

Room for Debate

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Hoity-Toity Versus TMZ

Jennifer Catron and Paul Outlaw are sculptors and performance artists. They show with Allegra LaViola Gallery.

Updated October 7, 2012, 7:16 PM

Jen:

What we really need are *more* critics that speculate on the importance of hangly-dangly existential pieces of art. The five percent of America that can actually afford the luxury to buy art really needs to know what to buy! This is important. I'm actually shocked that there aren't more people out there trying to start a professional blog about art, or produce or get onto an art reality show to criticize some crafty artwork!

Paul:

I mean there is no chance that critics would just write things to hear themselves talk about something they know a little bit about in order to hear themselves sound smarter than someone who has spent a lot of time on the subject and has invested a great deal of sweat, time, and energy into it, right? That would never happen! It must be relevant for the greater good or else no one would invest the time and money into starting a blog. That's a lot of work!

Jen:

Of course criticism is relevant! While we disregard any criticism that doesn't pertain directly to us and doesn't shower us with well-deserved compliments on our artistic brilliance, more mediocre blogs means more mediocre press for us all!

Paul:

Maybe people rely on the keen eye of critics to sum up what they are looking at and give it a thumbs up or down based on their highly skilled levels of observation. Often times the general public and laymen need a guide in order to traverse the harsh and unknown landscape that is contemporary art. Perhaps professional criticisms are still a valuable resource to help sculpt the ever-changing dynamic of art trends and movements calling out the poseurs and proclaiming the righteous! If there is something that needs some changing, perhaps it's the regurgitated one-liners and copy-and-paste pieces that some critics are passing off as reviews. I know, it's hard to believe, but some "critics" seem to be more of a TMZ of art instead of actually offering some intensive insight. But maybe that's the world we live in!

Jen:



Honestly, we cannot wait for that huge negative criticism to circulate the Internet about us! You know when you get that, you really have made it in the art world, and are hopefully making so much money at a huge white box gallery where half its roster is dead that you no longer care whether you are relevant anymore!

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	Thor Seattle			
	I tell you this: I pay attention to the buzz of artists about other artists than I do critics.			
	Oct. 9, 2012 at 11:15 a.m.			
	MH Guelph			
	Oh, exclamation points!!! What a witty and ironical way to register your contempt for art criticism!!!			
	I was soothed by the generally pro-critic sentiment of the debaters in this Room for Debate, but I have to wonder if it really would			

have been so hard to find artists who could make their hostility toward critics sound less like high schoolers passing snide notes about their corny, out-of-touch art teacher. He even seems to think that "the art world" owes him an A for effort. Kidney stones and bowel movements can require time, sweat, and effort, too.

I admire the courage of someone who decides to go out and make their living as an "artist," but the same Internet that democratizes criticism also makes it possible for amateur artists to disseminate their work to a global audience for free. It has never been easier to make a name for yourself without any hope of your name ever making any money. I don't know anything about these two artists, but the smug, self-assured quality of their whining leads me to assume that there is a considerable gulf between their social media presence and their success among anyone who ever put "critic" on a resume with a straight face.

Oct. 9, 2012 at 11:14 a.m.

 **Patricia** Pasadena, CA

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