



CENTER ON CONTEMPORARY ART



**Kate Vrijmoet:
Essential Gestures**

Kate Vrijmoet: Essential Gestures

February 11, 2010 - March 7, 2010
Center on Contemporary Art
Ballard Gallery
Joseph C. Roberts, Curator



Publisher

Published August, 2010 by:

CoCA
Center on Contemporary Art
6413 Seaview Avenue N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98107

<http://www.cocaseattle.org>
info@cocaseattle.org

ISBN 0-9787313-1-X
Copyright ©2010

authors:
Joseph C. Roberts, Daniel Kaney, Eletia Harris

designed by Ray C. Freeman III

Artist's images used by permission.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

Support

Mission Statement:

CoCA serves the Pacific Northwest as a catalyst and forum for the advancement, development, and understanding of contemporary art.

CoCA is a vital part of the contemporary arts scene in the Northwest. There are many ways to participate in CoCA's mission; these include individual memberships, sponsorships, volunteerism, donations, and board participation.

Sponsorships and underwriting of our catalogs are available, both in the catalogs themselves and at our community web page and on-line bookstore. This can take the form of direct donations to underwrite a specific show, or assistance related to the production and printing of the catalogs. Contact the board President via our website at <http://www.cocaseattle.org/board/>

CoCA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts organization and any donations or sponsorships may be tax-deductable. Check with your own tax advisor.

Contents

- 4 **Kate Vrijmoet: Essential Gestures**
Joseph C. Roberts, Curator
- 7 **The Accidental Purist:
Kate Vrijmoet and the American Sublime**
Daniel Kany
- 13 **Painting Non-ordinary Reality:
A Long Look at What You Can't See**
Elatia Harris
- 16 **Abstract, figurative
collide in Vrijmoet paintings**
Michael Upchurch, *Seattle Times* Arts Writer
- 19 **Accident Paintings**
- 27 **Non-ordinary Reality Paintings**
- 31 **Figure Drawings**
- 36 **Kate Vrijmoet: Biography**
- 41 **Acknowledgements**

Kate Vrijmoet: Essential Gestures

Joseph C. Roberts
Curator

On behalf of CoCA, I am delighted to present this solo exhibit of Kate Vrijmoet's work. I consider this her debut as an accomplished painter. While she has been drawing and exhibiting for decades, much of her effort to date has an academic feel. No wonder. She is a teacher, a mother – and always a student, always curious. With this exhibition, I aim to demonstrate that she has come of age.

In *Kate Vrijmoet: Essential Gestures*, we present selected works from three *bodies* of Vrijmoet's oeuvre: gesture drawings, paintings from her *Accident* series and paintings from her *Non-ordinary Reality* (water) series. An exhibit of any one of these stylistically distinct bodies of work would be strong. By exhibiting the three together, we demonstrate the level of Vrijmoet's artistic accomplishment to date and provide a glimpse into her mind. We also invite the viewer to follow Vrijmoet's *execution* strategy. From a thematic idea, like "accidents," she draws a few gestures that seek to capture the essence of a human figure and those gestures become the essence of full-scale paintings.

Vrijmoet describes her gesture drawings more poetically. "I look for rhythm of the form in space / the way gravity interacts with mass, light and shadow / and energized parts of the figure. / What is left out / is as important as what is rendered," she says. Her insight and skill are manifest even in the few graphite marks on newsprint she calls *The Base Model* (pg 34) and certainly in the more lifelike lines of *Flight Lessons for Angels* (pg 35). More elaborately rendered drawings like *Touching Light* (pg 32) and *Daylight Leyak* (pg 33) dispel any remaining doubt.

Viewers can enter this exhibit through gesture drawings and see cursory but lifelike marks turn to bones, then to flesh and sometimes on to clothing and fully rendered paintings. Or, they can reverse engineer the paintings,

seeing through clothes – even through flesh – to the essential gestures that support and define the work.

I was not immediately disturbed by Vrijmoet's work because my initial encounter was too brief and I was too close. Too brief because I was on a First Thursday¹ whirlwind tour and the catastrophic array of gore and body parts left me feeling like I had to keep moving to avoid getting hit myself. But just outside her studio I checked to see if I had blood on my hands.

Too close because Vrijmoet outgrew her Seattle studio (Tashiro Kaplan #107) before she moved in. It was like trying to "see" an impressionist painting with my nose on the canvas. The studio is not large enough to allow a viewer to fully experience her *Accident* paintings – and forget about her huge *Non-ordinary Reality* paintings. I don't even know how she got them *in* there.

The *Non-ordinary Reality* paintings are beautifully disquieting. Because water neutralizes the cruel inequalities of gravity on land, even a whale is graceful. The seduction is clear. The problem is, looking up from under water through the kaleidoscope of color and light refracted off waves, a floating corpse looks as serene as a vacationer relaxing in a pool. In noticing that Vrijmoet's work captures that weird ambiguity, I was hooked. Issues are presented but not resolved. I *need* to revisit the work. Are these happy summer vacation scenes, playfully distorted by the way light dances on the waves above – or are they scenes of a crime?

In what seems like another world, Vrijmoet's macabre *Accident* paintings evoke a sense of gallows humor. I am amused and cautiously relieved because all that gruesome shit happened to someone else – this time. The moments

during and immediately following calamitous accidents, which Vrijmoet depicts, are surreal and last a lifetime. In viewing these accidents, I feel I have survived, so far, to laugh about them. Nervously.

Within days of my initial encounter, I returned for tea and a conversation about Vrijmoet's work and the poetry that inspires her. I immediately offered her a show and within a month we had her work on CoCA Ballard gallery walls. This unusual whirlwind has not stopped since.

While we were hanging her work at CoCA, one of the pieces, *Maul Accident* (pg 18), won second place in a Bremerton, WA, show. So that piece arrived late. During the CoCA show, *Forgetting and Remembering in the Same Instant* (pg 28), which we hung at the entrance of our gallery and featured on the show announcement card, was selected by curator Anne Strauss for a Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition exhibit in its Civil War-era warehouse gallery on the Red Hook waterfront with a commanding vista of New York Harbor. Unable to refuse, we pulled that piece mid-show and shipped it to New York. Meanwhile, Seattle Times critic, Michael Upchurch, wrote an insightful and glowing review of the CoCA show and bloggers were buzzing. Keep your eye on this woman.

Joseph C. Roberts, *Curator*
Seattle, March 2010

PS: A few months after the CoCA show, I was invited to serve as a juror in the second Alvaro Noboa P. Painting Biennale in Guayaquil, Ecuador, sponsored by the Luis Noboa N. Museum. At my urging, Kate submitted a couple of paintings. Even recusing myself from voting, her *Shotgun Accident* (pg 25), which we exhibited a few

months earlier, won the \$5,000 third prize and was acquired by the Noboa museum. Moreover, because of the strength of Vrijmoet's work and its showing at the biennale, the Noboa Museum's director, Pablo Martinez R., offered Vrijmoet a solo exhibition at the Noboa museum later this year. That, I submit, is a decision that will make all involved proud. Touché!

JCR, August 2010

Thanks:

I thank Dan Kany for bringing Kate's work to our attention and for his essay that seeks to put Kate's work in historical perspective. I thank Elatia Harris for her insightful essay and engaging support. Thanks to Ray C. Freeman III for his design assistance on this catalog and for his presidential leadership of CoCA's board. I thank members of CoCA's board of directors for their service, and thank all of our members and supporters who help advance CoCA's mission: to be a catalyst and forum for the advancement, development and understanding of contemporary art.

¹ Seattle Art galleries present their new shows on the first Thursday of each month.

Joseph C. Roberts is past-president of CoCA and curator of our Ballard gallery. He also serves as CEO of Apulent, a Seattle hospitality firm, as board president of Copper Canyon Press, the preeminent independent publisher of poetry. He is a member of the board of advisors of Art With Heart (art therapy for traumatized children), and he serves as public arbitrator for the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority resolving complex securities disputes. He serves a mentor for young people both privately and through formal college programs.



Snow Blower Accident
65" x 50", 2009

The Accidental Purist: Kate Vrijmoet and the American Sublime

Daniel Kany

There is no denying one of the most historically important and powerful painters of Western culture was Francisco Goya. Late in life and at the peak of his powers, Goya painted directly onto the wall of his home a series of paintings known as the *Black Paintings*. The most famous of these is *Saturn Devouring his Son*, after the Roman god who ate his children in a desperate attempt to ward off the prophecy that one would ultimately overthrow him.

It is arguably the most brutal painting to scale the heights of the canon of Western art history. On a sheer black background, a wide-eyed and maniacally desperate Saturn – a naked giant – bites off his son’s left forearm having already devoured his head and right arm. The naked (adult) body hangs limp though squeezed by the madness of his terrified father. The body could be that of any viewer.

What makes this painting so terrifying is that the viewer identifies with the decapitated body. It provides scale in the face of the insanely violent monster. It lets us see ourselves in the image.

It’s worth asking why such a painting is so powerful, so captivating and so compelling. The answer goes beyond sympathy for this victim of cannibalistic filicide. We ask ourselves what kind of person would paint this picture. Who, moreover, would paint this for permanent display in his own dining room?

The paintings of Kate Vrijmoet’s *Accident* series raise similar questions in the face of more contemporary incidents of raucous blood and gore.

The Jet of Blood

In Vrijmoet’s *Snow Blower Accident*, for example, we see a man reaching into the blades of a snowblower spouting a jet of blood. There’s no doubt about the violence since the red spray features a few of his severed fingers. Yet the incident is so fresh that the man’s face has not yet registered pain. We are witnessing the moment between the violent incident and the realization by the victim that something horrific has happened to him.

The tension itself is explosive. We feel the desire to call out to him but – since it’s too late – find ourselves riveted to watch, twisting for some excuse not to look away. The moral implication of witnessing such a scene is difficult to bear: We are supposed to do something, aren’t we? Or is this fiction so over the edge that our laughter can be genuine – rather than the stammering guffaws of shock and surprise?

So we ask ourselves: What kind of an artist would do this? Is Vrijmoet some kind of hysterical joker? A sadist? Or is she tied to the history of Western painting – the majority of which has been held tightly within the arms of the Church? There, of course, we find centuries of brutal martyrdom paintings. Vrijmoet’s *Crossbow Accident* (pg 24) certainly brings to mind images like El Greco’s *Saint Sebastian*, in which the bound saint wears a thoughtfully plaintive expression as an arrow draws the life from his physical body.

This is where the questions about causality and intention become metaphysical: In the case of the martyrdom

paintings, the ultimate authority is God. Why would God do this or let this happen to his most devoted disciples? In Vrijmoet's paintings, the artist is the ultimate authority: Why would she build such an image? Are these real events? Or are these odd machinations of a twisted mind? Or is she up to something altogether different?

Vrijmoet's extraordinarily violent images underscore her focus on the individual encounter. While her masterful painting skill is readily on display, Vrijmoet also relies heavily on splashes and drips that are only partially in her control. While this might hint of metaphysical reliance, it speaks clearly about limitations of intention by the artist (or anyone else).

The unforeseen is a huge element of Vrijmoet's painting, just as (she hints) it is a huge element of life.

While it's possible to follow this line of thinking in religious terms (e.g., the story of Job), Vrijmoet is clearly leading us closer to a systematic sense of observation by dint of the series: the *Axe Accident* (pg 22), the *Maul Accident* (pg 18), the *Shotgun Accident* (pg 25) and so on.

It is the idea of observation that both cuts off the angel's wings (as it were) and complicates the semiotic status of Vrijmoet's accident paintings. While most Westerners equate the notion of acute observation with science, such an assumption can be misleading – as it is in this case.

The Sublime

Edmund Burke expressed his concept of the sublime in

1756 in his *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, just a few years before Emmanuel Kant's *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764), in which the German philosopher made his own comments about the validity and meaning of any observer's mental or emotional response.

Kant's definition of the sublime differed with that of the young Burke on a small but crucial point about form: While both understood the sublime as a philosophical notion standing in dialectical opposition to beauty, Kant veered to explain the sublime as so vast as to be beyond human comprehension *as form*. Kant's sublime was the night sky or the endless sea. When we look at the works of painters associated with German Romanticism, like Caspar David Friedrich, this is what we find: a mountaintop wanderer above a "sea of fog" or a monk standing before an endless ocean – both contemplating a grandiosity that opens a door to the infinite.

While Kant is a massive figure teetering on the mount between the Enlightenment and Romanticism, Burke presents a version of the sublime that is supremely uglier and decidedly more practical. Burke sees the potential for pleasure in the sublime even when it rides the aesthetics of horror.

Having written his *Enquiry* as a young man (his only purely philosophical text), Burke was the champion in the British Parliament of American independence. Whether his intention or not, bloody war was at his fingertips, and Burke should stand as one of our Founding Fathers for his steadfast support.

The New World

Enlightenment ideals were the philosophical crux of the American Revolution. This is best expressed in the Declaration of Independence – a revolutionary document of separation as opposed to the state-building dictates of the Constitution.

The fundamental difference lies in one of the phrases Benjamin Franklin added to the Declaration: “We hold these truths to be *self-evident*.”

America, in other words, was predicated on “natural law” and the idea that an individual’s perceptions can not only glimpse but grasp fundamental moral truths.

This is the literal foundation of American culture: The individual contains within herself the perception of morality even when it dictates violence in the name of survival. Even if it insists on gore: “The tree of liberty,” Thomas Jefferson once said, “must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure.”

Again, we confront Freud’s Oedipus complex: A son murders his father to displace him as political (and breeding) alpha. Can we say that Saturn was wrong to murder his children? Was it wrong for Abraham to be willing to kill his son Isaac if that sacrifice would have furthered their tribe? Was it wrong for God to offer his own son to be crucified?

The first Europeans came to America knowing they would

confront “savages.” Did they not use their own cultural means to represent the indigenous locals as inconceivably brutal in order to dehumanize them? (Is this, we must ask, how Jefferson justified institutionalizing slavery to himself?) Coming to America entailed an encounter with the sublime: monsters who might seek to decimate you. Even the maps whispered it: Here be dragons....

America, in other words, was defined by the encounter with the savage – the monstrously inconceivable. The sublime.

American Culture

American painting thrived on the theatrics of the unimaginable. The obvious example is America’s first great painting success: The Hudson River School was all about the sublime landscape. Yet one of the most famous 18th century American paintings was John Singleton Copley’s *Watson and the Shark*, in which men in a boat attempt to battle a monstrous shark as it attacks a naked (and very white-skinned) boy in the water. It is a horrifying scene just a second before blood will be spilled either by the shark or the boy – or both.

I see in Vrijmoet’s *Accident* paintings hints about the fundamental conundrum of American culture: Is ours a culture of the Enlightenment with its footings in scientific method and the Industrial Revolution, or is our culture more based in the philosophy of Romanticism and its dedication to individual perception?

Slavoj Žižek’s 2008 book *Violence* presses the idea that

systemic violence is the cultural underbelly of America. (In fact, it's easy to argue that violence is far more important to American culture than is painting). Žižek sees this at an obscene level, as illustrated, for example, by the photos of Americans torturing prisoners at Abu Ghraib, even pointing out (compellingly) that the hooded prisoner standing on a chair with battery leads attached to him is a product of our culture as a whole: "The very positions and costumes of the prisoners suggest a theatrical staging, a kind of *tableau vivant*, which cannot but bring to mind the whole spectrum of American performance art and 'theatre of cruelty'..." (p. 172).

The driving thrust of Žižek's text, however, is to diagnose and distinguish the difference between "subjective" and "objective" violence. The first is visible since it appears against the (mythical) background of stability and safety. Objective violence, however, "is invisible since it sustains the very zero-level standard against which we perceive something as subjectively violent." In other words, objective violence is invisible because it is what we define as "normal." Yet it is the wellspring of violence in our society, and it's as broad as our culture itself.

How and why we let objective violence remain invisible is a cultural question akin to some of the reasons for the gnawing discomfort caused by Vrijmoet's *Accident* paintings.

Vrijmoet's *Accident* paintings mobilize a series of ontological crises: Is this real? Is this my experience – or someone else's? Is this person dead or about to die? What is he thinking, and where is his consciousness? What do we do? How can we simply stare and think about philosophy

when our guts are screaming out "help!"?

Vrijmoet handles the subject of consciousness with dazzling brilliance: To respond to the *Shotgun Accident*, for example, we have to begin by reminding ourselves that we are witnessing a theatrical fiction. Vrijmoet, in other words, is flicking the suspension-of-disbelief switch up and down to reveal its presence. "What's he thinking?" very quickly becomes "What does the artist want us to believe he is thinking?" This is a supremely anti-modernist stance – following the idea that Modernism doesn't privilege the artist/author over the viewer. (It also follows an edgy comedic mode similar to, for example, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*.)

Žižek also seems to be making the argument that the American understanding of violence adheres to the Romantic model that underscores the individual's perception over the broader scientific understanding of the form of violence within our culture. Just compare the NRA's talking points to that of the gun control advocates: Pro-gun types proffer hypothetical anecdotes about someone breaking into your home, while their opponents tend – less successfully – to use broader statistical analyses.

Science, Observation and the Moment of Waking

Vrijmoet's *Accidents* are not scientifically observable: You can't conduct a double-blind experiment where someone hacks himself accidentally with an ax. Such incidents are unforeseeable. Reeling all this in, Vrijmoet is presenting something like the unimaginable image of the ineffable

subject or the unseeable image of the unforeseeable event. She is picturing the unspeakable. But she finds just enough concrete to pour the outer foundation of our cultural reality.

Vrijmoet, however, is not merely trafficking in conundrums and impossibilities. We know somehow that these images are real – even if they only play themselves out in our fears or as cultural harbingers. The artist’s physicality in the handling of paint challenges us to see the work in the moment as a painting – the physical trace of the creative event. In this sense Vrijmoet is playing a dialectical game with the traumatic memory trace: We tend to remember such events as fleeting wisps of images rather than as sounds or physical sensations. The term “trauma” is a Freudian hint as to why: “Trauma” is from the German “*traum*,” which means “dream.”

Vrijmoet’s *Accident* paintings are ultimately about the moment of waking, and they hit this point from several directions. The most obvious is the paroxysm of consciousness that comes with great pain. Also obvious is the immediate call to absolute focus in the moment of crisis. Others might be more subtle, but no less important: the life-changing moment of losing a limb, eye or other parts of the body; the realization that one has caused his one’s own death; the gut-level response to extreme gore; the recognition of the traumatic image; the humor of hysterical absurdity.

Vrijmoet’s *Accident* paintings flutter with possibilities about subject/object relations. They explode with the potential of violence. They shiver with trauma. They virtually

collapse from semiotic overload. They tug at our darkest heartstrings. They sometimes make us laugh in spite of ourselves. Yet they ring with the clarion call of emotional consciousness.

To realize the dream, we need the moment of waking, and Vrijmoet’s alarm clock is perpetually ringing in our ears – and before our eyes.

Daniel Kany is an author and art historian. A past chair, director and curator at CoCA, Kany is the art critic for the *Maine Sunday Telegram* and the *Portland Press Herald*.



I cannot of course come back. Not to this. Never.
Oil on canvas, 72" x 84", 2009

Painting Non-ordinary Reality: A Long Look at What You Can't See

Elatia Harris

A couple of years ago, Kate Vrijmoet began working simultaneously on two series of paintings that, in their extreme apparent differences, actually imply one another. Any single image from the *Accident Series – Chainsaw Accident* (pg 20), for instance – will freeze you where you stand. Motionlessly, you check yourself for parts and think: *Oh, that's the thing, the thing that happened to me, even if no one sees it.* The water paintings, on the other hand, will dislocate you – you are pulled, plunged and buoyed, seeing up and through and down. In *I cannot of course come back. Not to this. Never.*, one of the paintings that initiated the series, there is gentle but inexorable destruction of the very idea of a particular point of view. You are looking at what cannot be seen, and you do not know where you are. While this should make you want to run away, it is as lulling and optically seductive as the *Accident* paintings are transfixing.

Not for nothing are the water paintings more formally titled the *Non-ordinary Reality* series. In shamanistic terms, non-ordinary reality is as present, as psychically dense and as usable as the other kind. It can be examined for moments indefinitely long, like a highly concrete dream from which the time of waking is chosen. It is beyond vivid, but the experience of it can never be a subject for consensus. In *The Teachings of Don Juan*, Carlos Castaneda maps the mushroom route to non-ordinary reality, but with painting, it's a jolt to your body, tipping you into the unnamable space that has gaped beside you all along. Vrijmoet's are among those paintings you enter with your body – there's no other way in, and it's not even a decision.

One way that Vrijmoet works this is to paint water – you could almost say, to paint *through* water. A very physical

painter, she's in that company of painters who conjure with water, for whom it is a charged presence with its own givens. Monet did this, tilting a lily pond to make a high horizon, or, as in many of the *Nymphs*, to claim the picture space entirely – up, down, in and out. When a good painting stood comparison to a covetable view out a well-placed window, Monet painted water that massively shrugged, to fill the window and unmoor the viewer – a gorgeous aggression on the felt axis, one that would leave painting not the same.

But Monet never got into the swimming pool, where the water is clear, though the naked eye cannot see clearly through it, and the light is bent, and slow. Submersion in the pool tilts the felt axis of the painter – she is borne up, but still below, she is everywhere but nowhere, and permeable, capable even of being pulled apart by tricks of light. The pool is far more inviting than the air to tricks of light, making conditions visible to the camera that simply do not exist for the eye. Until Monet, no painter had shown the fury of the lilies, the wet striving below the meat-thick pads, the debris churned away by the widening water. It was a lesson that took: to find immanence in the ornamental, you look at its turbulent and shaggy underside. But first – you just look.

In the pool, Vrijmoet looks hard for what can be grasped but not seen. It is a deployment of the haptic sense, the sense of touch and so much more. The Greek root of “haptic” is *to fasten onto* – a heightened form of swallowing a thing whole, taking it unto oneself, a complete polysensory act of knowing. Goethe nailed it when he wrote a few lines, found among his *Erotica*: “Then at last I understand [...], I think and compare, see with a feeling



A need so great and deep it can never be swallowed.
Oil on canvas, 66" x 102", 2009

eye, feel with a seeing hand.” In *The Logic of Sensation*, in which he confronts the painting of Francis Bacon, Gilles Deleuze writes, “One might say that painters paint with their eyes, but only insofar as they touch with their eyes.” The psychologist of perception J. J. Gibson posited an entire haptic system, linking haptic perception, bodily movement and the transfer of perceptual experience to tools.

Tools like the camera, in Vrijmoet’s case. For an artist who has drawn from life almost every day since childhood, painting what could not first be seen – or accurately imagined, in order to be drawn – was a distinct conundrum. How, indeed, does such an artist prepare what Deleuze calls “the painting before painting”? Writing about how Bacon prepared – he manipulated photography, rather than sketched – Deleuze observes, “They say the painter is *already* in the canvas, where he or she encounters all the probabilistic givens that occupy and preoccupy the canvas [...] This preparatory work is invisible and silent, yet extremely intense.”

Together in *The Logic of Sensation*, Deleuze and Bacon go back and forth on the role of probability, chance and choice in preparing for painting, and in making the “non-representative” marks – the traces of the artist’s hand – that are the painting. Except that it would be hard to say which was the sorcerer and which the anthropologist, they might almost be Don Juan and Castaneda discussing

the celebrated and ruinous *mais pinta* – but those, it turns out, were interpenetrating personae for Castaneda, too. In other contexts, Bacon has shown a fondness for defining “the problem” – *The problem*, he once told John Russell, *is to paint like Velazquez, only with the texture of a rhinoceros hide* – but here with Deleuze the problem is to destroy the nascent cliché, the nascent illustration and narrative, so that “the image of the Figure” will emerge. To this end, Deleuze writes, “accident and chance [...] will have been an act or a choice, a certain type of act or choice. Chance, according to Bacon, is inseparable from a possibility of utilization. It is *manipulated chance*, as opposed to *conceived or seen probabilities*.”

As a shaman might see it, to alter a photograph smashes the grip of the known reality, enabling that erasure of personal history that impels the splashdown into non-ordinary reality. In the early 1970s, Lucas Samaras forsook his boxes bristling with shards and pins long enough to alter Polaroids – not after the nascent image had emerged and set, but before, while he could manipulate what it would become. He scoured, swept, poked and – how? – double-exposed. His “Photo-transformations” were one-offs, like paintings. Never having been a pure record of the visible, they could not be returned to that state. For Vrijmoet, it is the medium of water that acts preemptively to break up imagery that only her camera can take in. She alters her photographs before painting from them, and the painting that results – based on the alteration of a

And the vacuum cleaner swallows its bag
Oil on canvas, 72" x 84", 2010



thing never seen – is therefore that much further away from record, narrative or illustration. An instance, you might think, of Deleuze's manipulated chance.

A hallmark of non-ordinary reality, according to Don Juan/Castaneda, is that it must be practical: you don't merely enter it but *use* its properties, which are tools for acquiring power. The sense of burgeoning, of growing more powerful in the water, pervades Vrijmoet's paintings. Water slows gesture, but prolongs its traces. In the water, you are a slow-shooting comet with a long tail. Refracted light may scatter you like a centrifuge, but, as in *Forgetting and Remembering in the Same Instant* (pg 28), you somehow remain gathered, immanent – the snatch of hair, the seal pup mask in cruel torsion, the seeking arm all contained. In *And the Vacuum Cleaner Swallows Its Bag*, the center-seeking force is at the moment of being broken, the water muting its whine, and snap and suck – cosmogony sounds, for an interrupted *ourobouros*.

Water mutes everything if you're fully inside it – as we all once were. A voice over water is amplified to a shout, yet beneath it you regain the silence of the womb. There are “non-representative” marks in Vrijmoet's paintings that may be mistaken for sound waves, curving sneers of spume and delicate craters that yawn. Other than hands and feet of the most petal-like loveliness, calling as articulately as sirens, the best hope for finding

body parts you can name in these paintings is to think how wavy old window glass seizes and stretches any passing show, or of how Michelangelo painted himself, as a flayed skin, in *The Last Judgment*. Extremes of emotion, achieved without facial psychology, give these paintings an aural quality. Except that they are watery, you could say they made the rustle of Pan, but what you hear is a scream under a tight lid. There is yearning here that comes from not knowing if you're being pressed down or heaved up. In *A need so great and deep it can never be swallowed.*, you could argue for either form of stress, the cascade of fleshy flecks that part like lips to form Os showering you with their demands, the subject – a presence not an image – facelessly insistent.

Vrijmoet's titles are suggestive. She is a reader of poetry, and they come from the poets she reads – Anne Sexton, Adrienne Rich, Jorie Graham, among others. Like the poems, the paintings would be called beautiful, if they were not so much more than that. I have not discovered how the titles move into the paintings, or whether it's the other way around. But I have been told, about the water, that it's the artist's chosen place to be.

Elatia Harris is an internationally exhibited painter and teacher based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She writes a column for the science and culture digest *3 Quarks Daily*.

Review: Abstract, figurative collide in Vrijmoet paintings

Michael Upchurch,
Seattle Times Arts Writer



“Creation (of Melancholy Fate) by Supreme Being” is one of a series of paintings by Kate Vrijmoet with a swimming-pool motif.

February 18, 2010, *The Seattle Times*

Paintings and drawings by Kate Vrijmoet, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays through March 7, CoCA Ballard, 6413 Seaview Ave. N.W., Seattle; free (206-728-1980 or www.cocaseattle.org).

The figurative and the abstract collide and collude with startling vigor in Kate Vrijmoet's *Essential Gestures*. This exhibit of paintings and drawings is Vrijmoet's first solo show in Seattle – but it surely won't be her last.

Vrijmoet was born in Philadelphia in 1966, and earned her Master of Fine Arts at Syracuse University in 1997. She also studied with Evelina Brozgul at Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and with Richard Ryan at Boston University. Married with three children, she and her family moved to Seattle from New York in 2009 when her husband got a job here.

Artwork that's this accomplished, energetic, strange and alive is a rarity. Her images jolt you with the force of a Sylvia Plath poem or a Stravinskian percussion blast.

Gestures draws on three veins in Vrijmoet's work (you can explore all three in more detail on her Web site,).

Non-ordinary Reality is her swimming-pool series: swimming pools, that is, as viewed from below the surface. The two on show here are complex studies of disorienting perspective.

In *Creation (of Melancholy Fate) by Supreme Being*, a swimmer's feet are clearly visible. But everything else to do with this body in motion is inchoate, distorted, just coming into being. A second figure is semi-discernible amid the water shimmer and rippled flesh. And the imagery continues onto the *sides* of this huge canvas, as though its turbulence can't be contained within its frame (the same "overspill" occurs in all the show's paintings).

Forgetting and Remembering in the Same Instant seems, at first, a less-agitated work. But closer examination proves it equally unsettling. A hand and an oddly detached head of hair – a wig? – fill its foreground. The partially visible figure seems becalmed in the water, but with a violence implicit in its stillness. Both *Non-ordinary* paintings can be read as renderings of either a frolic or a struggle. Indeed,

look at *Forgetting* long enough and you may start thinking you're observing a crime scene.

Vrijmoet's *Exploding Moments* series is more overtly violent, but with some gallows humor entering the picture. All six *Moments* feature the same blue-collar figure, baseball cap aslant, cigarette drooping from his mouth. The deadpan titles – *Axe Accident*, *Chainsaw Accident*, etc. – indicate the grisly nature of these latex-house-paint-on-canvas works.

But there's an odd disconnect between the traumas visited on this blue-collar Joe and his failure to react to them. In her accompanying essay, Vrijmoet speaks of how time is "radically altered during an emergent or life-threatening moment," and says she sees each installment in the series as oscillating "between the occurrence of the accident and its aftermath."

She also mentions the "inexplicable glee" she and her model experienced during their painting sessions – but maybe it's not that hard to grasp, given the vitality of the images at hand. This is drip-crazy action painting, cruising excitingly along margins where form gives way to splattery anarchy.



Another series of paintings features messy renderings of a workman-type with ominous titles such as "357 Accident".

Vrijmoet's drawings reveal where the loose, jazzy assurance of her painting comes from. Each has a swift, intuitive rightness in its capturing of its human subjects, even when those figures shade into abstraction. The titles alone – *Mon beau fils de fil (my beautiful wire son)*, *Flüsterhaut (whispering skin)* – suggest the quick-sketch dynamism of Vrijmoet's charcoals, some on paper and some on newsprint, the latter lending a fragile, perishable air to these authoritative works.

Reprinted by permission of The Seattle Times



Blood, Water and Astonishment

"Astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror."

– Edmund Burke, *On the Sublime*, 1757

Perception of time is radically altered during a life-threatening or emergent moment – a second is sliced into milliseconds, an enduring stretch of time in which our bodily experience is carved into our consciousness. During trauma, when time is dream-like, we can appear detached, hyper-rational, even indifferent. Thus we can appear complicit in the event – knowing, not acting.

The images in the *Accident* paintings freeze and unfreeze time, flipping between the occurrence of the accident and the aftermath. The essential gesture is the force of the paint hurled at the canvas, its speed manifest in the drips and strings and downward rushing paint that begins to wash the figure off the canvas. In the *Non-ordinary Reality* paintings, water freezes light and gesture, for another kind of seeming calm, conveyed by upsurge and refraction.

I use the same model for each of the *Accident* paintings. The burning cigarette and the hat make reference to this. The subject is systematically dismantled as the series continues. The intent is to subject the viewer to the simultaneous sensations of repulsion and attraction, horror and humor, disgust and delight. In the *Non-ordinary Reality* paintings, the subject is never visible. By slowing gesture, the water has lapped away at identity, replacing it with a sense of becoming.

I paint from life, from what is observable, transferring what I see in front of me onto the canvas without judgment. Staging the accidents was a challenge for both my model and me. There was hilarity but also discomfort, and the great disquiet of inexplicable glee. We had no choice but to surrender to it, so often overcome by paroxysms of laughter we could hardly get through the session. And, this time, I traded seeing for knowing, observation for obsession. Painting the *Non-ordinary Reality* series was a more private experience, starting with my own altered photographs. What I would include or leave out was based on many judgments about things that could not, with the naked eye, be seen. These paintings began with the idea of a silent scream, a sound destined not to be heard in the *Accident* paintings.

Accident Paintings

- 18 **Maul Accident**
53" x 47", 2009
- 20 **Chainsaw Accident**
57.5" x 49.5", 2009
- 21 **Mattock Accident**
63.5" x 49.5", 2010
- 22 **Axe Accident**
71.5" x 49.5", 2010
- 23 **357 Accident**
66.5" x 49.5", 2010
- 24 **Crossbow Accident**
57.5" x 49.5", 2010
- 25 **Shotgun Accident**
62.5" x 49.5", 2009

All paintings Benjamin Moore
latex house paint on canvas.

photos by Bret Corrington, Artist Eye Portfolio Studio















Non-ordinary Reality Paintings

26 **Ribs of disaster
curving their assertion
among the tentative haunters**
66" x 89", 2008

28 **Forgetting
and Remembering
in the Same Instant**
70" x 80", 2009

29 **Creation
{of Melancholy Fate}
by Supreme Being**
67" x 116", 2010

All paintings oil on canvas.

photos by Bret Corrington, Artist Eye Portfolio Studio







Figure Drawings

“To artists, a good gesture drawing swings like a Duke Ellington song and serves as a foundation that keeps all of their later, detailed observations vital.”

– Dan Gheno, *Action and Gesture*, August 2005.

I have been drawing the figure for 30 years, a process that has been about learning to see – really see – and see again. I begin all my work with a gesture drawing. The process I go through rendering the figure should show; the search for form is as valid an art as the final form.

Gesture drawing is a quick study of the subject, usually drawn in 5 minutes or less. I look for rhythm of the form in space, the way gravity interacts with mass, light and shadow, and energized parts of the figure. What is left out is as important as what is rendered. I have a visceral understanding of the pose inside my own self when I draw. Both my model and I are in a heightened vulnerable state, bound together in a respectful relationship based on seeing and being seen, maintaining a certain level of anonymity. But that can change over time.

What does the artist do when she leaves the figure drawing session? Life drawing is foundational to anything I do, even if that art appears not to relate back to it. It is how I spend my private time as an artist, and is essential to me.

I want the great joy I experience in drawing the figure to come through, creating a certain level of satisfaction in the viewer as well.

- 30 **Clausius' Statement**
24" x 18", Charcoal on paper, 2004
- 32-1 **Mon beau fils de fil**
(my beautiful wire son)
18" x 24", Charcoal on paper, 2005
- 32-2 **Touching Light**
18" x 24", Charcoal on paper, 2005
- 33-1 **Vulnerable to Bear Attacks**
24" x 18", Conte on paper, 2004
- 33-2 **Flüsternhaut (whispering skin)**
24" x 18", Pastel on paper, 2005
- 33-3 **Kirlian Amazon**
24" x 18", Conte on paper, 2004
- 33-4 **Daylight Leyak**
36" x 24", Charcoal on paper, 2008
- 34 **The Base Model**
29" x 36", Charcoal on paper, 2005
- 35-1 **Synchronous Excitation**
24" x 18", Charcoal on paper, 2004
- 35-2 **The Salt Haint**
33" x 19", Charcoal on paper, 2004
- 35-3 **Finders Keepers**
44" x 32", Charcoal on paper, 2005
- 35-4 **Flight Lessons for Angels**
36" x 24", Charcoal on paper, 2004

1



2



1



2

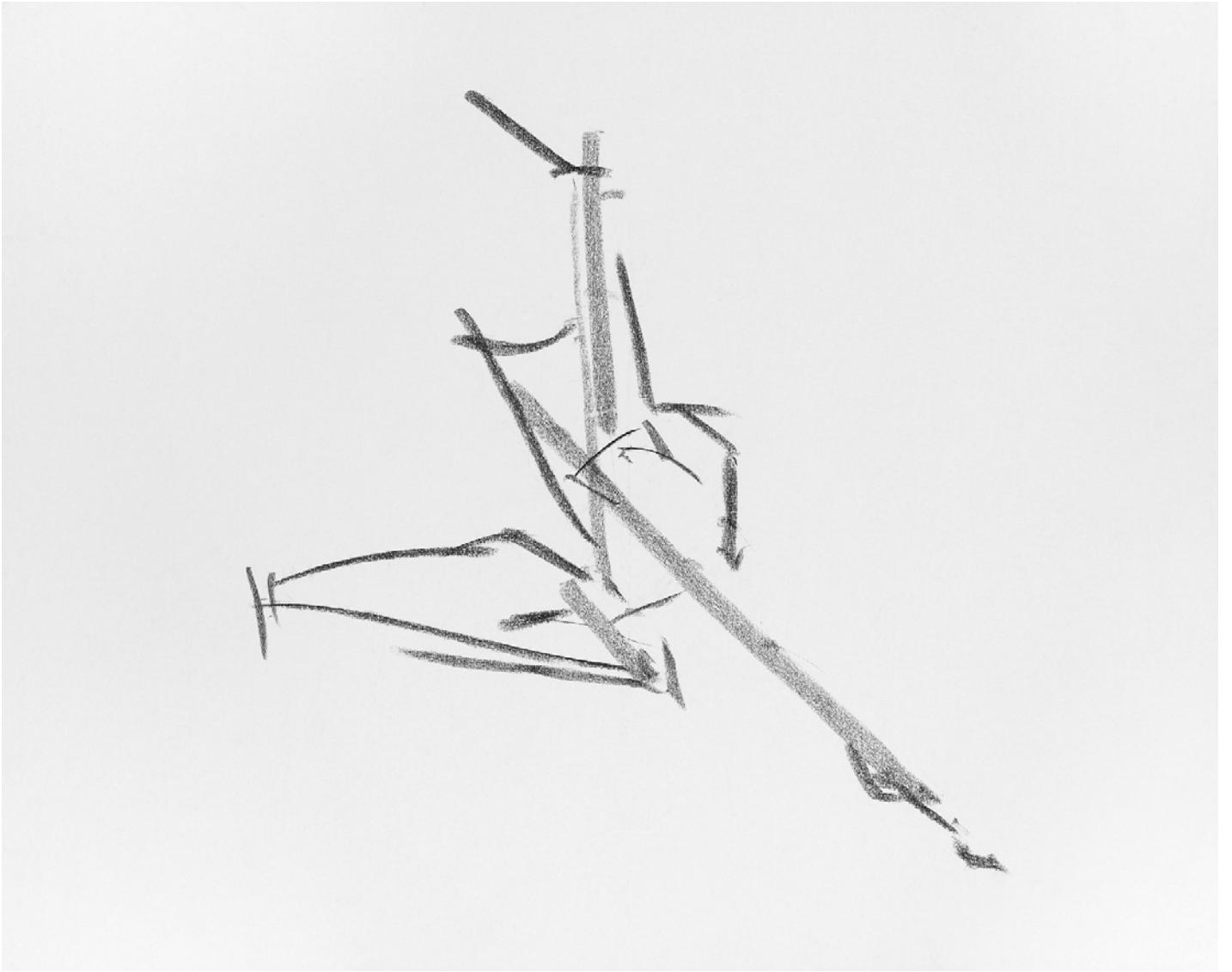


3



4





1



2



3



4



35

Kate Vrijmoet: Biography

Biography

Born in Philadelphia, PA, 1966

Lives and works in Seattle, WA

Undergraduate Studies Syracuse University, SVPA Crouse College 1984-1986

MFA Syracuse University 1997

Museum School of Fine Arts, Painting 2005

Boston University 2005-2006, Painting with Richard Ryan

NAGC Arts Network Proposal Conference Review Board, February 2008

Somerville Arts Council Visual Arts Fellowships Review Board, 2006

Adjunct Professor, Syracuse University. 1995

Teaching Associate, Syracuse University. 1995-1997

Solo Exhibitions

Kate Vrijmoet: Essential Gestures. CoCA Seattle. Feb-Mar 2010

First Thursday Seattle Art Walk. Exhibiting continuously with rotating monthly Exhibits. September 2009-ongoing

50 Paintings in 50 Days Exhibition Solo Exhibition, Pawling, NY, November 2008

Essential Gestures Solo Exhibition, Cambridge, Mass., September – October 2005

Group Exhibitions

Art House Coop Sketchbook Project, national tour 2011

Mystic Sons of Morris Graves, Centennial Birthday and Séance, Seattle, WA Aug. 2010

Ouch My Eye, "Spirit Resonance," The Seattle Group. Seattle, WA. May 2010

"Maul Accident" Participating Artists: James Brown, Chris Crites, Andrew Drawbaugh, Bill Fahey, Shawn Foote, Robert Hardgrave, Carl Jackson, Joseph Keppler, Mark Tracy, Kate Vrijmoet, Paul Young, Tracy Boyd.

Corridor Gallery, Seattle, WA December 2009

Slide Slam Dutchess County, NY April 2009

Artists Open Studio Selected open studios, Pawling, NY, October 2008

Great Swamp Art Exhibit Group Show, Pawling, NY, October 2008

Merwinsville Hotel Art & Fine Craft Show, Group Show, Gaylordsville, Conn., 2008

Somerville Open Studios Group Show, Somerville, Mass., May 2006

Brickbottom & Joy Street Open Studios Group Exhibition, Somerville, Mass., Nov. 2005

ArtsUnion Walking Tour Group Show, Somerville, Mass., September 2005

Awards

Ecuador II International Biennale, 3rd place.

Alvero Noboa II International Bienal de Pintura April 2010. “Shotgun Accident”

Jurors: Ecuadorians artists Theo Constante, and Larissa Marangoni, and museum director and painter Mariela Garcia also from Ecuador; Joseph Roberts, curator from the United States; and Argentinian Alejandra Rosetti, VP of Sotheby’s NY.

Art Kudos international juried art competition and exhibition,

Creation {of Melancholy Fate} by Supreme Being, Finalist 2010

Collective Visions 2010 2-d 2nd place – “Maul Accident”, Jake Jenuik-curator.

New Art Originals, Juried by Annette Graham of the Whitechapel Gallery in London.

One of 10 runners up. January 2010

Recipient of The Fund, finalist. Seattle, WA 2010

Outstanding Teaching Associate of the Year, Syracuse University 1996-97

ADDY Award, Tampa, FL, Schifino/Lee, Concept, design 1998

Advertising Student Representative, VisCom, Syracuse University 1996

Finalist T/A fellowship, Syracuse University 1996

National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts award winner in visual arts 1984,

Fifth Annual Legislative Student Art Exhibition, 1984

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Citation by The House of Representatives, 1984

Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars winning entry for the Young American

Creative Patriotic Art Competition. 1984

Frank Keane Scholarship, Local 169, 1984

Nominated for Governor’s School program at Bucknell University, 1983

Delaware Valley Tri-State Regional Exhibition, 1983

Young People’s Art Workshop Special Award, Moore College of Art, 1983

Public Collections

Luis A. Noboa Naranjo Museum. Guayaquil, Ecuador

Affiliations

The Seattle Group

Biennales/Curated/Juried Exhibitions/Invitationals

Art Kudos international juried art competition and exhibition, Creation {of Melancholy Fate} by Supreme Being, Finalist 2010

ArtsWest, “WTF” Seattle, WA October 2010

II Ecuadorian Bienal de Pintura, Guayaquil, Ecuador. Álvaro Noboa Invitational. Guayaquil, Ecuador. April 2010
“Shotgun Accident” 3rd place winner of the Biennale, and “The rest is a faint echo” Jurors: Joseph Roberts, curator from the United States; and Argentinian Alejandra Rosetti, VP of Sotheby’s NY; Ecuadorians artists Theo Constante, and Larissa Marangoni, and museum director and painter Mariela Garcia also from Ecuador. Pablo Martínez Rojas, Director of the Luis A Noboa Naranjo Museum. April 2010

Wide Open, “Forgetting and Remembering” Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition, Brooklyn, NY
Jurors: Anne Strauss: Associate Curator of 19th Century and Contemporary Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Ms. Strauss was one of the curators of the highly acclaimed and provocative Francis Bacon retrospective. She also co-organized *Jeffrey Koons on the Roof*. Mark Hughes, Director of Galerie Lelong in Chelsea, which has for the last 25 years presented exhibitions by seminal artists of our time including Richard Serra, Nancy Spero and Ana Mendieta and. Juror and artist Bill Murphy is an Associate Professor of Drawing and Printmaking and Gallery Director at Wagner College. March 2010

Unclad, “A need so great,” “Middle Passage,” “Tip to Bridge,” Gallery by the Bay, Stafford Washington, March 2010

Collective Visions 2010, “Maul Accident” Bremerton, WA Juror: Jake Jenuik.

Portraits, “Ralph” Angle Gallery, Seattle, February 2010. Curator: Paul McKee

For the Love of Art

Curated Group Show, The Hat Factory, Peekskill NY, February-March 2009. **Curatorial committee:** Kenise Barnes (Kenise Barnes Fine Art, Larchmont, NY), Kara Lenkeit (Purchase College), William C. Maxwell (Maxwell Fine Arts, Peekskill, NY), Michael Anthony Natiello (Collaborative Concepts), Sara Pasti (Director, Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art at New Paltz), and Tilly Strauss (Artist).

“Big,” Brickbottom Artist Gallery Curated Group Show, Somerville, Mass., July 2006

Selected Bibliography

- Huffington Post “What Does Ecuador Have to Do with Seattle?” Ming Holden June 18, 2010.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ming-holden/what-does-ecuador-have-to_b_607046.html
- El Universo, “Juan Caguana lidera Bienal de Guayaquil,” April 30, 2010.
<http://www.eluniverso.com/2010/04/30/1/1380/juan-caguana-lidera-bienal-guayaquil.html>
- El Universo, “Dien finalistas para la Segunda Bienal de Pintura Guayaquil” April 28, 2010.
<http://www.eluniverso.com/2010/04/28/1/1380/diez-finalistas-segunda-bienal-pintura-guayaquil.html>
- Seattle Times, “Review: Abstract, figurative collide in Vrijmoet paintings, Seattle artist Kate Vrijmoet strikes an energizing balance between the figurative and the abstract in her new show, "Essential Gestures."” By Michael Upchurch
Seattle Times arts writer. February 18, 2010.
http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/thearts/2011117780_coca19.html?cmpid=2628
- MyBallard.com Art show inspired by ‘accidents’ Posted by Sarah Kane on February 16th, 2010.
<http://www.myballard.com/2010/02/16/art-show-inspired-by-accidents/>
- SVPA Alumni Showcase, Syracuse University newsletter February 2010
<http://www.vpa.syr.edu/index.cfm/page/get-connected-news-and-events-alumni-showcase>
- Art Review.com, January 2010, Featured artist, painting: I cannot of course come back. Not to this. Never. From the Non-Ordinary Reality series.
Pawling Press, April 2009
- PPR Radio Interview. April 23 2009, Tom Rose
- The Journal News, ‘For the Love of Art in Peckskill: Making money isn’t the artist’ top priority at this juried show,”
Georgette Gouveia, Saturday, February 14, 2009.
- New York Times, “A Show of Heartfelt, Diverse Works,” Susan Hodara, Sunday, February 8, 2009.
Pawling News Chronicle
“Local artist selected for major Hudson Valley exhibition,” February 5 2009.
- Hudson River Museum and Gallery Guide, Winter 2008-2009
- 3 Quarks Daily
December 22, 2008. Elatia Harris, writer. Artwork created by Kate Vrijmoet
<http://www.3quarksdaily.com/3quarksdaily/2008/12/how-never-to-write-about-your-animals.html>
- Levine Breaking News, FACESPACE feature, Sunday, December 21, 2008.
- Harlem Valley Times, Amenia
Around the Region, “50 Paintings in 50 Days:’ local artis opens exhibit,” Susan Macura, Editor, Thursday,
November 20, 2008.
- Pawling News Chronicle
“50 Paintings in 50 Days:’ local artist opens exhibit,” Susan Macura, Editor, Thursday, November 20, 2008.

Dutchess Weekend Artcetera, Daily Views, November 6, 2008.
The Millerton News
 “ArtEast studio tour wraps up,” Cory Allyn, Staff Reporter, November 6, 2008
Harlem Valley Times
 “Millerton show launches Art East studio tours” Jennifer Barry, Staff Reporter. Oct. 9, 2008
The Pawling News Chronicle
 “Ambitious Task,” Laurie Przyborowski Spens, p. A11, Thursday, September 25, 2008.
Better Homes and Gardens Remodel Magazine
 “A Freethinker’s Kitchen,” Estelle Bond Guralnick, pp 64-69, July 2007.
Cambridge Tab
 “Lavish Attention,” Penelope Lane, pp 16-18, Friday, September 1, 2006.
Boston Globe Magazine
 “Freethinking,” Estelle Bond Guralnick, pp 46-49, October 9, 2005.
Somerville Art Matters
 Weekly CAT talk show, Somerville, Mass.
 Segment 2 of Women’s Issues in Art
 Moderator: Julia Fairclough, November 2006
Baguette newsletter, feature article, July 2006
Somerville News, feature article, October 2005

contact:
Kate Vrijmoet
Tashiro/Kaplan Building
306 S. Washington St. Suite 107 Seattle WA 98104
kvrijmoet@hotmail.com | www.figurespace.com

Acknowledgments



I have not in my life as an artist lived in a community like Seattle, where every first Thursday of the month, art galleries and artists alike open their doors to the public until 9 PM. Each time, I count on meeting over 400 artists, students, and enthusiasts. I feel tremendous gratitude to the art lover who rushed into my studio pulling a friend by the arm, stopped in front of *A need so great and deep it can never be swallowed.*, and, sighing with her whole body, said to her friend, “THIS is what I had to show you!” And to the musician who rushed me to look at *Maul Accident* and burst out laughing. “This is my favorite painting!” he told me. “You don’t understand -- this is me! You painted me!”

Those are two of the people I’m grateful to without knowing who they are, but there are others whom I’d like to name.

Joseph Roberts, the curator of my solo show at the CoCA, a board member and past president of CoCA, the President of the Board of Copper Canyon Press and CEO of Apulent, has provided me with rare opportunities and life-shaping insights. Most precious to me is the way he connects deeply with my painting.

Dan Kany, art historian, critic, and gallerist, has supported my work from the early days in Seattle, introducing me to Joseph Roberts and CoCA. Elatia Harris is a writer and artist and a wise and sisterly friend. Did it all start for me in Seattle when the cellist Mannfried Funk introduced me to Dan Kany? I could make that case, but it is much

more. The Seattle Group, artists who meet regularly to talk about important issues in art, welcomed me into the community, nourishing my mind and spirit, finding their way quickly to my heart. Sumi Almquist, Wendi Heipt, Wendy and Paul Owen, and Barbara Noonan have provided me with loving encouragement. Andrew Taper is a peerless source of advice and information. Susan Golick, the founder of the S.L.E. Lupus Foundation, is a tireless source of inspiration, and one of the best and most patient models I’ve ever had. My brother, Mike, who first posed for the *Accident* painting studies, and always laughed with me. No model has been called upon to offer as much as Thomas York, who has consented to be stabbed, whacked, punctured, sliced, and ground up -- coming back for more as we laugh and listen to Radio Lab.

Richard Ryan was the painting teacher who told me to “just start painting fast and furious.” To that end, I bought many gallons of Benjamin Moore house paint and invited my new neighbors in Pawling, NY, to sit for portraits. The Hudson River School knew the light was the gift the area had to offer. With the aid of that light I got to know my community and prepare for the *Accident* Series and *Nonordinary Reality* Series, which began simultaneously in the mid-Hudson Valley and would come to fruition in Seattle. Ray C. Freeman III, the CoCA president, designed the catalog, my first. I am grateful to him for the way it represents me, in Seattle and in the world.

John Vrijmoet, the heart of my heart, makes it possible for me to go down this path. Thank you, John.

CoCA Board of Directors

Ray C. Freeman III	President
David Francis	Vice President
Mariyah Guess	Treasurer
Joseph C. Roberts	Curator, Ballard
Derin Smith	Curator, Belltown
Paul Glen Erb	Membership

Jessica Sullivan
Ryan Long
Waldo Vega
Doug Jeck
Lauren Collins
Miguel Edwards
Quata Cody
Maia Swanson
Paul Glen Erb

CoCA History

The Center on Contemporary Art was established in 1980 by a group of artists and supporters in Seattle, Washington. CoCA's first major exhibition was among the first major exhibitions by artist James Turrell, who has since become a towering international figure in the world of contemporary art.

CoCA has been devoted largely to visual art, but has featured the performance art of important musicians, dancers, writers, and others at different points in their careers - from the then-fledgling rock band Nirvana to the infamous William S. Burroughs at the peak of his powers. Our guest-juried Annual and our Art Marathon have become Northwest institutions.

Like most non-profits, CoCA has worked hard to negotiate the financial vicissitudes of the economy, but it has remained an active and vital presence in Seattle and the region for thirty years. During that time, CoCA has continued to find creative and innovative programming outside the normal confines of the mainstream, the predictable "cutting edge," or the time-doomed notion of the hip or "fashionable."

CoCA produces shows and events at our Ballard Gallery inside the Shilshole Bay Beach Club, at our Belltown Gallery at the Avenue One Condominiums, and our newest location, our Pioneer Square Gallery in the Globe Building in Pioneer Square, as well as working with government groups to sponsor major sculpture exhibitions at Seattle's Carkeek Park and King County's Cougar Mountain Regional Wildlands Park.

CoCA Publication Series

The following catalogs and books are available at:
<http://www.cocaseattle.org/books/>



Heaven and Earth

Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition in Carkeek Park



2009 East | West

Emerging Artist Exchange



Across the Divide

Contemporary Art from the Scablands and Beyond



2009 Annual Exhibition

Juried by Jess Van Nostrand



CoCA 2009

Yearbook (comprehensive)



Resident Alien

Local Artists from Europe and the Mediterranean



Becoming

A story of Love and Cosmology, by Gideon



Across the Divide 2

Contemporary Art from Big Sky Country



Otherwise This Stone

Poetry Monograph: David Francis



back: *Axe Accident*, 66.5" x 49.5", Benjamin Moore latex house paint on canvas, 2010

front: *Forgetting and Remembering in the Same Instant*, 70" x 80", Oil on canvas,

Kate Vrmoet:
Essential Gestures

Roberts, Kany, Harris



ISBN 978-0-9787313-1-1



52000



9 780978 731311