
Articles You May Have Missed

Susanne Friend, column editor

“Oldest Figurative Art Ever Discovered,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 9, 2004.

The oldest figurative carvings ever found have been discovered in a cave in Southeast Germany. While precise dates for the objects are unknown, an analysis of related deposits indicates that the artists lived from 30,000 to 35,000 years ago. The three small ivory carvings suggest a high level of artistic skill among craftspeople living at this time, experts claim.

“The Barnes: Doing The Numbers,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 4, 2004.

Could a new Barnes thrive in a \$100 million building with a \$10 million annual budget, two figures floated in court? Yes, observers believe. There would be new revenue opportunities, and the Barnes would be more attractive to prestige-seeking but cautious donors. In the worst case, though, donations and attendance might drop off after an initial rush, and expenses could spiral.

“Should Barnes Temporarily ‘Sell’ Some Art To Survive?” *Philadelphia City Paper*, December 24, 2003.

Is survival of the Barnes Collection dependant on moving to downtown Philadelphia? Another “solution” has been proposed by art dealer James Maroney. The plan, which Maroney considers a form of legal “tenancy in common,” appears relatively simple: A selected number of Barnes’ paintings, not currently on display, would be sold to interested art collectors for the duration of the buyers’ lifetimes, but returned to the Barnes Foundation upon their deaths. Maroney said that the novel plan would raise money while imposing less “damage to Dr. Barnes’ vision than certain other proposals”

“Director: London Museum Should Rebury 20,000 Skeletons,” *The Guardian* (UK), January 6, 2004.

The Museum of London has a collection of 20,000 skeletons, and its director says he believes they should be reburied. The skeletons’ fate has prompted debate among academics. Many of whom have previously said they should be held back for research into human origins and

history. But Jack Lohman, the museum’s director, said it was an ‘ethical issue’ and that artifacts found alongside them suggested 70% of the skeletons unearthed in London in the past three decades had received Christian burials.

“WTC Memorial Design Chosen,” *The New York Times*, January 6, 2004.

The memorial at the site of the World Trade Center has been chosen. It will be a teeming grove of trees above two deep reflecting pools within the outlines of the twin towers. The announcement followed weeks of contentious debate in a city whose citizenry quickly scrutinized the eight finalists’ plans. The discussion underscored the difficulty of choosing one from the total of 5,201 entrants in the competition for a memorial that would encompass heroic sacrifice and unfathomable loss.

“Independent Review Of WTC Plans,” *The New York Times*, January 6, 2004.

Plans for the World Trade Center site are being reviewed by preservationists. As stipulated by the National Historic Preservation Act, the so-called Section 106 review requires that the site’s historical significance be officially evaluated before federal money can be used to rebuild it.

For the first time, in other words, independent scholars will have the opportunity to address publicly the historical meaning of ground zero and its value to future generations. This is welcome news indeed. “Not since the milestone Supreme Court decision that upheld the preservation of Grand Central Terminal has there been a landmarks issue of comparable importance to the future of urban America,” writes Herbert Muschamp.

“Restored To What?” *The New York Times*, January 5, 2004.

Many conservators no longer restore objects to approximate their original condition as fine arts museums do, preferring instead to maintain the way they looked when acquired. The aim is to extend their life while retaining the evidence of what made them important, even if it means presenting tattered artifacts with blood stains, bullet holes, and burnt edges. Now new techniques and a

new emphasis on less varnished truth in history museums are transforming the staid exhibitions of the past.

“Artist Jailed For Selling Basquiat Fakes Finds Career Rolls Along,” *New York Magazine*, January 5, 2004.

Alfredo Martinez was jailed in June 2002 for faking drawings by Jean-Michel Basquiat and he’s serving a sentence of three years. But that has hardly affected his artistic productivity: the work he has made in the pen has been in four shows, including solo exhibitions in New York and Paris.

“Scot Finds Lost Renaissance Painting In Louvre,” *The Scotsman*, January 5, 2004.

Sir Timothy Clifford, director of the National Galleries of Scotland, has found what he believes is a work by the 16th-century artist Francesco Maria Mazzola, known as Parmigianino in the vaults at the Louvre in Paris.

“Protecting The Nude Barbie,” *Yahoo!* (Reuters), December 29, 2003.

A US federal court has ruled that a Utah artist can make art depicting nude Barbies being menaced by kitchen appliances. Noting the image of Barbie dolls is “ripe for social comment,” a three judge panel of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals rejected toymaker Mattel Inc.’s appeal of a lower court ruling in favor of lampooning the popular doll.

“The Case Against PowerPoint,” *Australian IT*, December 29, 2003.

There seems to be a mounting backlash against PowerPoint as a means of conveying ideas. Visual artists say Microsoft’s popular “slideware” — which makes it easy to incorporate animated graphics and other entertainment into presentations — lulls people into accepting pabulum over ideas. Foes say PowerPoint’s ubiquity perverts everything from elementary school reports to NASA’s scientific theses into sales pitches with bullet points and stock art.

One of the internet’s original developers, Vint Cerf, gets laughs from audiences by quipping, “power corrupts and PowerPoint corrupts absolutely.”

“One Million To See Weather At Tate Modern,” *BBC*, December 18, 2003.

Olafur Eliasson’s foggy sunset installation at Tate Modern has recorded its one millionth visitor in just two months. Eliasson’s work, based on the British obsession with the weather, involves 300 mirrors on the ceiling and more than 200 lamps behind a semi-circular screen.

“World’s Most Endangered,” *The New York Times*, December 16, 2003.

This year’s list of 100 most endangered cultural monuments is out. The 2004 list has some surprises. Antarctica appears for the first time. The polar caps may be melting, but surely protection can be found for Ernest Shackleton’s expedition hut. The hut is infested with microbes. I can testify that the ruins of Ephesus, the ancient pilgrimage city with the Temple of Artemis, now in Turkey, are infested with tourists. I felt like a total pest when I visited that site six years ago. The place was crawling with us. The list also features sites that straddle national boundaries.

“Is It Or Isn’t It? “Van Gogh” Auction Delayed,” *BBC*, December 12, 2003.

The auction of a controversial painting attributed to Vincent Van Gogh has been delayed to re-examine its authenticity. The work was spotted at a Paris flea market in 1991 and bought for 1,500 euros (\$1,800). It was expected to fetch more than 1 million euros (\$1.2m) at auction on Saturday, but was withheld to allow further scrutiny by experts. Amsterdam’s Van Gogh Museum previously pronounced the wood-on-oil painting a fake, but several experts disagree. The painting, titled *The Labourers*, depicts farm workers under a heavy sky.

“Museums And The Issue Of Who Owns Culture,” *US News*, December 7, 2003.

Western museums have traditionally resisted requests to return cultural heritage to their countries of origin. Yet museums and claimants may be inching toward some common ground. American museum directors said recently that they are revising guidelines for addressing repatriation claims. And some combatants are working toward creative solutions.

Even the Elgin sculptures could make a visit home for the Olympics. Greece and the British Museum reportedly are discussing a possible loan. And while they defend the idea of a ‘universal museum’ with the common heritage of humankind on display under one roof, museum directors are looking for new missions.

“Italy Seeking Indictment Of Getty Curator,” *MSNBC*, December 7, 2003.

In Rome, prosecutors are seeking the indictment of Marion True, curator for antiquities at the J. Paul Getty Museum, and three art dealers on charges of illegally exporting cultural goods, receiving state-protected cultural property, and criminal association. Italy, a pioneer in police work to crack down on illicit antiquities trafficking, forbids selling or exporting ancient artifacts found in the country. Getty officials defended True’s work.

“Bamiyan Buddhas Stabilized,” *The Independent (South Africa)*, December 11, 2003.

Italian engineers have completed work to prevent the collapse of the cliff niches which house the remaining fragments of Afghanistan’s ancient Bamiyan Buddhas which were destroyed by the Taliban.

“See-Through Toilet Is A Work Of Art,” *London Evening Standard*, December 4, 2003.

A public art toilet made of one-way glass is being installed across from Tate Britain. Sitting on this lavatory you can see everything outside; pedestrians and, across the road, Tate Britain. This has been achieved by surrounding the lavatory with glass that allows you to see out but no one else to see in. This £30,000, not-so private privy was created by Italian artist Monica Bonvicini.

“Ancient Chariot Under Road,” *The Guardian (UK)*, December 3, 2003.

Highway builders have discovered an ancient chariot buried in their path in West Yorkshire. Buried for 2,500 years, the find is a complete chariot containing the skeleton of a tribal leader, with the remains of at least 250 cattle, probably slaughtered for the funeral feast.

“Working out the Bugs,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 25, 2004.

Insects threaten many of the Southwest Museum’s holdings. A pest control and conservation effort will take about three years. The staff has struggled to eradicate insect intruders for decades but never with enough money to fully protect the collection. Since 1990, the museum has received more than \$1 million in 18 grants for conservation, and it has made infrastructure improvements partly geared toward pest control.

“The End of a 300-Year Journey,” *Los Angeles Times*, February 3, 2004.

The remains of a lone sailor found aboard the French ship *La Belle*, which sank off Texas, will be buried among the state’s notables. Historians believe it is the proper resting place for this lowly deckhand. Archeologists discovered the sunken wreck of *La Belle*, a ship commanded by the famed explorer Rene-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, in 1995. The ship, which sank in 1686 in Matagorda Bay, became a significant marine archeological find, largely because the bay’s fine silt appears to have entombed *La Belle* almost immediately after it went down. The excavation yielded more than one million artifacts, from bronze cannons to a brass colander whose holes formed the shape of a delicate flower. “What we found here was basically a kit for building a colony in the New World. It’s the only place that these objects have all been found together,” said one of the archeologists.

“Court OKs Study of Ancient Kennewick Man,” *Los Angeles Times*, Feb. 7, 2004.

Scientists can study the 9,300 year old remains of the Kennewick Man, a federal appeals court ruled Wednesday. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco upheld an August decision by U.S. Magistrate Judge John Jelderks in Portland, Ore. Northwest Indian tribes wanted the bones, found by the Columbia River in 1996, to be turned over for burial. The three judge panel found that the remains did not fall under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and could be studied under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act.