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# ARTnews

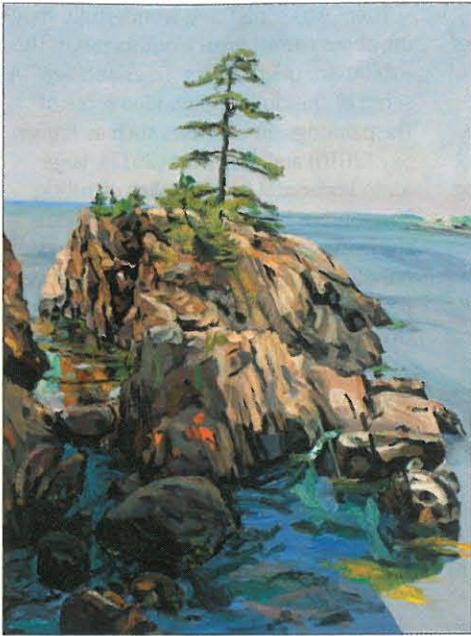
## Where Fashion Meets Art

**The Cindy Sherman Effect**

Bushwick: A Scene Grows in Brooklyn

**Authenticity: Who Decides?**



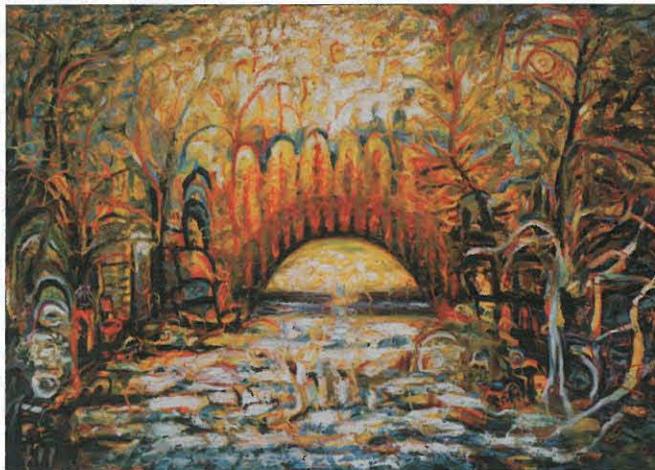


George Nick, *Crow's Nose June 2011*, oil on linen, 40" x 30". Gallery NAGA.

painterly alchemy of turning base materials into something precious.

Although Nick has been a realist throughout his long career—he is now 84—he is also a formalist. The bare tree branches in *Fresh Snow, Back Bay January 2010* stretch out across the canvas, flattening the image as in a Cézanne. In *Crow's Nose June 2011*, strokes of yellow, aquamarine, and sea green help define the ocean's complex color, but when seen up close, stay stubbornly on the surface of the canvas, drawing attention to its flatness.

Nick exults in his medium. He brings a sense of joy to his paint handling, like a toddler playing with finger paints. He even signs his work by scratching his name and the piece's title into the wet paint with a jackknife. The title of this exhibition, "The World Is Flat (Until You Paint It)," was only part of the



Michael Roque Collins, *Growing Behind the Arsenale*, 2010–11, oil on linen, 72" x 100". LewAllen at the Railyard.

story. Nick makes a flat world three-dimensional and then makes it flat all over again.

—David Bonetti

## Michael Roque Collins

### LewAllen at the Railyard

#### Santa Fe

Houston-born Michael Roque Collins paints abstracted landscapes full of architectural remnants and ruins. These expressionistic scenes—with their waterways, boats, and dense subtropical vegetation—have a mystical aura but also evoke the artist's native Gulf Coast surroundings.

"Tides of Memory," Collins's sixth exhibition at this gallery, consisted of recent oil

paintings plus two bronze sculptures. The artist's brushwork is characterized by thick impastos and looping arabesques, seen in the swirling clouds and waters of *Sailing the Sepik Tide* (2010–11). Small, Giacometti-like visages appear in some of the paintings, including *Drifting Near the Island of the Mau-*

*soleum* and *Bridge Beyond the Lake of Fire* (both 2010). They bring to mind stacked skulls, ghosts, or the haloed heads of Byzantine saints.

In *Growing Behind the Arsenale* (2010–11), the artist reveals himself to be a bold colorist. Depicting a bridge over water surrounded by tangled, swampy vegetation, the work recalls Charles Burchfield's eerie landscapes.

With their sly and somewhat sinister beauty, Collins's paintings lure the viewer into a near-apocalyptic world.

—Jon Carver

## Swoon

### New Orleans Museum of Art New Orleans

Nearly six and a half years ago, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, water engulfed New Orleans. *Thalassa* (2011), New



Swoon, *Thalassa*, 2011, acrylic on linocut prints, paper, wood, steel, and rope, 20' x 30' x 30', installation view. New Orleans Museum of Art.

York-based artist Swoon's monumental temporary installation for this museum, was a powerful reminder of the tragedy and of the port city's historical connections to the sea and the Mississippi River.

Approximately 20 feet tall and created expressly for this space, the giant human-octopus hybrid form, which represented the mythical Greek goddess of the sea, was suspended from the ceiling of the museum's neoclassical Great Hall. Menacing tentacles stretched out in every direction as a powerful reminder of the ocean's perils and munificence.

The figure's torso was made up of two large reinforced hand-painted linocut prints. Her body was adorned with images of crabs, seahorses, fish, and other sea creatures; her tentacles were composed from paper and plastic cutouts strung together on long ropes. *Thalassa* hung in