

Greetings reader

The editors warmly welcome you to volume four of

DUCK & COVER

We're back from our summer break with our ridiculously unreasonable, unsound, and incongruous ABSURD issue. This month we will be welcoming lots of new readers so lets take a moment to introduce ourselves.

DUCK & COVER is good advice in most survival situations. It is also the title of this publication. DUCK & COVER is a non-profit, free magazine for the artist, providing an interdisciplinary view of each month's given theme, through the writing, musing and mark making of our many and varied contributors.

Enjoy.

Many thanks to this month's contributors and thanks also to you, for reading.

Jim & Katy

Editors

For more information or to contribute you can use these helpful (NEW!) addresses-

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Duck & Cover Magazine

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Katy Norton

Contributors

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GT Bouquet teaches minimalism at The University for the Vertically Challenged (UVC) at Littlehampton

Todd Dedman is a teacher of Media Studies and is currently in the end stages of a PhD in Cultural Studies. He is a relatively friendly misanthropist and has climbed Mt. Fuji. He plays bass in magnets.

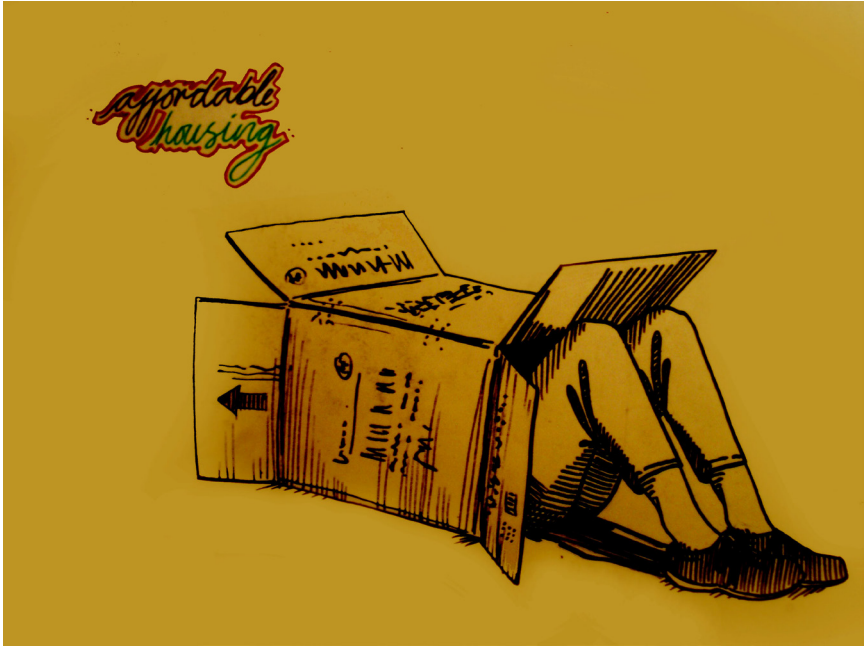
Lisa Hall is an artist practicing in Kent.

Rachel James is an illustrator.

Jessica Voorsanger explores celebrity and popular culture in her work. Originally from New York she is now based in London and has shown extensively. www.jessicavoorsanger.com

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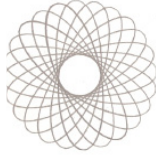
Rachel James

from Rachel James <xxxxxxxxxx@hotmail.com>
to emergency mailsystem@googlemail.com
date Sat, Aug 1, 2009 at 11:56 AM
mailed-by hotmail.com
Aug 1

The current economic climate is absurd.

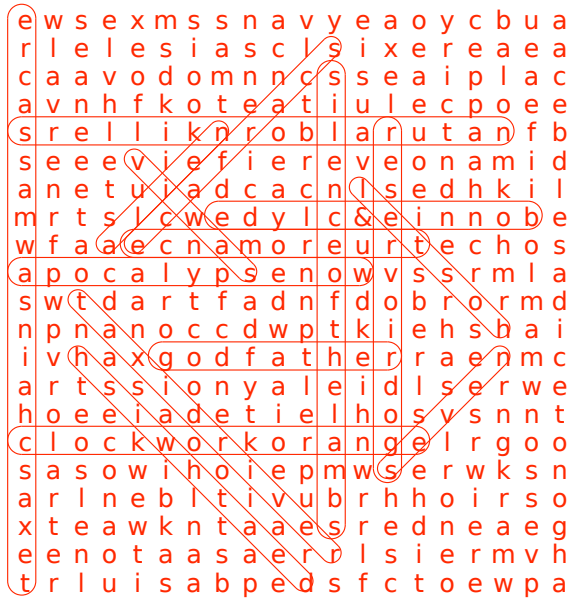
RJ x

Windows Live Messenger: Thanks for 10 great years-enjoy free winks and emoticons. Get Them Now



Answers to the Vol. 3 Wordsearch
(Vol. 3 Violence is still available for download from our web site)

Violent Films
Jessica Voorsanger



Saw IV
Silence of the Lambs
Natural Born Killers
Hostel
Death Wish
Seven

Godfather
Clockwork Orange
Reservoir Dogs
Texas Chainsaw Massacre
Taxi Driver

Apocalypse Now
True Romance
Scarface
Bonnie & Clyde
Alien



A Sort Of Kite For The Blind

Another kind of review from your Duck And Cover

Before the summer we brought you our first review from the Herbert Read Gallery, Canterbury. That was for *Cortez Arrives*, a show that, had it arrived at your party would have not been one for conversation and would've smelled of feet. The current show, the Bob Matthews Curated *A Sort of Night to the Mind, A Kind of Night for our Thoughts* by contrast is the life and soul: A party curated by Matthews, is a much better type of party.

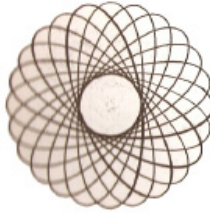
Gracing the walls of the Herbert Read Gallery this time around are paintings by the likes of Moyra Derby, Nigel Cooke, Claude Heath, Roger Kelly and many others. Why ambassador, with these paintings you are really spoiling us!

Friends and neighbours there are not so many of us very good at looking at paintings. Many reactions on the opening night closely resembled the various oohs! And aaahs! That one makes at a firework. We are no doubt, positively affected by the paintings, but the feeling (destroyed by closer inspection) is fleeting. We are left questioning what it was that excited us in the first-place as the glitter and magic fades deeper into a night sky.

What happens when you are yet again faced with blackness? Well, you wait for the next firework to wow you: You move on to the next painting.

The logistics of fitting twenty-two paintings by twenty-two artists into a space as modest the Herbert Read Gallery, and no-doubt recent organisational changes and budget cuts, has lead to each work being necessarily small. This has resulted in a peculiar movement around the gallery as viewers shuffle to look at the next painting, the next painting, the next painting. Slotting into the rhythm meant that you were acting out a rarefied version of how people behave in all galleries, everywhere. You stand at the appropriate distance, position yourself in front of the work, pay it the appropriate reverence (about 10 seconds) and continue. In the case of *A Sort of Night to the Mind* the appropriate distance is only a few feet because the paintings are so small. This leaves an expanse in the centre of the gallery where there is no-one looking at paintings. During my visit and in an early break of code I stepped back to occupy this space, as I wanted to see the paintings by Jost Munster and Mark Harris at the same time, I wanted to imagine that they were having a conversation: Like I say, there are not many of us very good at looking at paintings. I later discovered however that the central space does have a more important use if you visit while the show is busy: The area is for talking to people: Mingling, networking, and attempting to sound cleverer than you are so that nobody realised that you are not very good at looking at paintings. It kind of resembles a ball scene from a Jane Austen novel, only in reverse: With the dancers around the edge of the room, and the socio-political anecdotes occurring in the centre.

Before I mix any more metaphors and so that this article can earn its title as a review I'd better inform you reader about whether the show is any good or not: Yes its very good, its blueprint good. These little paintings make a big impact. Is that the kind of stuff you'd like to hear about the show? Because if that's the sort of reportage you'd like I could spout such praise. Or would you prefer it less anecdotal, more critical? Would you like to know whether the show's subtitle *Illusion and Materiality in Contemporary Painting* is deserved? Does it matter? As long as the paintings are stuff and are about stuff then surely they can be described in those terms.



OK, so I'm being reductive in that last statement. But I'm no good at looking at paintings, many of us are no good at looking at paintings. All I can say with certainty about *A Sort of Night to the Mind* is that I liked it, because it was good. This month Duck & Cover's review is just like an artwork by Azorru: 'We like it a lot.' (Don't worry if you don't get that reference it is a little obscure.)

Even if you are someone who doesn't know how to look at paintings, even if you are blind to paintings, this show will pull you with some unseen force and make you say I liked it.

Jim Lockey

Very nice

A Sort of Night to the Mind

A KIND OF NIGHT FOR OUR THOUGHTS

Illusion and Materiality in Contemporary Painting

23 September to 24 October 2009

open Monday to Friday 9.30am to 5.30pm

Phillip Allen . Andrew Blick . Simon Burton . Varda Caivano . Leigh Clarke . Nigel Cooke
Moyra Derby . Neil Gall . Pamela Golden . Mark Hampson . Beth Harland . Mark Harris
Paul Housley . Vincent Hawkins . Claude Heath . Roger Kelly . Bob Matthews
Andrea Medjesi-Jones . Jost Münster . Martina Schmid . Joel Tomlin . Julian Wakelin

Preview Tuesday 22 September 5 to 8 pm

UCA
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New Dover Road Canterbury
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The Absurd

As a rule, I hate labels. I hate it when people say "I am this" or "I am that" because there just seems to be such a finite quality to defining yourself by some predetermined and inextricably fixed position. This doesn't appeal to me. We hate it when others label us due to our physical appearance, our skin colour, haircut, choice of clothes or sexual preferences because such labels are often placed in order to stereotype and possibly to subordinate us. Yet we are happy to place such labels on ourselves.

Essentialism is a school of social scientific thought which suggests that groups or categories of objects have certain defining features shared by all the members of the group. Essentialism is, to put it in very un-social scientific terms, an absolute load of old cock. To put it in real base terms, if we belong to an easily identifiable community group we are, according to this approach, all the same.

All Japanese women = the same

All bald men = the same

All fans of My Chemical Romance = the same

All feminists = the same

All those who fail to laugh at the "Carry On..." films = the same

All those from single parent families = the same

All those.....well, you get the point.

So, as free thinking intelligent people we probably all assume that this idea is a long extinguished one, confined to the annals of history along with Spangles, the Sinclair C5 and people thinking Jim Davidson is a good thing. Unfortunately, essentialism can still clearly be seen today. This is not just evident in the labelling schemes used by racist arseholes or old grannies that don't really know any better and have very little time left for anyone to even attempt to re-educate them, but in media practices ranging from fiction to the so-called presentation of facts on the News. I felt totally ostracised from the media output of the last few weeks and months as I can honestly say, hand on heart, I could not have given two shits about Jade Goody. The same was true in 1997 when Princess Diana smashed her head to pieces in a tunnel in Paris. I couldn't have cared less (although it is true that I did get a bit upset when I realised there'd be nothing else on the telly for a few days). Now, this may make me some kind of heartless, unfeeling bastard but I'd rather be labelled unfeeling than unthinking like all of the morons caught up in this tidal wave of national grief. The whole Jade Goody thing made me feel that this country, after 1997, got a taste for outwardly exposing emotions of sadness and couldn't fucking wait for another similar situation to arise.

The broadcast news has an obligation to the audience to present unbiased, impartial stories. In light of this, I was hopeful of getting a phone call from the BBC, ITN or Sky to be their token "couldn't give a shit about Jade" kind of guest. This would, you must concede, have ensured impartiality. No such call came. Not just to me, but no such call was received by anyone willing to offer such an opinion. The fact that she was slowly being canonised in front of our eyes seemed not to really bother many people. She was being portrayed as a martyr who had helped raise women's awareness of cervical cancer. How strange. How ridiculous. The country was in mourning for "the Princess Diana from the wrong side of the tracks", for the girl who "did not know the way to East Anglia but knew the way to our hearts" (© some fuckwits).

So, as I say - I hate labels. I hate it when people I know place some kind of label on me. I particularly hate it when people I don't know are telling me how I'm feeling. I am not the same as you and you are not the same as me. In fact, we're probably not even that similar. Our tastes, views and values will no doubt differ wildly. Weirdly though, this is what should bring us together more. I can't stand being in a room with people who agree with me and share my ideals. I would much rather argue an opposing view just to get away from the self-congratulatory presence of so-called kindred spirits. I am not a fan of collectivity. Debate cannot come from people who share ideas and ideas cannot be developed without debate. If I was faced with a room full of Marxist, "Curb Your Enthusiasm" obsessed Star Wars loving atheist Sonic Youth fans then I would probably run away. "I wouldn't want to be part of a club who would have me as a member" as someone better than me once noted.

So, what's this all got to do with the notion of the absurd?? Well, I could have written about art or philosophy in order to further an understanding of the viewpoint that life has no meaning and any search for meaning is a futile act. I could have, but I didn't. I decided to focus on an aspect of life that I find absurd and then wandered off the point rather splendidly. That's one thing I'm good at; going off on tangents – but then that would be a label, I guess.

So, yes – I find labels absurd. I am open to admitting that I, of course, use them regularly in order for me to understand concepts that my brain finds it difficult to get a grip on. But I still hate them.

I also feel quite strongly that the following aspects of human life are absurd in nature and could easily have wasted your precious time with an article on any of the following:

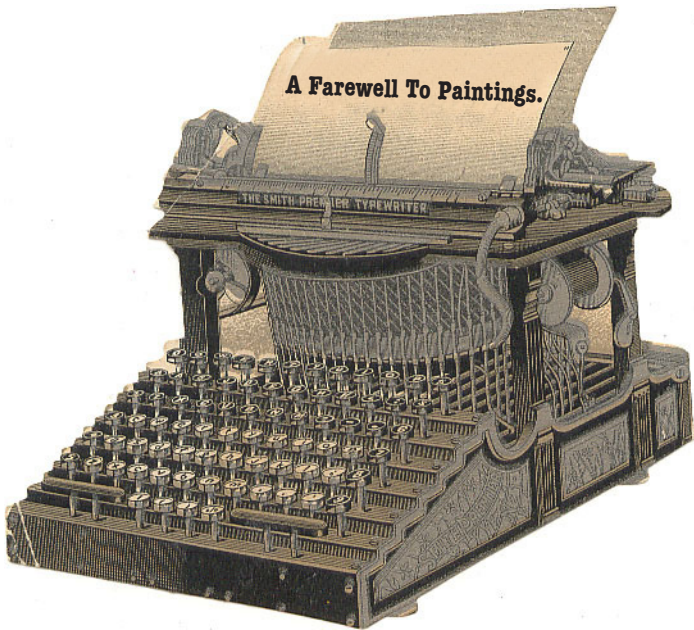
- Voting Conservative (horrible)
- Capitalism (misguided)
- Marching against capitalism (you damn fools – that's playing into the hands of the capitalists who will only use images of hippies in an attempt to prove how RIGHT capitalism is. The revolution has to be silent)
- Jester's hats at music festivals (pricks)
- People not realising that Aidan Moffatt is an absolute fucking genius (www.aidanmoffatt.co.uk)
- Stargate Atlantis (what's that all about?)
- The search for meaning (futile)
- The belief in the truth (and the denial of many possible truths)
- Poi (no, no, no, no, no!)

Todd Dedman



Oh happy day, post-renaissance, post-enlightenment, post-modern. In all the arts we are freed. What a rebirth we've had, except the painters. It was more of a miscarriage in that regard.

Paintings, you've seen them, they clutter our lives with their wall-y-ness. You know the painters? They do the paintings? You must've seen the paintings, clinging to walls only millimetre's thicker than nothing and conveying nothing, except perhaps the vague memory of an artists gesture: You know, the paintings, they're rectangular and they look like stuff: You must've seen the paintings: In the pub, behind the bar, the smudges of colour applied to a background: You know, in the gallery and the pub and the living room, the paintings: Hanging there all objecty, taking up space, demanding worship and veneration: In the gallery and the pub and the living room, something so flat but so shouty, waiting to be transformed into an icon. Waiting for someone to think about the marks too much, and deify them: The paintings, stay so fucking still all the time, remembering the movements of the painter, the articulation of a body: Something so mundane and passing, drawn out to last far too long: You know the paintings, they think they're better than time: What's so scary about the dimension of time anyway, or the dimension of depth? - The paintings want to be immortal. I reject paintings, I forget the paintings. You know the paintings, they refuse to live with us in the world. You remember the paintings? I don't.



Jim Lockey

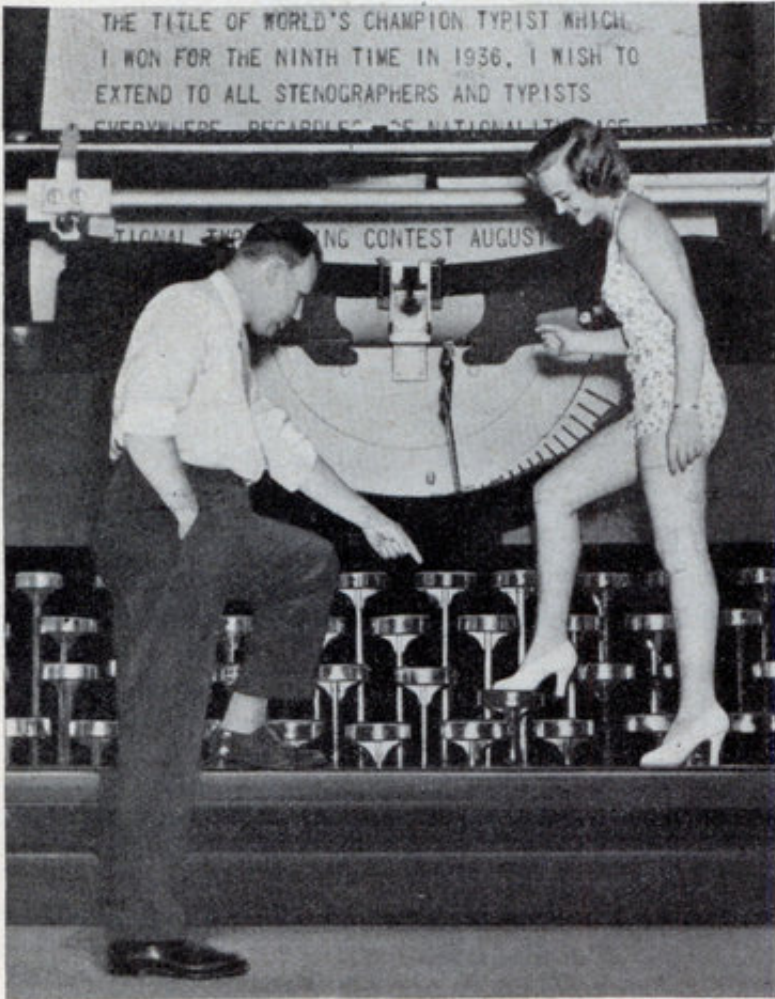


fig 1. Duck & Cover's editors

Duck & Cover relies upon submissions from artists in order to survive.

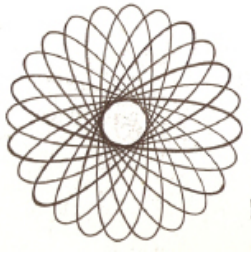
email your submission to duckandcovermag@googlemail.com



The Duck & Cover Podcast

Available online at www.duckandcovermag.co.uk

Listen to the latest edition **LIVE** from **Alternative, Margate.**



The platypus once pondered
On the meaning of the word
Why did people say that
She was so absurd?

My duck-bill face she said with pride
Is nothing I would want to hide

I'm normal by my standards
A mammal who lays eggs
Unlike those weirdo people
Who only use two legs

And sit in claustrophobic tubes
To get from A to B
And volunteer to go
On reality TV.

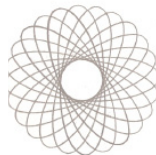
GT Bouquet

Absurd Film/TV Word Search

Jessica Voorsanger



- Steve Martin
- The Jerk
- Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid
- Chevy Chase
- Airplane
- Jack Black
- Zoolander
- Will Ferrell
- Fawlty Towers
- Monty Python
- Mel Brooks
- Pee Wee Herman
- Gene Wilder
- Saturday Night Live
- Britain's Got Talent
- Laugh In
- America's Got Talent
- Big Brother



Very Short Article

Here is an example of structural irony,
I do not know how to use structural irony.



See you next time, for Vol. 5 THE DEAD ISSUE