collector has changed over the decades, indeed, generations.

We see gallery openings in the East Village, studio visits, in the 1980s that are indiscernible from today, except that in place



Edward Brezinski, *Edward Brezinski, Self Portrait* 1976. Courtesy: *Make Me Famous* (film), New York

of glossy announcement cards, in 2024 the Brezinski of today would scramble to show you his website, Instagram account or QR code.

On a technical note, director Brian Vincent utilizes a clever dramatic twist as the film progresses, to transform an otherwise conventional documentary into a quirky detective story, that takes us on a journey around the world in search of whatever happened to our almost hero, Edward Brezinski.

We meet his somewhat bewildered family in Michigan, knock on doors of last known

The film relies on a treasure trove of real videotape from the 1980s that captures the scrappy artmaking scene of largely unknown artists hustling to make it in New York

addresses, talk to people on a street corner in Berlin — where once upon a time The Wall stood — who had chance encounters with the restless artist.

Ultimately, the trail goes cold in Cannes, France. **M**



Photo by Jonathan Postal. Painter Edward Brezinski and CLUCK models for NY TALK Magazine, 1976. Courtesy: *Make Me Famous* (film), New York

Village East by Angelika

A Love Story directed by
Eve Brandstein,
Richard Kaufman and
Stuart Samuels

By Gülsen Calik

In October of 1973, May Pang, a young personal assistant to the hip power couple, newly ex-Beatle John Lennon and his avant-garde artist wife, Yoko Ono, would find herself entangled in a web of intrigue that, against all odds, blossomed into a whirlwind love story, dubbed *The Lost Weekend*.

In fact the romance lasted nearly two years, during the ex-Beatle's separation from his wife, from 1973 until 1975, when Lennon and Ono ultimately reconciled.

The film is essentially a retelling of the story Pang wrote about in her book, *Loving John*, published in 1983.

Pang stumbles into the unlikely romance at the "request" of Ono, who tells her one morning at work, "John and I are not getting along. I want you to go out with him." This request initially baffles Pang, whose non-romantic, professional role as the couple's personal assistant

was well established by that time, some two years in.

She is at a loss for words, and dismisses the suggestion out of hand. But as fate would have it, a genuine, intimate relationship blossoms.

Pang narrates the story while weaving images into her testament: Home photographs and Polaroids of Lennon taken by her, and cartoonish drawings by Lennon that she kept to remember the moment.

Fellow ex-Beatles Paul McCartney and his wife, Linda, and Ringo Starr, George Harrison, as well as a who's who list of rock royalty, David Bowie, Elton John, Mick Jagger, Phil Spector, Harry Nilsson appear in the film, as we see Lennon reengage with the music scene of the mid 1970s.

Frames are well-composed, alternating between stock images, newspaper clippings, news media headlines and crisply lettered, white on black headings that mark the unique time period or focus of sequences. The high-contrast black and white photos, taken at the entrance of clubs or restaurants are sometimes coupled with graphic illustra-

tions that skillfully direct the viewer to new phases in the development of the budding, ultimately doomed romance.

Color photographs with muted blues and yellows and some sepia toned photographs reflect the aesthetic of the era. Evidence of day-to-day activities, relocating from New York to California, traveling to Florida and finally returning to New York, to a new apartment on East 52nd Street convincingly recreate the fabric of a time that has clearly stood still, in Pang's mind.

As an autobiographical documentary, *The Lost Weekend* partially delivers what we hoped for at the beginning: a more intimate look at one of the most impactful personalities of the late twentieth century. John Lennon was, for a fleeting moment in time, the most famous man in the world.

The personal journey of May Pang and John Lennon together, as told here, reveals a nuanced level of intimacy coupled with a sense of innocence, authenticity.

Due to the story's abrupt ending by an assassin's bullet at the opening of the 1980s decade, the viewer is left to ponder, *what if...* **M**

music



Photo courtesy of May Pang

**Brooklyn Museum
New York**

**Paul McCartney
Photographs 1963-64:
Eyes of the Storm**
By [Michael Macinnis](#)

**Musée Granet
Aix-en-Provence, France**

This show held its debut at the National Portrait Gallery, London, in the summer of 2023, before traveling to the Brooklyn Museum in New York.

Paul McCartney Photographs 1963-64: Eyes of the Storm is currently on view at Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence, France from July 4, 2026 through January 3, 2027.

Paul McCartney is not a photographer, and therein lay the charm of this ambitious, yet intimate show that features hundreds of photographs from the archives of the would-be “ex”-Beatle who never really stopped being a Beatle.

The surviving half of the most famous songwriting partnership of the past century, Lennon-McCartney, Sir Paul, who this year in 2026 has released his latest new album *The Boys of Dungeon Lane* that is topping the charts, while he prepares to embark on yet another world tour is looking back on his life.

And not for the first time. Back in 1997, McCartney penned the prescient lyrics to a song, *The World Tonight*, that could serve as the de facto artist’s statement for this show.

*I saw you hiding from a flock of paparazzi
You were hoping, you were hoping
That the ground would swallow you
I saw you hiding there*

*I don't care what you wanna be
I go back so far, I'm in front of me
It doesn't matter what they say
They're giving the game away, hey hey*

*I can see the world tonight
Look into the future
See it in a different light
I can see the world tonight*

Before delving into the exhibition itself, it is probably worth a brief retelling of what the phenomena called The Beatles was, given that they mean something different, across multiple generations. That a creepy, crawling bug, a beetle, could be transformed into global brand, bigger than Disney, bigger than Apple, and according to the group’s once presumed leader John Lennon — in a heady moment of unguarded exuberance — bigger than Jesus, is already astonishing.

The moniker, The Beatles, was inspired by the American singer-songwriter, Buddy Holly, who named his musical group, The Crickets. Lennon, a wordsmith, liked the double meaning of The Crickets, as both a chirping insect and the name for a popular British pastime. At the urging of his artist friend, Stuart Sutcliffe, who for a brief period was a fifth Beatle, the two looked for other insect names, and came upon the beetle, which when spelled with an “a” could suggest the double entendre of a musical beat.



Paul McCartney. Self-portraits, Paris, 1964. Archival pigment print 29 1/8 x 13 7/8 x 1 9/16 inches.
Lender: MPL Communications Ltd.

Buddy Holly died at 22 in a plane crash, in 1959. The Beatles, consisting of John Lennon on rhythm guitar, Paul McCartney on bass, George Harrison, lead guitar, and Ringo Starr (legal name, Richard Starkey) settled on calling themselves The Beatles in 1960. The tightly knit group was much more than a musical act, which at that time typically meant a good looking singer as the front-man, backed up by an often interchangeable ensemble of musicians.

Each Beatle: John, Paul, George and Ringo was good looking, could sing, and had superstar power in his own right. The four combined was like a lightning bolt that shook the earth, wherever they went.

The Beatles as a global phenomena, dubbed *Beatlemania*, lasted from 1963 through 1970, when, following the death in 1967 of their visionary manager, Brian Epstein at 32 — who had been the glue keeping the unit intact — the four drifted apart, and eventually dissolved The Beatles, as a legal entity, on December 29, 1974.

That being said, it does appear to have been a real possibility of a Beatles reunion of sorts in the 1980s, with the rapprochement of the group's main songwriting partners, Lennon and McCartney, and Lennon's reemergence in the public eye with the release of a new batch of songs, *Double Fantasy*, and plans to tour the album after taking a five year hiatus from the music industry to focus on family life.

But these plans were cut short when he was gunned down in front of his apartment in New York, December 8, 1980. Barely two decades later, George Harrison too would find himself the target of a murderous attack, in his own home in Britain, December 30, 1999. Although he survived the assault, with the aid of his wife, his health rapidly deteriorated soon thereafter, and he passed away just two years later on November 29, 2001, at the age of 58.

Which brings us back to Sir Paul, who as stated, has never really stopped being a Beatle, and the world is richer for that.

This show is specifically focused on the intense, paparazzi *Beatlemania* period, from 1963 until they stopped touring, giving their last live performance as a touring band August 29, 1966 to a nearly half empty Candlestick Park in San Francisco, California.

In contrast to their first live concert in America, to a completely sold out Washington Coli-



Paul McCartney Press call in Central Park, 1964. Archival fiber-based print 31 1/2 x 47 1/4 x 1 3/4 inches
Lender: MPI Communications Ltd.



Paul McCartney P1964-11-7 New York Street Scene, 1964. Archival fiber-based print 24 1/16 x 18 1/8 x 1 3/16 inches. Lender: MPL Communications Ltd.

seum on February 11, 1964, just two days after their legendary television debut before an estimated 73 million viewers on *The Ed Sullivan Show* on February 9, 1964.

Among the most compelling photographs in this show are the intimate, backstage images presenting “the boys” — as their manager, Brian Epstein, affectionately called them — greeting Ed Sullivan, and rehearsing on the set at *CBS Studio 50* in New York City.

The building opened in 1927 as Hammerstein's Theatre, and somehow survived the Broadway Massacre of 1982, where developers demolished no less than five historic theaters in one fell swoop, to make way for generic office towers, effectively neutering the city's storied theatre district.

For architecture aficionados, the demolished theatres are (were) the Morosco Theatre (built 1917), Helen Hayes Theatre (original, built 1911), Bijou Theatre (built 1917), Astor Theatre (built 1906), and Gaiety Theatre (built 1909).

Many of these photographs are hung salon style, rows stacked upon rows, much like you might see in someone's home, giving the exhibition an informal charm. You have the sense that you are looking through a family album. We see images composed as one might shoot friends and family, on vacation.

There is a shot taken from an airplane window of the jet engine cowlings attached to the wing, above the clouds. Suggesting the giddiness of a first visit to America. Before the Beatles, no one heard of Liverpool, much less heard that unique Liverpudlian accent.

Now these four twenty-somethings were on their way to see the land where their musical heroes came from, not yet fully aware that in doing so, they had become the new heroes. Elvis Presley was the past. The Beatles, in their Pierre Cardin inspired avant-garde collarless suits, and no-grease, shaggy, *mop-top* hairstyle were the new here and now.

We see singer Ronnie Spector sitting in a sofa chair in a livingroom, glancing askew at the camera, and there is John in another photo, wearing thick, black framed eyeglasses, looking back over his shoulder, the out of focus image of an airline stewardess coming down the aisle.

A smiling, clearly elated Brian Epstein, on top of the world, is slightly out of focus, holding a camera playfully, shooting back at Paul in a hotel suite.

Some of the most memorable photos here are taken from inside moving cars. We see out from the front windshield, Hotel Mayflower in New York, a bigger than life Cola-Cola sign declares the truth: *Thirst Knows No Season*.

Then there are the portraits, not formal portraits, rather childhood friends taking pics of each other, to simply remember the moment.

Paul's color shot of John seated outside, in a casual white shirt, reddish brown hair in that classic *mop-top* coiffure, no eyeglasses, his expression totally unguarded, seeking approval, is beautiful, angelic.

There are lots of wonderful street shots of 1960s New York, again shot from inside cars, looking out from a rear window, a side window. Perhaps the most iconic photo here, one that captures the *Eyes of the Storm* is credited to Paul, in Central Park, February, 1964. We see a gaggle of pressmen, one holding a professional, news-grade medium format still camera, the other a film camera outfitted with three lenses, that resemble a microscope. You barely see their faces, just the peering eyes of the multiple camera lenses.

Another favorite photograph here, taken in Washington DC, shows an unknown adolescent girl in a small group, flanked by what could be her older brother and mother, perfectly framed by the inside of a car side door window. Unlike the screaming fans, her face is calm, friendly, curious. She is looking directly at Paul, as he snaps the picture.

Finally there is the man behind the camera revealed, but not quite. Skillfully out of focus, a 21 year-old Paul McCartney in 1963, in London looks into a mirror that appears to rest atop a wooden dresser.

We can make out the blurry shape of a white rotary dial phone and presumably personal items. He is holding a 35mm film camera, low enough that we see his face, half shadow, in the black and photograph. He snaps the shutter.

M



Paul McCartney Self-portrait, London, 1963. Large graphic reproduction 47 1/4 x 70 7/8 x 1 inches.
Lender: MPL Communications Ltd.

Live Music New York

An overview of the city's
live music venues and
artists, from rock, to folk,
to jazz, and classical
[By Michael Macinnis](#)

When we say New York is the center of art world, we typically think of the visual arts. The hundreds of art galleries, dozens of major world class art museums, international art auction houses, countless art studios and alternative art venues here.

The city's music scene, especially live music, is often overlooked, taken for granted. Some even assume it no longer exists, that everything must be on the Internet, or stored on your phone. That except for a handful of pricey legacy acts, or astro-turfed stars, music is something to stream while multitasking.

Visual art by necessity is often big, bold, splashy, designed to get your attention, whereas music, you have to go out and find it. You have to slow down, stop and listen.

Although I live in New York, engaged in the art world for the past two decades, only until very recently did I discover for myself, the vibrancy of the live music scene here, all across the city, seemingly hidden in plain sight.

As fate would have it, this was a discovery by chance. The webmaster for our magazine, Jasen Goodrow, who was a musician aside from his web development skills, told me he was going to perform by himself at small storefront venue in the East Village. I was curious to hear what he did, musically, since I rarely saw him over the years. There was no need to come to the office for working on our website.

When I arrived at the venue, he had already finished and left. I had assumed the performance started at 8pm, but it started at 6pm, so I missed it. The owners informed me that Jasen often went to a nearby local music bar, Pangea, at 178, 2nd Avenue. That if I headed over there, I might catch up with him.

So I took a walk over there. On the way I passed a trio carrying guitars on their back, with a small guitar amp in tow. I thought to myself, how nice. Probably local musicians headed from gig to gig, like you hear about from the 1980s village scene.

When I got to Pangea Jasen was nowhere to be seen, and not answering his phone. I would learn later that he was gravely ill, and soon passed away. This was apparently one of his last outings in the city. The bar-



Jeff Wilson and wife Sara of the band, Soucake, in New York's East Village, 2025.
Photo by M. Brendan Macinnis

tender suggested I might like to stay, as a local band was set to play at 8:30pm. So I ordered a good German beer, Spaten, and eyed the scene.

Pangea is a modest size restaurant bar, with a formal, ticketed dinner theater in the back, and a small, elevated stage in the front, fitted with a baby grand piano. There is no cover charge to come in and listen to live music, in the front, save the price of a beer.

The band playing that night, *Soulcake*, turned out to be the trio I had passed by in the street. Singer songwriter Joff Wilson on guitar, his wife, Sara, who also sings, on electric bass and Laura Sativa on flute performed a wonderful acoustic set of mostly original music.

I was amazed that for the price of a beer, and a tip jar, you could walk into well appointed music venue in New York and treat yourself to a performance of this caliber, this level of musicianship. You could hear immediately there must be a couple decades of professional playing behind what they do.

So began my journey, to uncover all things music in New York. There is something poetic, that the untimely death of a trusted work colleague would open this new door.

After the performance I made a point to meet the band. These are the sweetest, gentlest souls you could ever meet. As Pangea closed about 11pm, we moved our little gathering to a favorite watering hole that stayed open until 4am, serving up rounds of Guinness on tap. It turns out that, aside from acoustic guitar, Joff plays an amazing electric guitar with several local bands that are also of top musical caliber. I made note to check out these performances as well.

One band is called *Dragon Redux*, headed up by bassist Joe Sztabnik, that plays hard hitting gritty rock with a 1970s feel, probably because they have been playing since the 1970s. But this is no nostalgic act. Joe Sztabnik, Joff Wilson, drummer Dave Donen and poet, lyricist Puma Perl form yet another band called the *Puma Perl Band*, which just released an album this year, of entirely new material called *Under Tenement Skies*.

We review this album in our new Records Review section, at the end of this article, where we select independently released

albums to discuss, as well as take a second look at older record releases, even going back decades, that merit attention today. For example, in this issue we look at French singer songwriter Serge Gainsburg's 1984 release of *Love on the Beat*, and Jack Bruce's fifth studio album, the 1977 *How's Tricks*.

The *Puma Perl Band* is a unique mix of poetry reading, in the Beats tradition — think Jack Kerouac, Gregory Corso — and a well oiled rock and roll outfit ready to unleash at any moment. In its live performances, the band will often invite a guest musician to step up for a cameo. If you are lucky, Seaton Hancock may join in on sax, or if pianist, vocalist Johnny Young is in the house, he may add his unique sound to the mix as well.

Live music venues in New York come in several categories, and thankfully permeate the entire city, from the East Village, to the Lower East Side, to Greenwich Village's Bleaker Street, to Harlem, to hipster haven Williamsburg and Bushwick, and even sleepy Astoria in Queens. Lest we not forget the magnificent cathedrals and chapels that host breathtaking classical and choral music passed down through the ages.

Only last week, I attended a performance by the *Trinity Choir* at St. Paul's Chapel of Trinity Church, featuring sopranos and altos Alceé Chriss III, organ, Tracy Cowart, medieval harp, conducted by Melissa Attebury. Fortunately the production chose not to mic the singers (electronically amplify their voices) as is often done in large venues. There is nothing so pure as to hear the unadulterated human voice, the perfect blending of soprano, alto, tenor, bass, with the faint accompaniment of a medieval harp, music written centuries ago brought to life.

In the summer months, there is Central Park's Naumburg Bandshell, a neoclassical outdoor concert venue that hosts free concerts, from classical to jazz, rock and folk since 1908.

I saw *Soulcake*, and a blues outfit, *King Bee and the Stingers*, perform there. Unlike the massive star studded performances held on the park's Great Lawn, the Bandshell is intimate, informal. You can gather around, sit on a park bench, and take in the music.

On the theme of outdoor performance spaces, we have the public gardens in the East Village that host music events, such as the 6th Street & Avenue B Community Garden. Joff Wilson curates the free *Music Under the Stars* series where, in front of a friendly, communal audience, musical



After performance bar hopping in New York's East Village, 2025.
Photo by M. Brendan Macinnis

artists young and old can feel at home to try out new material.

I discovered a wonderful flamenco guitarist, singer songwriter there one night, Jackson Scott Walter. You can find Walter performing his original material and Spanish guitar classics at Pangea, and other live music venues in the neighborhood, such as Marylu, a French themed music bistro at 41 St. Marks Place, and KGB Bar, dubbed a "literary watering hole," at 85 East 4th St.

Also in the same building you have the Red Room, on the first floor, a former theater recently converted into a music bar, with a full professional stage, as well as an inclined seating area with some of the remaining plush theater seats. Last summer the *Puma Perl Band* performed at the 6th Street & Avenue B Community Garden, which as the name suggests, is located on 6th Street, at Avenue B. I also managed to slip in a performance there, closing out the last edition of *Music Under the Stars*, last summer.

La Plaza Cultural Community Garden, at 674 East 9th Street is another East Village gem. This is where a memorial concert was held for Jason Goodrow, the recently departed colleague I mentioned. All of his musician friends showed up to perform, and I got to meet his lovely wife, Satoko Onishi-Goodrow and two young children.

The beauty of the live music scene in New York is that the best venues — where you are most likely to discover new artists, playing original material — do not charge. There is no cover.

Which means you can invite a friend, who can in turn invite more friends, without anyone having to deal with being hit up at the door for cash, just to walk in the door.

This may seem counter intuitive, in that a well meaning patron may think, surely I want to support the musicians by paying something to see them. But the musicians typically never see this cash taken at the door. The bar will take the lion's share, the first couple hundred



Classical guitarist The Lu performs at New York's Guitar Master Festival, 2024. Produced by Charles Carlini.
Photo by M. Brendon Macinnis

dollars, and if there is any change left over, they may hand that to the performers.

Worse, some music bars will set a minimum to take in at the door, and if they do not get that minimum for that night, they will turn around and demand that cash from the performers, effectively double-dipping. They get the cover charge at the door, plus cash at the bar, from patrons who come to hear the band. Best to avoid that scene.

Here is a list of my favorite music venues in New York, which generally do not charge a cover, or if they do, it is a recommended donation on special occasions. At the top of the list has to be Otto's Shrunken Head, in the East Village at 538 East 14th St. A no frills cocktail bar and lounge, with a separate performance space in the back, Otto's serves up a very, very hard rock line up.

The venue is well known among top musicians around country, and around the world. I saw Laura Palmer's *Screaming Angles* there a few days ago — a power trio of standup bass, electric guitar, and drums. Incredibly in 2026, you can still order a \$4 beer, round it up to \$5 with tip, and enjoy. Or you can splurge on a pricey cocktail, and bar food.

The 11th Street Bar, at 510 East 11th should definitely be on your list. The music covers a range of genres, from hard-hitting rock, to esoteric, artsy.

Then there is the recently opened Lucinda's on 169 Avenue C, an old school honky-tonk, country music bar. The Parkside Lounge on 317 East Houston St. is generally a decent music venue, though they will sometimes hit you with a cover charge, when you least expect it. Baker Falls at 192 Allen St. is a work in progress, dealing with lease issues. The venerable poet and author Anthony Haden Guest was recently feted there to celebrate his 89th birthday.

In the West Village, the Red Lion at 151 Bleecker St. is a wonderful live music venue, with moderately priced food. Nearby the

Bitter End, a rustic, charming relic from the 1960s is still hanging on.

Gary Guarinello's Catalyst Records deserves a shout-out. Located inside Essex Market, at 88 Essex St., the vinyl records retailer offers a small area for live music simultaneously livestreamed.

Uptown in Harlem, two of my favorite music destinations, Shrine World Music Venue, at 2271 Adam Clayton Powell Blvd, and Silvana, a Middle Eastern restaurant and live music venue are top on my list.

In Williamsburg, Skinny Dennis at 152 Metropolitan Ave. offers honky-tonk, country music where the focus is on two-step country dancing to live music, having a good time. A bit out of the way in Astoria the Shillelagh Tavern at 47-22 30th Ave, and in Long Island City, the LIC Bar at 45-58, are noteworthy live music venues.

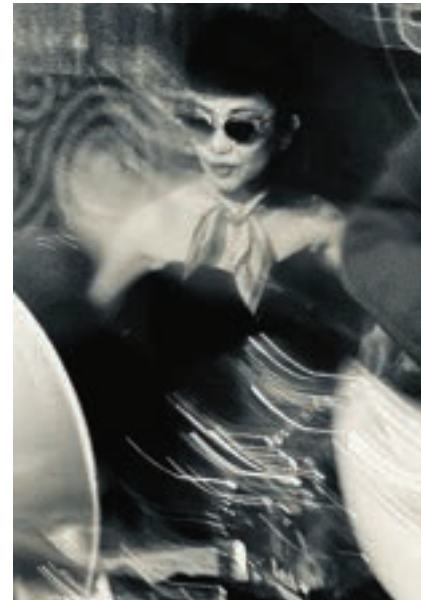
In the classical realm, the Guggenheim's *Works and Process*, a unique performing arts series started 1984, held in the Peter B. Lewis Theater at 1071 Fifth Ave., offers intimate access to the musicians immediately following each concert, with a post-performance reception.

Another classical musical event to keep an eye out for, Charles Carlini's *Guitar Masters Festival*, which held its debut in 2024, features some of the top classical and flamenco guitarists in the world. Not only to perform but to offer guitar workshops in conjunction with the musical program. The venue for the festival changes with each edition, check online.

I had the honor to attend a workshop with Vietnamese native, classical guitarist Thu Le, and see her perform, on the same program with the legendary Brazilian singer, composer, guitarist Badi Assad — an unforgettable experience.

While the visual arts understandably gets the lion's share of media attention in the art world press, the remarkable musical opportunities in New York certainly deserve a place at the table. To be sure, this is not an entirely new idea.

Visual artist Andy Warhol sponsored the avant-garde musical group, *Velvet Underground*, which in turn launched the musical careers of Lou Reed, Nico (Born Christa Päffgen), John Cale, Moe Tucker. And the group's iconic debut album is said to have inspired other musical artists, known and unknown. **M**



Love on the Beat Serge Gainsbourg PolyGram Records



Love on the Beat, French bad boy crooner Serge Gainsbourg's first album released in America, and fifth studio album, is an extraordinary work of stylized decadence. Although the full impact of his highly sexualized lyrics, which he murmurs in French, will be lost on American audiences, the chorus, which serves as the hook in each of these songs, is sung in English.

Gainsbourg does not actually sing, rather he croons in a quirky gin soaked voice over a thick sinuous dance beat. The effect is hypnotic as the chorus moves in and out, in a spellbinding rhythm.

In its careful blending of synthesizers, saxophone and nuanced percussion, set to the words of a poet, this album is addictive. All of the songs are laced with a risqué ambience that defines Gainsbourg's peculiar brand of stylized vulgarity.

Under Tenement Skies Puma Perl Band Vinyl, Bandcamp

It is rare that a studio album captures the feel of a live performance, yet *Under Tenement Skies* does just that. Comprised of Joff Wilson, guitar, Joe Sziobnik, bass, Dave Donen, drums, and lyricist Puma Perl on vocals, the songs here are strong enough to work

both live, and as polished studio recordings. This is probably because the band has road tested many of these little gems in small, intimate clubs around New York City and abroad.

Standouts include the catchy *Something Better*, with its driving rhythm, *Ticket to Hell*, that boasts a howling lead guitar riff intro, and *End of the World*, which again, features some wonderful guitar work, an irresistible riff.

As the title suggests, the songs are very geographical, specific to tenement life in New York's storied East Village, delivered in a salty, world weary tone backed up by some great musicians.

Pistoleros Mac Gollehon & The Hispanic Mechanics CD, Bandcamp

The sounds that classically trained musician Mac Gollehon gets out of his trumpet are out of this world, seriously. This is the stuff of another planet. For want of some approximation, we could call this jazz fusion. But fused with what? That remains the intriguing mystery.

The Hispanic Mechanics are David Brenner, special effects, Anthony Carrillo, percussion, Elvis Ferrara, percussion, vocals, and Greg Meisenberg, drums, bass, guitar. The production is superb.

This is next level music, timeless. People will be playing these tracks a hundred years from now, and it will still sound new.

How's Tricks? Jack Bruce Bands RSO Records

The man with the golden voice, and creative force behind 1960s British super-group, Cream, Jack Bruce did not rest on his laurels

and play the hits, following the nova like disintegration of the power trio that set the template for Jimi Hendrix and ZZ Top.

Bruce and his lifelong writing partner, lyricist Pete Brown, went on to produce some extraordinarily beautiful, sophisticated collections of songs, including ballads, over the decades since.

How's Tricks?, released 1977, Bruce's fifth solo album, is an enigmatic masterwork, rooted in jazz, that takes flight under the magic of Brown's wordsmith imagery and Bruce's flawless vocal delivery and yes, that unmistakable fretless baseline. To be sure, not all tracks on this album are up to the level of the title song, such is the nature of experimental work. But there are more standouts.

Lost Inside A Song begins as a solo ballad, with Bruce on piano showing off his sensitive upper vocal range, the lyrics have an autobiographical, confessional feel. *Without A Word*, a bluesy, swaying lost love song, and *Something To Live For*, an upbeat, catchy, feel good tune fills out this charming sleeper of an album.

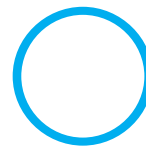
Caravanserai Concert Parastoo Ahmadi YouTube

Iranian singer Parastoo Ahmadi, part of a younger generation of Iranian artists who, under the often deadly repression of the Islamic junta that seized power in that country's 1979 coup d'état, uses social media platforms to share her extraordinary, breathtaking vocal performances.

Her performance of *Az Khun-e Javanane Vatan*, a patriotic song written by Aref Qazvini to honor young people killed during the 1906 struggle for constitutional reform in Iran was so powerful it got her arrested given the barbaric sentence of 74 lashes.

michael macinnis

social



Our Social features section is a blank canvas, where we can explore together new topics in each issue, that have a social theme. Here we consider food as art, in Japanese photographer Izumi Kasai's *Edible Portrait* series (opposite and facing pages) where she playfully serves up beauty ideals beyond taste. We pair these unique food portraits with a selection of art friendly restaurants, cafes, and other edible suggestions here below, submitted for your perusal.

Peacefood Cafe Upper West Side

Eating healthy vegan, in a live and let live environment never tasted so good. Too often vegan dining is about what you cannot have. No steak for you! No cheese either! Or worse, they will enlist the services of scientists to fabricate something that looks like a chicken, made from a concoction of soy and seed oils.

This rustic, reasonably priced (for Manhattan) full fledged vegan cafe restaurant, located at 460 Amsterdam Ave., at West 82nd St. (with other locations as well) serves up a robust offering of surprisingly satiating meal choices that will make you forget that you are eating healthy.

The Fluffy Quinoa Salad, made with onion, avocado, sprouts, sweet pepper corn, mustard lime vinaigrette, is a meal unto itself. Open until 10pm, the timing fits nicely into an evening of visiting art gallery openings.

The one downside, no alcohol. Yes, this is a health food destination afterfall. But they do offer an impressive selection of coffees and teas, with delicious, in-house baked non-dairy pastries.

Organic Cocoa Bread Artisan Bread Recipe

Yes, you can bake your own artesian bread at home without having to become a professional baker. You do not need a "bread machine," or a giant gas oven.

You do not even have to knead dough, or spend hours in a kitchen.

What's more, suddenly a crusty, chewy loaf of the healthiest old school European bread you might expect to pay \$8 or more for in a boutique bakery in New York, costs less than \$1 to make, even using the finest ingredients.

Here is how to make a your own delicious, super healthy organic cocoa bread in barley an hour.

All that you need: 3 cups of unbleached, organic bread flour. 1 table spoon of instant yeast. 2 table spoons of organic cocoa powder. 2 table spoons of molasses, 1 tea spoon of brown sugar (not for taste, but to feed yeast). 1 table spoon of olive oil, a roll of parchment paper, a sprinkling of sea salt, and a hand full of chia seeds.

Mix everything, except the chia seeds, in a large bowl. Stir in slowly 2 cups of warm water, and continue stirring (no kneading) until a thick paste.

Cover with a towel or cloth, not sealed, and let sit at room temperature to allow yeast to rise.

The mix will double and become a pliable doe. Sprinkle flour, to keep from sticking, pick up the ball of doe, stretch and fold a few times, then put back in bowl and place in refrigerator overnight.

This is what develops the flavor, letting nature do its work, slowly

bromating overnight. The next day, you are ready to bake.

Shape the doe as you like, into a round French style *pain de campagne*, or into a couple long Parisian baguettes.

Sprinkle a handful of chia seeds over the top, and use a sharp knife or razor to make a few decorative slices, to allow the bread to expand while baking.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees, you can also use a toaster oven, place doe on wetted parchment paper (to create steam), and bake for 30 minutes. Congratulations! You did it.

Le Parisien Bistro Kips Bay

This unassuming French bistro nestled between several Asian-Fusion eateries on East 33rd St. at 3rd Ave., is a local favorite. Upon entering you are greeted by shelves of hand painted water bottles behind a small bar. The interior is fashioned in a Parisian style, with painted copper ceilings and walled mirrors. A limited menu of French staples, simple and rich flavors, makes life easy. Try the steak frites, or duck country pate with cornichons and escargots, guaranteed to please. The atmosphere is primed for good conversation, with soft music and real candles. An excellent choice for an after-opening dinner.

rikki driver

Izumi Kasai *Angkor Wat of Grapes*, 2010. Archival Pigment Print, 20 x 24 inch.



THROCKMORTON FINE ART



**The Foremost Source For
Latin American Vintage
&
Contemporary Photography**

Image: Isabel Muñoz, MIT 0806, 2012

145 East 57th Street, 3rd. fl., New York, NY 10022
Tel. 212. 223. 1059 Fax. 212. 221 1937
Info@throckmorton-nyc.com www.throckmorton-nyc.com