



Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, November 8, 1968—January 12, 1969

10¢

VIOLENCE!

IN RECENT AMERICAN ART

Violinmaker Murders Ex-Wife in Museum

Climaxing years of bitter disputes over his daughter, a 72-year-old master violinmaker shot and killed his former wife yesterday before scores of horrified onlookers in the main hall of the Museum of Natural History.

Among the shocked and terror-stricken witnesses was the girl herself, a pretty, frail 12-year-old. —N.Y. Daily News, February 8

Teeners Slash New Pupil Because 'She's a Misfit'

TORRANCE, Calif., Sept. 19 (AP)—As she walked home from her third day at Torrance High School, a carload of teen-agers pulled up alongside 15-year-old Margaret Mary Little. One yelled: "We don't want misfits in our school."

Then, said the girl, three boys and two girls jumped out. The others watched as one boy ripped her skirt and her blouse, and, with a rusty razor blade, cut slashes on her cheek and forearm. Margaret is a cerebral palsy victim. She has been handicapped since birth.

Mother of 7 Found Guilty in Torture Slaying of Girl

INDIANAPOLIS, May 19 (UPI)—A Criminal Court jury found Mrs. Gertrude Baniszewski, 38, mother of seven, guilty today of first degree murder in the torture-slaying of Sylvia Likens, 16. Four teen-age defendants were convicted on other charges.

Mrs. Baniszewski... was accused of leading a pack of youngsters—including her daughter—

3 Policemen Cuffed Together and Killed

LAWRENCEVILLE, Ga., April

integrated residential area on the southwest side where it began. —N.Y. Times, July 26, 1964

10,000 in Beach Riot in New Hampshire

WEIRS, N.H., June 19—A steel-helmeted police riot squad backed up by National Guardsmen firing rock salt pellets and a fire truck dispersing tear gas formed a battle line tonight to break up a riot by 10,000 young persons at Weirs Beach.

—N.Y. Times, June 20, 1965

Police in Chicago Battle Rioters

CHICAGO, Aug. 13—One hundred fifty policemen battled rioters in a Negro neighborhood tonight. About 24 persons were injured and at least 75 arrested.

What began as a street-corner civil rights rally swelled into a looting, bottle-tossing mob after a white, off-duty policeman in civilian clothes was stabbed by an angry crowd of Negroes. —N.Y. Times, Aug. 14, 1965

21 Dead in Los Angeles Riots; 600 Hurt; 20,000 Troops Called;

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 14—Rioting, looting and burning spread today for the fourth day in the Negro district of southwestern Los Angeles [Watts]. The disorders continued despite the rifle fire of National Guard troops and local peace forces.

The death toll from the hoodlum-instigated lawlessness rose tonight to 21. Nineteen of the victims were rioters, one was a sheriff's deputy and one a fireman. The last two were white men, as was one of the victims officially classed as a rioter.

The number of injured reached about 600, most of them rioters. Arrests totaled 1,400. Estimates of property damage ranged from

A 5th Redhead Slain in Jersey

An attractive redhaired matron—the fifth redhaired woman murdered in a two-county area along the Jersey shore in less than a year—was found shot through the head yesterday in her own car, mired in the sand in Howell Township between Lakewood and Freehold.

The victim was Mrs. Dorothy Louise McKenzie.

—N.Y. Daily News, Aug. 11

Armed Negroes Fight the Police in Chicago Riots

CHICAGO, Friday, July 15—Roving gangs and snipers in the predominantly Negro West Side exchanged gunfire last night and early this morning with heavily reinforced police patrols.

Dozens of persons were injured including a police captain who was shot in the back.

More than 1,000 policemen tried to contain 5,000 Negroes in the streets.

—N.Y. Times, July 15, 1966

37 Who Saw Murder Didn't Call the Police

For more than half an hour 38 respectable, law-abiding citizens in Queens watched a killer stalk and stab a woman in three separate attacks in Kew Gardens.

Twice the sound of their voices and the sudden glow of their bedroom lights interrupted him and frightened him off. Each time he returned, sought her out and stabbed her again. Not one person telephoned the police during the assault; one witness called after the woman was dead.

—N.Y. Times, March 27.

54 Hurt as Whites in Chicago Hurl Bricks

CHICAGO, July 31—Angry crowds of whites chanting "white power!" hurled bricks and bottles

Between 15 and 25 automobiles, some owned by Negro marchers, were overturned and set on fire by white youths.

More than 54 persons were injured, including two policemen, and at least 14 persons were arrested.

—N.Y. Times, Aug. 1, 1966

Shackup Sadism Costs Life of Beaten Crutch Girl, 7

A chronic sufferer of a debilitating bone disease and an acute victim of "battered child syndrome," 7-year-old Elizabeth Pappolla died yesterday after two weeks of savage beatings by her mother and the woman's lover.

The lover-boy, unemployed laborer John Koltosky, 26, allegedly admitted to the police he pummeled the under-sized child every night for two weeks because "I enjoy beating her."

—N.Y. Daily News, March 14

Atlanta Negroes Riot After Police Wound a Suspect

ATLANTA, Sept. 6—Rioting Negroes fought the police with bricks and bottles today and toppled the city's Mayor from the roof of a car when he attempted to calm them. The police dispersed the Negroes by tossing canisters of tear gas and firing shotguns and pistols above their heads. However, sporadic violence continued into the night, and by midnight the injury toll stood at 15.

It all began in mid-afternoon after the police shot and seriously wounded a Negro suspected of a car theft.

—N.Y. Times, Sept. 7, 1966

2 Teen Cousins Forced To Kneel, Shot To Death

ROCKFORD, Ill., March 3 (AP)

VIOLENCE!

In Recent American Art

The relationship of art to life has never been simple. While it is true that art reflects the society producing it, the artist illuminates the subject, determines the focus and composes the picture.

Art can also be an escape from life. At a time when style seems the artist's overriding concern, life is sublimated. On the other hand, when reportage seems the objective, life remains an undigested part of art.

The type of art produced in any era depends as much on the quality and intensity of life in that era as on the artist's choice to become creatively and morally involved. Untroubled and uneventful times do not force the artist onto the witness stand. By the same token, indulgent and self-centered artists are unlikely to be affected by the needs and concerns of their environment.

Assassinations and riots, war and revolt, are the facts we have faced in America for the last five years. This violence is bound to be reflected in the visual arts. Artists are actively demonstrating their convictions. A few years ago in Los Angeles painters threw their canvases on a bonfire, a poignant protest of senseless napalm burning in Vietnam. To these artists, the loss of works of art is far less important than the loss of human lives.

Just this summer artists marched to protest an arthritic regime in France, a senseless display of police force in Venice and a violation of democratic principles in Chicago. The artist reacts with indignation, soul searching and a searing curiosity. His painting, print or sculpture is tangible and lasting evidence of his convictions.

In the July 31 issue of "Skyline," the Chicago critic Robert Glauber published an article entitled "The Effect of American Violence on American Art." Because of its compassionate treatment of a subject that lies heavily on our conscience, Mr. Glauber's article called forth many positive reactions from the readers of "Skyline," and it trig-

gered, in me, the desire to document and exhibit the growing use of violent subject matter in American art. I am fortunate that my board of trustees allowed me to present a controversial subject and treat it in a forthright manner.

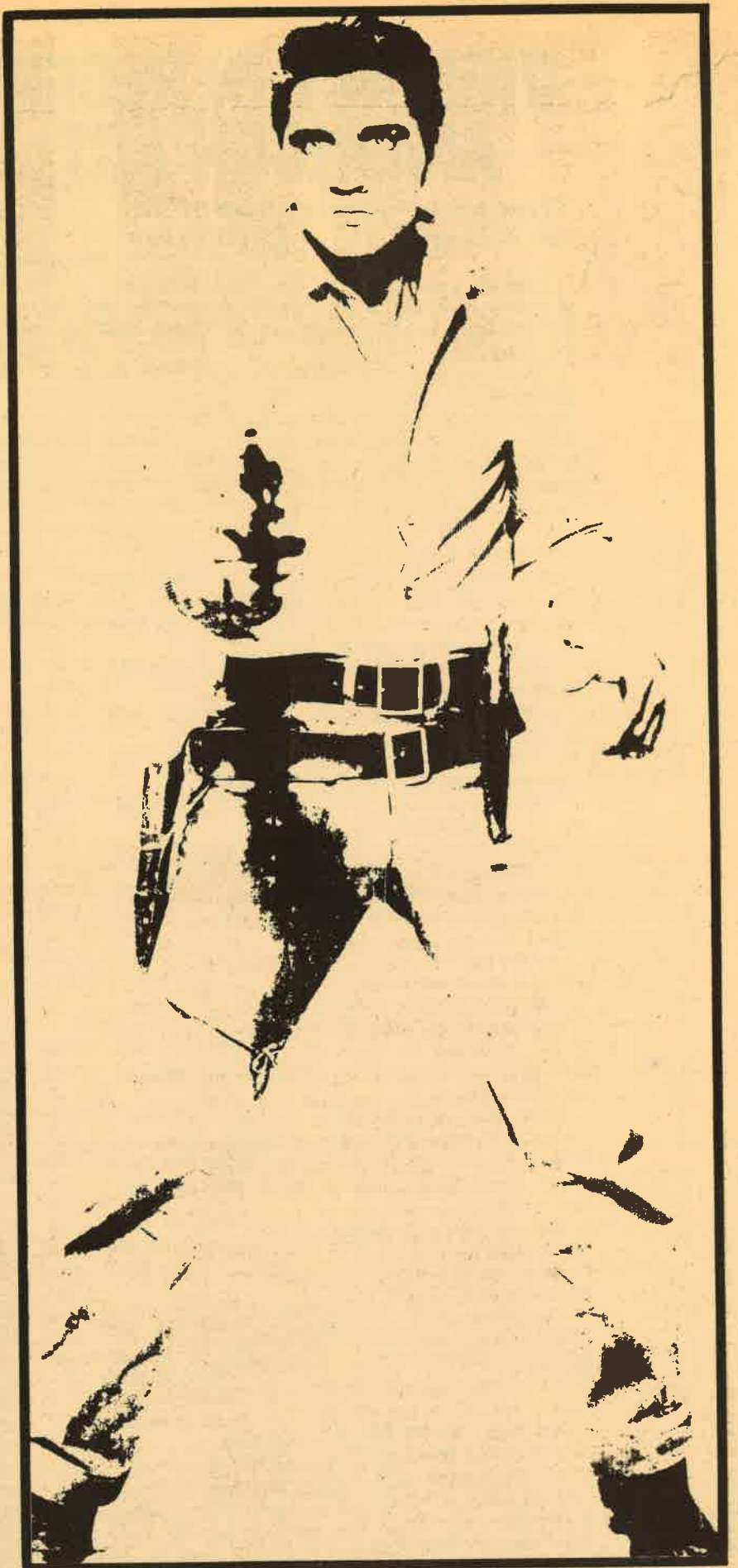
My thanks go to the artists, some of whom endorsed the recent Chicago boycott. Their decision to convert withdrawal into participation is commendable and courageous.

As the guest director of the exhibition, Robert Glauber carried the project from inception to completion. The Illinois Bell Telephone Company was generous enough to share Mr. Glauber's time with the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Lerner Press. I personally would like to thank Robert Glauber for his great devotion to this exhibition and for the enlightening essay he wrote for the accompanying catalogue.

Louis Lerner, executive vice-president and general manager of Lerner Newspapers, and Robert Lerner, Vice-President and Editor of "Skyline," contributed the catalogue which is printed in the form of a tabloid newspaper.

The Museum of Contemporary Art gratefully acknowledges the cooperation of Bernard Aptekar, Arleigh Gallery, Ralph Arnold, Associated American Artists, John G. Balsley, Benjamin Galleries, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin A. Bergman, Mrs. Eugenia Butler, Byron Gallery, Leo Castelli Gallery, Dominick DiMeo, Dwan Gallery, Douglas Edge, Fairweather-Hardin Gallery, Richard Feigen Gallery, Ed Flood, Allan Frumkin Gallery, Richard Gray Gallery, Mrs. W. Hansen, Peter Holbrook, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard J. Horwich, Hyde Park Art Center, Ray Johnson, Paul LaMantia, Mrs. Albert List, Lo Giudice Gallery, Richard Merkin, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Netsch, Mr. and Mrs. Albert H. Newman, Obelisk Gallery, Edward Paschke, Clayton Pinkerton, Albert Pounian, Pro Grafica Arte, Joseph Raffael, Bertha Schaefer Gallery, Stable Gallery, Walker Art Center, William Weege.

Jan van der Marck
Director
Museum of Contemporary Art



Andy Warhol
Elvis II 1964

Roy Lichtenstein
Pistol 1964

VIOLENCE IN RECENT AMERICAN ART

"True artists are on the side of life, not of death."
Albert Camus

Over the past year or so, Americans have taken to serious discussion of violence—its significance in our country's history, our private lives, our commercial pursuits and our arts.

The constant barrage of bloody news from the battlefronts in Vietnam, the shocking murders of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, the persistence of riot and death on our streets, the physical brutality too often employed to counter protest . . . all these have helped crystallize the conscience of the nation. We beat our breasts and say: America is a violent land. We sadly acknowledge it. It is our fault.

But beyond that acknowledgement, what? The prevalence of violence in this country is a huge and complex problem. We debate varying aspects of it by asking ourselves hard questions.

—Is violence somehow inherent in the American character?

—Why are we as a nation so passionately fond of guns?

—Why have we, above all people, elevated the gun-toting criminal to the role of folk hero?

—What does our interest in violence as an adjunct to entertainment signify?

—What needs do the murders and gory mayhem in our films and TV programs fill in our lives?

—Has the immediacy of our TV coverage of the war in Vietnam made us indifferent to sudden death?

—Has that immediacy translated itself into riot and reprisal on our streets?

—Do we resort to personal violence more easily or more viciously than other people?

—In short, are we really what most of the world sees us as being—the most trigger-happy, sanguinary of people?

Answers to these questions vary from Freudian to Marxian, from Biblical to Pragmatic, from sophisticated excuses to naive simplifications that begin: "Just plain common sense will tell you that. . ."

But whatever the answer, most Americans now admit that the United States maintains a level of violence and tolerance of that violence unmatched anywhere in the world.

This is not to say, of course, that we are the only violent people. Far from it. Other nations have their peculiar tastes for violence. But, somehow, in the United States it is significantly, frighteningly different.

The Irish, for instance, love a good brawl. Anyone who has spent any time in a country pub knows how freely the fists can fly for any number of reasons. But men are friends before they fight and just as friendly after a punch or two—political or sporting differences to the contrary. The Irish may be free with their fists or shillelaghs, but a natural humor, a sense of proportion seems to keep their brawls on almost reasonable, family terms.

The Mexican often shocks foreigners with his display of bloody, realistic crucifixes, his public self-flagellation, the ominous skull-shaped cakes he eats on festive days and the skeleton toys he gives to his children. The preoccupation with death in that bright land confuses and disgusts many visitors. But all of this centers about the horror man feels at death. It stems primarily from the layering of Catholicism over primitive Indian beliefs—beliefs still close to the surface of the people's conscience. It is an inner response of frightened souls and seldom involves our concept of violence.

There are a number of countries in Europe and the Middle East where robbery is not uncommon—but guns are seldom involved. The thief is most likely to snatch and run. It seems that only in the United States you are accosted, relieved of your purse or wallet, forced to stand with a gun or knife in your ribs while the money is counted, and then, if the take is not deemed high enough, subjected to a vicious and gratuitous beating. You may well get the beating even if it is.

The Spaniard is often condemned for his interest in the bull ring. To us this is a spectacle of unrelieved violence and gore. But if we studied the ring, we would find that our judgment is based only on the apparent violence of the scene. To the Spaniard bullfighting is an art involving immense technique, complex aesthetics and what Juan Belmonte called "inner sentiment." It pits a small

man with a slight, needle-sharp sword against an extremely strong, heavy animal with terrible horns and great speed. The man has intelligence. The bull has ferocity. The contest is not one of strength but of courage. And that display of courage, etched in grace, removes the bullfight from the realm of mere violence and gives it a mystique peculiar to Hispanic cultures.

Several African nations in recent years have greeted their independence with blood baths. There was violence in the Congo that paled anything on our streets. The Biafran struggle makes our troubles seem slight. But most African violence has involved what we smugly term "primitive peoples" without the dubious benefits of industrial civilization. More significantly, it revolves about tribal clashes—a specialized form of violence that removes any sense of wrong-doing since the victim is usually of another tribe and so not really a "person." Neither of these explanations, of course, applies to violence in civilized, non-tribal America.

Numerous other examples could be cited. Yet it seems inescapable that, though other countries may have their violent aspects, the United States breeds a kind of personal violence, a love of it as entertainment and a reverence for it as history that is unique. Where else in the world are children given extremely realistic guns to play with? Where else, up to very recently, could you mail order pistols, rifles, submachine guns, even anti-tanks guns "as easily as baskets of fruit or cartons of cigarettes" to use President Johnson's phrase?

(It is interesting that we can send guns and death through the mail but not anything the postal authorities deem obscene.)

Where else are vicious, common killers like Billy the Kid, Jesse James and even Bonnie and Clyde treated as romantic, popular heroes? Where else in sport is special attention given to the hatchet man—a player known for his ability to "get" an opposition man scoring too well? Where else is murder so common an expression of violent disagreement—not by the Latin code of machismo but by stealthy assassination of political figures, civil rights workers and leaders? Where else are innocent children target-victims of church bombings?

It would take a combination historian, sociologist and psychiatrist to answer all of these questions in any detail and run down all their implications. But since our interests are primarily in art, let us concentrate our attentions on the influences this climate of violence has had on the work of contemporary American artists.

Obviously, the social climate in which an artist works does influence him. It would be naive to argue that an artist can work in an ivory tower; that his art can reflect only his personal, inner visions. Even the most relentless isolationists have grudgingly come to realize that the world leaves its mark on all men—novelists, painters, poets, politicians and scientists alike. An artist's environment colors his vision—at least in part. He reacts to the conditions of his life with his art.

Jakob Burckhardt pointed out: "Passion is the mother of great things." Artists are stimulated by great events, even if they do not actively take part or directly portray them in their works. The British art historian, the late Sir Herbert Read, carried this idea a step further when he defined art as: "The pattern evolved in a complex interplay of personal and societal processes of adjustment."

But where does the artist get the imagery he employs to depict this pattern as he understands it? Carl Jung offers two interesting and contrasting choices. Some work is drawn from the most deeply guarded corners of the mind "as if it had emerged from the abyss of pre-human ages, or from a super-human world of contrasting light and darkness." This is clearly visionary art—more often than not in a highly abstracted or non-objective style. It displays what Dore Ashton termed "the thinking that recalls rather than represents."

Other work is set down by an artist out of "his crucial experiences, powerful emotions, suffering, passion, the stuff of human fate in general." Here is the artist as reporter rather than mystic, caught up in the harsh realities of this world.

Most of the pieces in this exhibition derive obviously from this latter source. They may be abstract or literal. The violence they reflect may be explicit or implicit. These are details. What unites them is their sense of confrontation with the

actual conditions of American life at this moment in history and the comments the artists feel compelled to make about them.

Now artists who work from their "crucial experiences" can hardly be told to work in the styles of their fathers. Those who advocate that an artist ignore society and go back to the stylistic purity of nature, base their arguments on the curious notion that "nature" is somehow a stable environment. As has been pointed out, such people are obviously more concerned with their notion of a "going back" than they are with nature's place in art.

How does art reflect its times? Giotto's frescoes in the Scrovegni Chapels speak of the 14th century as clearly as Michelangelo's ceiling and wall in the Sistine echo the 16th. Abstract Expressionism is as much a mirror of the 1940's as Pop Art is of the 1960's. "Hamlet" is no less realistic than "Guernica" or Gillo Pontecorvo's "The Battle of Algiers." The differences between them lie not so much in their creators' approach to the real world as their varied views of artistic form.

America has only recently emerged from a fairly long period in which, to use Sidney Tillim's fine phrase, artists were "almost completely occupied with form as content and style as the ultimate objective." This attitude was understandable in a country struggling to establish a valid art of its own by importing somewhat worn European ideas and wearing them even thinner.

But even the earliest of the relatively independent American artists reflected, if only indirectly, this country's moods, prejudices, fears and dreams. George Luks, John Sloan, Everett Shinn, George Bellows, William Glackens—all were concerned with the emergence of the American social ideal.

The horrors of the Depression, the racial oppression in the South, the rise of Mussolini and Hitler, the holocaust of World War II set up a reaction that took the forms of Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism: the one a flight from the real to a fantasy world; the second a flight from the real to a wholly depersonalized, inner world. The best artists of this period surely reflect America at the peak of her philosophical isolation. They also were all largely symbolic in both intent and content. All of this tended to perpetuate the formalist approach to art: one advocating that art be kept as "pure" as possible, as little sullied as feasible by direct reference to reality.

There were, of course, even at that time some artists who involved themselves directly in the socio-political life of their times. Many works by Ben Shahn, Robert Gwathmey, William Gropper, Jacob Lawrence reflect their concern with the violence of their day. Yet these were relatively minor figures. They spoke with real anger but in small voices for small numbers. (What a contrast with the present moment when virtually every major artist has been so shaken by social problems that his artistic involvement has followed naturally and strongly.)

It is a pity that some of the 1930-1940 works could not have been included in this exhibition. Yet it was clear from the outset that any attempt to mount an historical survey of violence in American art would present us with a wholly unwieldy appendage that would be of only incidental importance to the show's main concern. Perhaps even more important than that, it must be remembered that, of itself, violence in art is hardly a new phenomenon.

Consider the metopes of the Parthenon or the western pediment from the Temple of Zeus in Olympia or the numerous hunting and battle scenes in Egyptian and Assyrian reliefs, to cite several ancient examples that come quickly to mind. The main emphasis in this exhibition is this moment in history and the influence of its violence on our art.

The arrival in the late 1950's of the first strong stirrings of Pop Art from Britain, and the New Realism from France, helped wipe away most of the sense of detachment fostered during the previous decades. The Pop artists clearly and obviously drew on the actualities of our commercialized world. They reflected our fantasies, our hang-ups, the day-to-day stuff of our lives in images that were blatantly social. They were concerned with the essentially vulgar nature of much of our lives — with the crass, the cheap, the sensationally and superficially erotic and violent. Turning their backs on the inner-directed abstractions of painters like Franz Kline, Jackson Pollock, Mark Tobey and Adolph Gottlieb, they plunged directly into the absurd.

Pop Art brought a frank, clear-cut social commentary to art that was as widespread as it was appropriate for the times. Its influence spread so pervasively that in much of the best art of the 1960's it is almost impossible to separate the art from the social commentary. A great deal of that comment concerns the violence that, in one form or another, is so prevalent in the United States.

It would obviously be impossible to catalogue all the forms violence has taken in recent American art. Yet, in essence, this exhibition is an attempt at just such a catalogue. It is a sampling of areas of concern and forms of artistic reaction—individualized by the personalities of the artists represented. It may have the obvious failing of most "theme shows"—the inclusion of works in which the idea takes precedence over the art. But, as has already been pointed out, with much of the art of our immediate time, it is not always easily possible to separate form and content.

Many categories could be devised, but for convenience let us list six general types of violence and consider some of the works in the exhibition as they reflect those categories.

War Violence: It would be impossible for anyone under 40 to recall a time of world peace. But in the recent past the tempo of battle insistence has grown so all-encompassing that it is hardly remarkable so many artists have worked war images into their work. If anything is remarkable, it is that more of them haven't. Peter Saul, Albert Pounian and Robert Andrew Parker are much concerned with war and its effect on the individual. Their work is moving not only because of the furious emotional appeal of the subject but also the spillover of that fury into the execution of the work. The paintings are obviously meant to (and do) hit the viewer hard. Here is art converted almost wholly into social commentary and, to the artists' credit, still remains powerful as art.

Racial Violence: In the minds of many, the relationship between the races is the number one problem we face in this country. It is asserted that, at least at the moment, almost all major issues stem from this seesawing, confusing and often violent confrontation between past customs, present hopes and future needs. The growing iconography of the struggle is found in the work of Andy Warhol, Robert Indiana, Arthur Secunda and William Wiley. Some of the most effective pieces in this category project a cold horror made all the more frightening by its seeming reportorial detachment. Yet others have a shocked one-for-one personal quality that is exemplified by Wiley's "Idle Hands Are the Devil's Workshop II" which carries the fervid dating: "Begun April 4, 8 a.m.; finished April 4, 7 p.m., 1968."

Personal Violence: It is doubtless that on the personal level violence is most pervasive and psychologically most devastating. A few may be lucky enough to escape it individually, in their family or in their circle of friends—but who escapes the effects of the murder of a King or a Kennedy? Reactions to personal violence can be direct — as with Peter Holbrook or Ralph Arnold; or more indirect — as with Stanley Edwards or Joseph Raffael. In either case, the confrontation for the viewer is immediate, the results contagious.

Gun Violence: Strictly speaking, of course, it is often impossible to separate guns from the idea of personal violence. But the many special uses artists have made of guns, their symbolic extrapolations of its form and purpose warrant a separate category. Probably no painter has confronted us more directly with the power of the gun than Roy Lichtenstein. His pistol banner is aimed straight at our eyes. Several artists have recently dealt with the criminal as folk hero—none more effectively than Robert Rauschenberg. His six "Bonnie and Clyde" lithographs are shattering comments on the fascination these irrationally romanticized bloody characters and their guns hold for us.

Psychological Violence: When acceptance of physical violence becomes easy, it is then a small step to psychological violence. In works that reflect it, actual blood need not be spilled. Suggestion is enough. The viewer understands all too well the threats and disasters implied. Jim Dine uses his two great heads of Mao and Johnson to comment on our attitudes toward China and the potential horrors lurking in the background. When Dominick DiMeo calls an abstracted head against a red background "Victim," he opens for us an endless stream of readily available, violent images stored

in our memories. Robert Mallery, Bernard Aptekar, Richard Merkin and so many others play on the vague but real fears that torment creator and viewer alike.

The Climate of Violence: It is natural that some artists prefer to work with the general climate of violence that all of these rather specific details produce. Such artists are not so much concerned with guns or racial tensions or war as such as they are with the effects all of these have on their own creative impulses and artistic vocabularies. The result is often imagery that is either explicitly violent in many bloody details or almost wholly implicit—indirect but unmistakable. William Weege is a good example of the former. "Long Live Life" is an indescribably painful catalogue of violence as people have practiced it, participated in it and suffered from it, a sado-masochistic record that appalls us with its ubiquity. Clayton Pinkerton rests at the other extreme. Who knows for whom his "Messenger" is coming? Who knows what message he brings? Is he part of the protective police? Is he an aggressive member of the military? Does he come to inform us of the death of others — or our own? Who knows in our world of constantly encroaching violence when he may hear from this messenger?

But all of this is critical theory and interpretation. Edward Paschke is a talented young artist who often works themes and symbols of violence into his canvases. His rationale for doing so is well thought out and clearly expressed. It is better for him to speak for the artist. This is his comment on his portrait of Lee Harvey Oswald, "Purple Ritual."

"I like my paintings to have a strong initial impact on the viewer. Whether or not that is violence, I don't know. My images are surely not gentle and violence certainly interests me. But a distinction must be made between the strong first impact a painting makes and mere shock value.

"Shock is surely a valid response to a painting. But I would strongly doubt that such a shock has any aesthetic value.

"Many people feel that in 'Purple Ritual' I glorified Oswald as an individual—and so it is an anti-American painting. I intended it to be a symbol of the American way of life. That is why I set Oswald down against the flag and seals. The only literal thing I did in the painting was to color him purple—the color associated with death and official mourning.

"But whose death? Oswald's or Kennedy's? Both, in a sense. My main concern was not the death of either man but rather the relationship between both incidents and their place in the fabric of our heritage.

"As an artist, I am an outgrowth of the times and society in which I live. I reflect the mood and temperament of those times—literally and otherwise. Whatever I say in my paintings comments on my environment.

"I would like to think that my work is a graphic, a documentary breakdown of the traditional thinking of this country—a synthesis of new and old thinking. I relate this visually through images and symbols that interest me—but any literal interpretation must come from the outside."

It seems quite clear that an artist is the complex product of his times. The sensitive ones reflect their times in a way that makes other sensitive people squirm. But this is part of their function. One might say that, in a very real sense, the whole purpose of an artist is to make people see the world as he sees it—not as they see it.

Beyond that, of course, the passionate violence of some of the works in this exhibition certainly implies that at least some of the artists involved use their art as outlet for their own violent urges. They paint out their aggressions rather than act them out. Their work is, in a very real way, a catharsis for them. But if such canvases wind up controlled violence rather than mere pictures of it or reactions to it, they at least manifest a wholly constructive use of force. But this is motivation assignment—and a very tenuous business.

These are restless and harsh and violent times. Perceptive painters mirror this back to us. It may be a sop for us to say that violence in the movies or on television (or even in art galleries) produces violence in our homes or on the streets. But this is naive. If we were not initially attracted to the violence, millions of us would not go to such movies, watch such television programs or keep millions of weapons stashed away "for an emergency." But we do, and the commercial panderers of such stuff know it and feed us what we want.

Edward Paschke made a comment about this worth repeating: "An artist cannot influence what

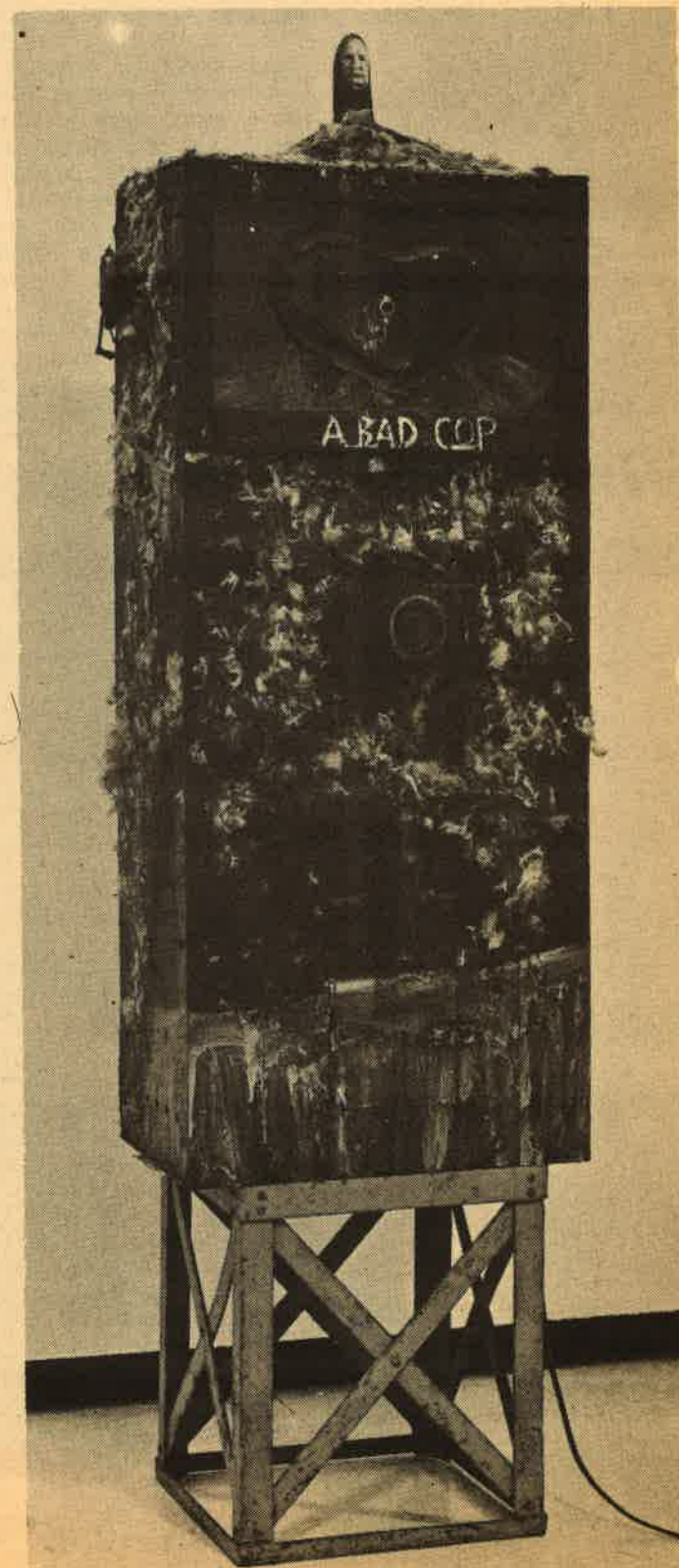
will happen in society. He can only observe and comment on its past. But even in commenting on the past, he cannot be literal. He can only reflect on history as it happened to him. His paintings are his emotional responses to his part in the story, to history as it happened to him. Such influence is always indirect.

"I doubt that any painter has ever influenced the course of history or of social growth. If one tried, he would somehow cease to be a painter—and become a politician."

So for American artists at any rate, it is probably easier to express the climate of violence in their art than to ignore it. Americans have long believed in the direct visceral expression of emotion in art, the projection on the canvas of our instincts and impulses. (Weren't these the bases of Abstract Expressionism?) This, of course, ties in closely with the hot nature of violence, its gut appeal and animal response. The French critic Gerald Gassiot-Talabot sums this up succinctly: "Violence is immediate expression. It is never conscience."

The works in this exhibition bear it out.

Robert Glauber
Curator
Illinois Bell Telephone Company

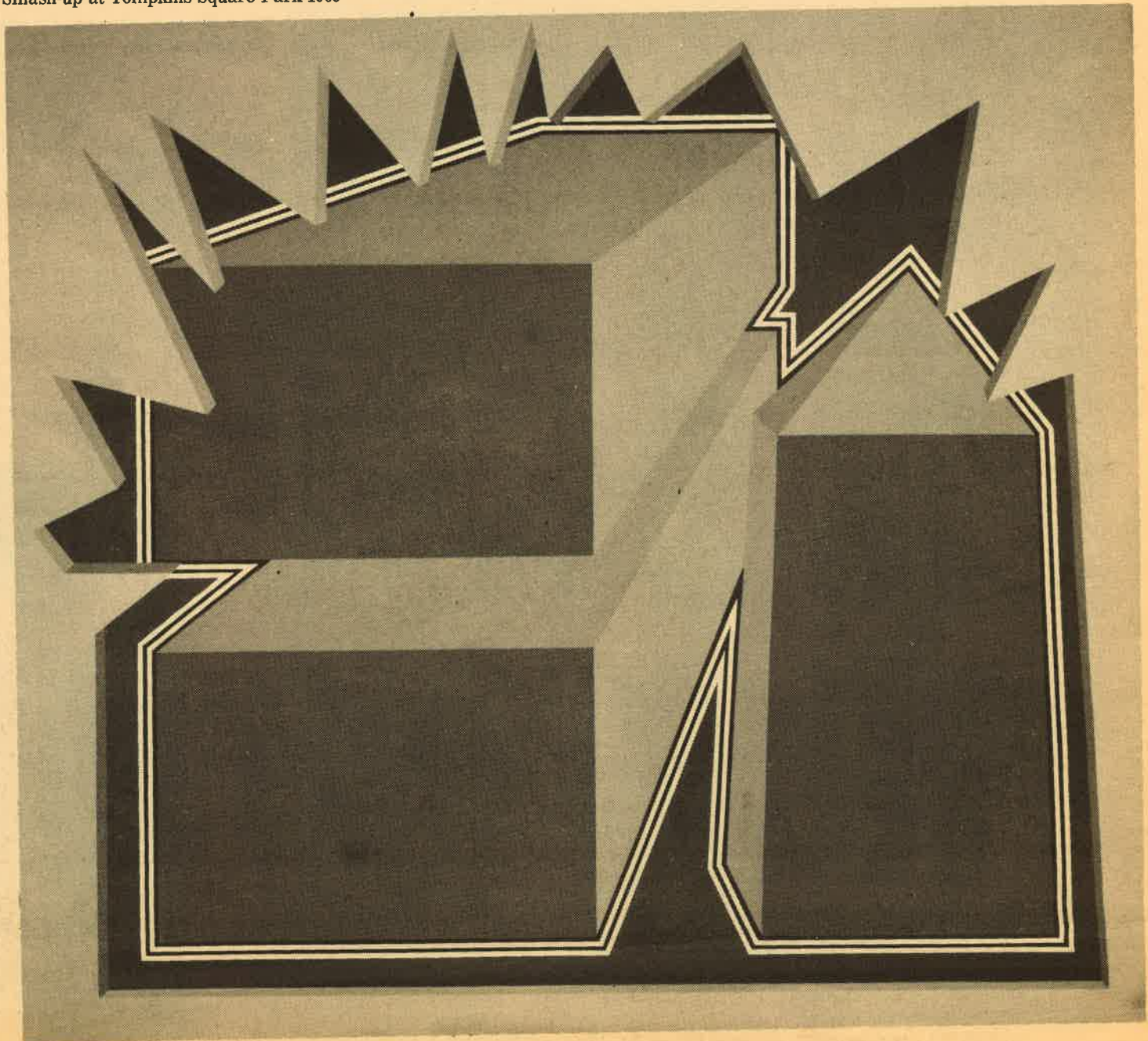


Edward Kienholz
A Bad Cop, 1966

Robert Mallery
Parachutist 1962-63

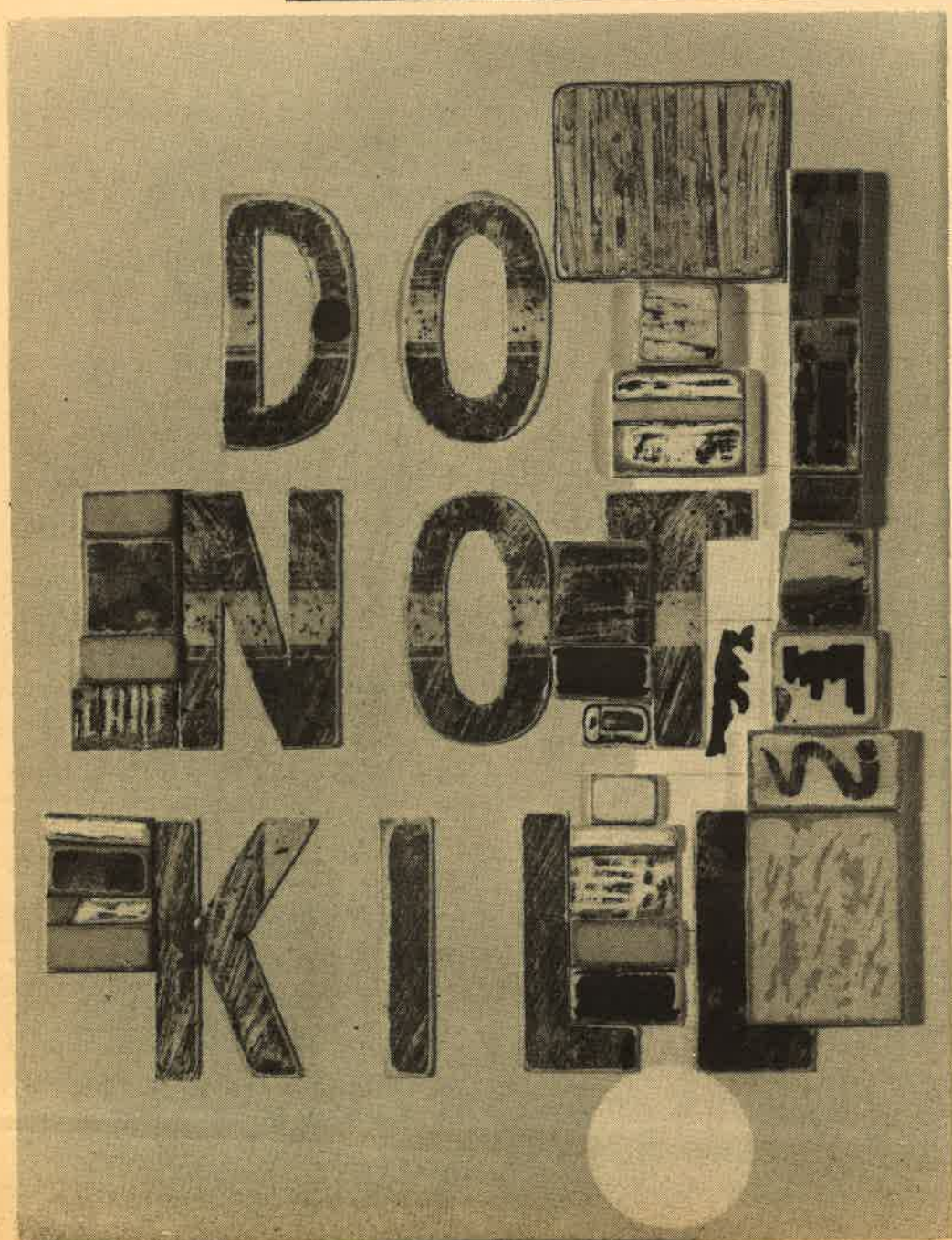


Stanley Edwards
Smash-up at Tompkins Square Park 1968





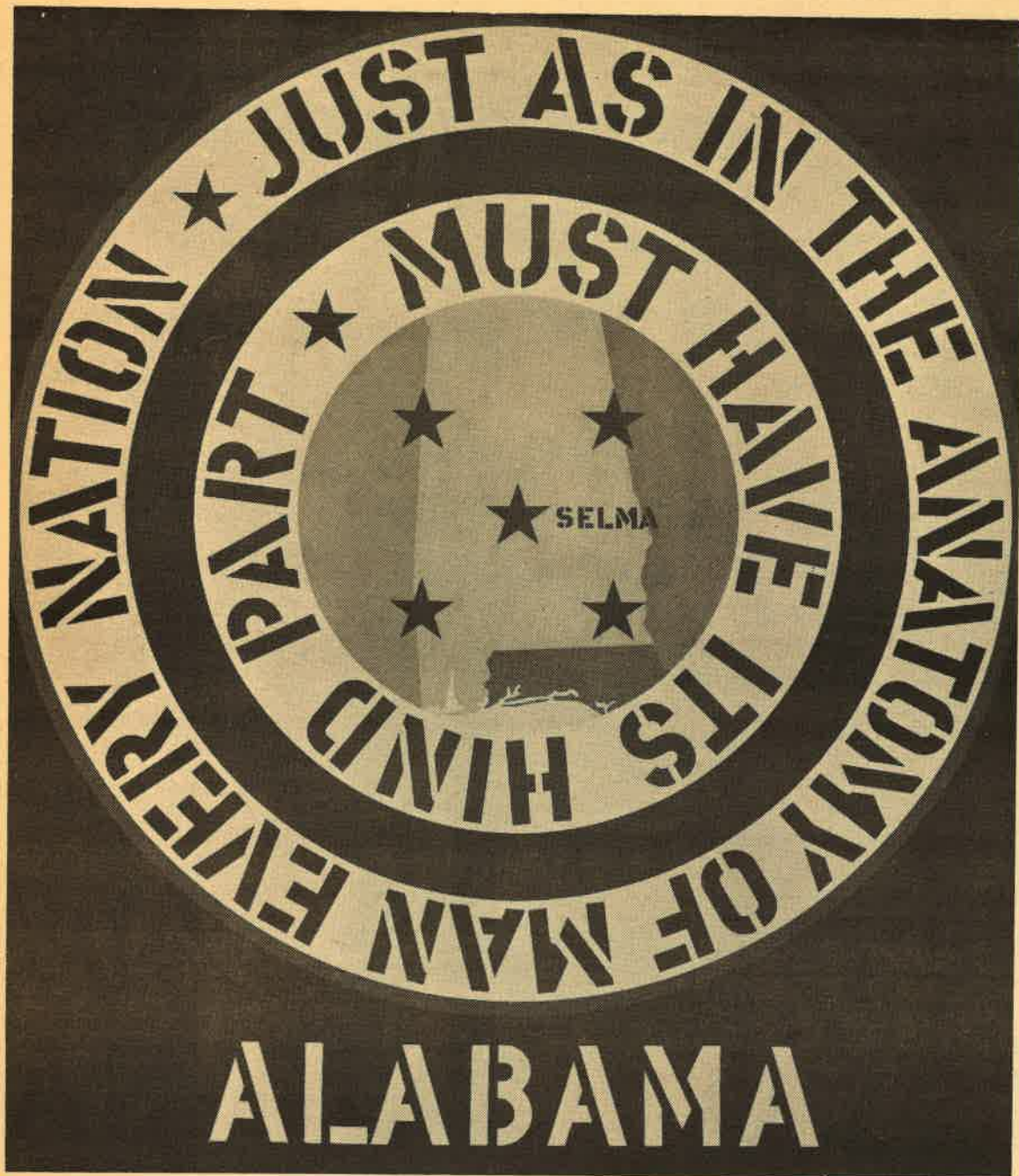
Ralph Arnold
Unfinished Collage 1968
(Detail)



Ray Johnson
Do Not Kill 1966

Clayton Pinkerton
Untitled 1968





Robert Indiana
Alabama 1965



Bernard Apteckar
A Death Dealer 1968

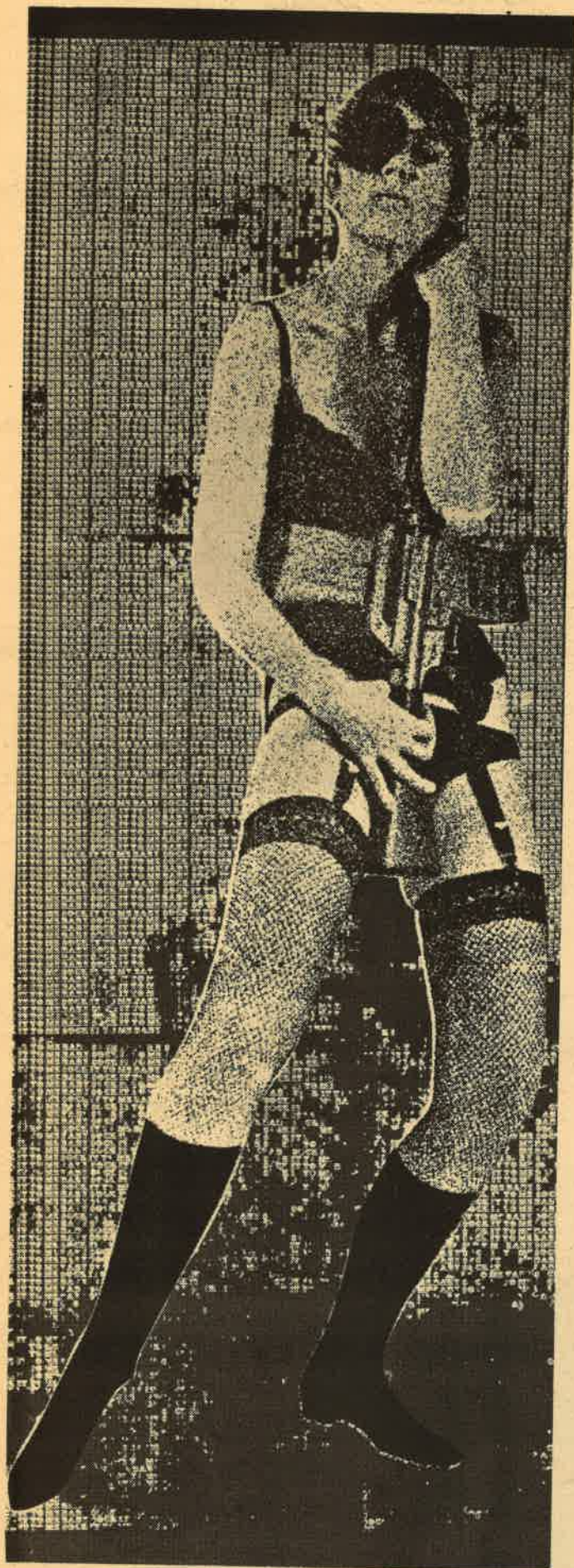
Blown Apart Fragments
And Torso 1968



Andy Warhol
Race Riot 1963



Peter Holbrook
Battle of Grant Park 1968



William Weege
Fuck the C.I.A. 1967



Edward Paschke
Purple Ritual 1967



Ellen Lanyon
L.B.J. Doll 1966

Roslyn Drexler
Sorry About That 1966





Joseph Raffael
Baggie, Covered Baby, Face, Covered Face 1967



James Strombotne
Reflections on the Assassination of R.F.K. 1968



Jim Dine
Drag 1967

Notes Toward the Eventual Definition of the
Great Lust-Mad Lesbian Nympho Prison Break
(For R.K. friend and liberal) 1966





Peter Saul
Saigon 1967



John G. Balsley
American Sunday Summer Landscape Series:
Fatal Blacktop Version 1968

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

1. Bernard Aptekar
A Death Dealer 1968
Acrylic on masonite and wood 108x60x1½"
Lent by the artist
2. Bernard Aptekar
Blown Apart Fragments and Torso 1968
Acrylic on masonite and wood 114x80x1½"
Lent by the artist
3. Ralph Arnold
Unfinished Collage 1968
Collage and acrylic 50x150"
Benjamin Galleries, Chicago
4. John G. Balsley
American Sunday Summer Landscape Series:
Fatal Blacktop Version 1968
Mixed media 6' high
Fairweather-Hardin Gallery, Chicago
5. Warrington Colescott
The Great Society: Inner Core 1967
Etching 17½x18"
Associated American Artists, New York
6. William Copley
Drop That Gun 1960
Oil on canvas 32x39"
Mr. and Mrs. Leonard J. Horwich, Chicago
7. Dominick DiMeo
Victim 1965
Acrylic on canvas 58x50"
Fairweather-Hardin Gallery, Chicago
8. Jim Dine
Window 1959
Mixed media 29½x29½"
Gordon Locksley, Minneapolis
9. Jim Dine
Drag 1967
Silkscreen 33½x47½"
Lo Giudice Gallery, Chicago
10. Roslyn Drexler
Sorry About That 1966
Acrylic on canvas 48x72"
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
11. Douglas Edge
Malcolm X 1967
Acrylic, polyester resin and wood 18½x4x21½"
Gallery 669, Los Angeles
12. Stanley Edwards
Smash-up at Tompkins Square Park 1968
Acrylic on canvas 62x62"
Fairweather-Hardin Gallery, Chicago
13. Ed Flood
She Devil 1968
Mixed media on plexiglass 6¾x8¾"
Lent by the artist
14. Peter Holbrook
Battle of Grant Park 1968
Acrylic on canvas 54x66"
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago
15. Robert Indiana
Alabama 1965
Oil on canvas 72x60"
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Netsch, Chicago
16. Ray Johnson
Do Not Kill 1966
Collage 18¼x14¾"
Richard Feigen Gallery, New York
17. Paul LaMantia
P.C. Looking at TV 1968
Mixed media on paper 30x40"
Lent by the artist
18. Ellen Lanyon
L.B.J. Doll 1966
Mixed media 34x9"
Mr. and Mrs. Edwin A. Bergman, Chicago
19. Roy Lichtenstein
Pistol 1964
Felt 82x49"
Lo Giudice Gallery, Chicago
20. Ben Mahmoud
Mace and Fracture 1968
Mixed media drawing 25x27"
Pro Grafica Arte, Chicago
21. Robert Mallary
Parachutist 1962-63
Polyester and fabric 68x6½x5"
Mrs. Albert List, New York
On long term loan to
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis
22. Richard Merkin
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Mixed media 40x60"
Obelisk Gallery, Boston and Byron Gallery, New York
23. Robert Andrew Parker
Death of the Ball Turret Gunner 1968
Watercolor 23¼x18¾"
Pro Grafica Arte, Chicago
24. Edward Paschke
Purple Ritual 1967
Oil on canvas 48x32"
Lent by the artist
25. Edward Paschke
Tet Inoffensive 1968
Oil on canvas 38x34"
Lent by the artist
26. Clayton Pinkerton
Messenger 1968
Acrylic on plexiglass 48x51"
Arleigh Gallery, San Francisco
- 27A. Clayton Pinkerton
Untitled 1968
Acrylic on plexiglass 12x12"
Arleigh Gallery, San Francisco
- 27B. Clayton Pinkerton
Untitled 1968
Acrylic on plexiglass 12x12"
Arleigh Gallery, San Francisco
28. Albert Pounian
Rain 1968
Acrylic on canvas 54x30"
Gilman Gallery, Chicago
29. Joseph Raffael
Baggie, Covered Baby, Face, Covered Face 1967
Oil and mixed media 71x60"
Stable Gallery, New York
30. Robert Rauschenberg
Storyline I 1968
Color lithograph 17x21½"
Associated American Artists, New York
31. Robert Rauschenberg
Storyline II 1968
Color lithograph 18x22"
Associated American Artists, New York
32. Robert Rauschenberg
Storyline III 1968
Color lithograph 17½x21½"
Associated American Artists, New York
33. Robert Rauschenberg
Love Zone 1968
Color lithograph 23x27"
Associated American Artists, New York
34. Robert Rauschenberg
Flower Re-Run 1968
Color lithograph 18½x23½"
Associated American Artists, New York
35. Robert Rauschenberg
Still 1968
Color lithograph 22x30"
Associated American Artists, New York
36. Peter Saul
Saigon 1967
Oil on canvas 93x142"
Allan Frumkin Gallery, Chicago
37. Arthur Secunda
Negative Landscape 1968
Silkscreen 11x15"
Associated American Artists, New York
38. James Strombotne
Reflections on the Assassination of R.F.K. 1968
Oil on canvas 70x60"
Bertha Schaefer Gallery, New York
39. Carol Summers
Kill For Peace 1967
Silkscreen 23x19"
Associated American Artists, New York
40. Andy Warhol
Race Riot 1963 (two versions)
Acrylic and silkscreen enamel on canvas 30x33" each
Leo Castelli Gallery, New York
41. Andy Warhol
Elvis II 1964 (single version)
Acrylic and silkscreen enamel on canvas 82x36"
Private collection, Chicago
42. William Weege
Fuck the C.I.A. 1967
Silkscreen on paper on canvas 78½x38"
Private collection, Chicago
43. William Weege
Long Live Life (1984) 1968
Silkscreen and lithograph 88x109"
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago
44. William T. Wiley
Tori in a Depressed State, I think it's Alabama 1967
Watercolor on paper 28¾x22¾"
Allan Frumkin Gallery, New York
45. William T. Wiley
Idle Hands Are the Devil's Workshop II 1968
Mixed media 47½x48¼"
Allan Frumkin Gallery, New York
46. William T. Wiley
Movement to Black Ball Violence, Hommage to
Martin Luther King, Jr. 1968
Tape 23¼" diameter
Allan Frumkin Gallery, New York
47. James Wines
Assassin III 1964
Collage 29½x19½"
Private collection, Chicago
48. Edward Kienholz
A Bad Cop 1966
Mixed Media Construction 50" high
Dwan Gallery, New York

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