

Questioning Classical Realism: a Critique of Ross's "The Great 20th Century Art Scam" as Related to the Art Renewal Center

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Date: 2006

Summary: Many people enjoy the subtleties of a realistic painting. Among methods that create such art, Classical Realism relates to older Academy teachings. Art collector Fred Ross's article "The Great 20th Century Art Scam: How Arrogance, Greed and Folly Nearly Destroyed 2,500 Years of Western Art"¹ promotes the rhetoric of the more extreme Classical Realists. Followed by an interview,² his article also memorializes a starting point for the non-profit group *The Art Renewal Center* (ARC, at <http://www.artrenewal.org/>), which supports contemporary realism. As ARC chairman, Ross's viewpoint includes odd claims: contemporary art theories are hoaxes; a conspiracy of powerful museums, universities, and critics keep realism out of the market; and, higher education art programs provide nothing good. These position realistic painting as the victim of corrupt cultural forces against which visual art needs a renewal. Many of Ross's claims are false, incomplete, and misleading. Ross and the ARC deny the validity of non-realist arts while also perpetuating myths about both experimental and traditional arts and its varying art theories.

Introduction

A few years ago some friends and I vacationed in Hawaii. Two of my friends' young boys had a new video game, which they loved playing indoors. But in gorgeous Hawaii, the rest of us wanted to enjoy sun and surf. We told the boys that going to the beach would be nice, given such wonderful blue skies. One boy yelled "But I don't want the sky to be blue!" It was a goofy complaint, and rather charming from a young boy. But of course despite it, the sky was blue. Ross and the Art Renewal Center rely on the boys' style of counter-factual denial. Their argument goes like this: that's not blue; that can't ever be blue; I can make my definition of blue any way I want to regardless of what everyone else says about blue; my definition of blue is preferable to yours; everyone except me has forgotten how to make this special blue, which is a terrible loss; I can't see your 'blue' so you must be ignorant or trying to con people; just because you call it blue doesn't mean it is; and those liars lying about blue don't really know what is blue so you better not go to their blue colleges and should instead go to our blue schools. Just replace blue with 'art.' It's enough to make one prefer the color green.

The following are Ross's basic claims from his essay: Modernism systematically attempted to and practically succeeded at destroying traditional art, taking over the entire college and university art education system, museum system, and even arts journalism, and thus, "five centuries of critical data was nearly thrown into the trash" (Ross, p.26) or "2500 years" (essay title); Modernist theories are "wanting in every respect, void of substance and built on a labyrinth of easily disproved fallacies, suppositions and hypotheses." (p.26); Modern and Postmodern art is entirely "nihilistic and anti-human, denigrating our hopes, dreams, and the real world we live in." (p.37); Modern and Postmodern art and art-theory are one big "hoax" (interview, p.39); if you disagree with Ross, then you are an unthinking product of the anti-tradition "propaganda successes." (Ross, p.26) Combined, Ross's claims attempt to explain how strange 20th Century non-traditional, modern art became popular, by positioning all such art as a scam and its supporters as cons.

Indeed some realist painting today includes profound technical skill and thoughtful, critical approaches to content, artistry and visual metaphor. But in defending and promoting such art, Ross places his idea of the true, good art (realism borne out of ancient traditions) versus the scam (everything from Impressionism onwards, including all modern and postmodern art). Critical thinkers will recognize serious problems in Ross's and the ARC's writings: factual error, factual omission, red herring, ad hominem, false hierarchy, either-or, argument from the negative, cherry-picking the data, collection bias, etc. Ross claims that 20th Century Modernism contained such fallacies. Sometimes it did. But his comments fare no better. In my opinion, these problems do a disservice to talented realist painters by unnecessarily pitting them against the useful historical and technical scholarship that higher education and many forms of contemporary art can and do offer them. At the same time, realism need not play victim. It's a great art form that was studied, exhibited, created, widely distributed and often celebrated throughout the 20th Century and today.

Why is it Important to Question These Claims and Conspiracy Theories?

Ross's ideas seem popular. At first glance, Ross appears to have good credentials, including a graduate Art Education degree from Columbia Teacher's College, and a lifelong interest in the visual arts. Admirably, Ross collects and purchases the works of many wonderful artists. He often speaks publicly about art. He's also the millionaire chairman of the Art Renewal Center (ARC). His essay "The Great 20th Century Art Scam" almost word-for-word reflects the ARC's stated doctrine. The ARC claims to receive over four hundred fifty million web hits per year³. That popularity alone is good reason to question the ARC's claims, for if their claims are true, then their popularity would be good reason to support them. In attaching themselves to the ARC's agenda, numerous figurative artists today mirror Ross's claims. Perhaps a blatant denial of unusual art provides enough hype that Classical Realists gain significant mindshare among the public. Artists may hope that by doing so they too will gain audiences, collectors, and more students.

Additionally one might ask what should the art teacher promote and teach? Why? If you want, Ross and the ARC conveniently have all the answers for you. They claim to know exactly what art is. They believe that if you aren't teaching realistic, traditional art, then you're not teaching art. Such narrowness is essentially the same fallacy as claiming 'if it isn't video, it's not art' or 'it's not art if it isn't abstract painting.' In fact one of the ARC's founders, Brian Yoder, wrote "What about photography, isn't that art? No. My position is that photography, which can indeed be a wonderful and excellent thing, is not actually an art form per se."⁴ Such narrowness defends the cry 'but that's not art,' which the ARC and many Classical Realists use to deny everything except what Classical Realists create. But making such false measures is like asking is Japanese haiku not poetry because it's not an English sonnet? No, of course not – both are poetry, simply of different form. Here we see that Ross's narrow art definitions and negations force false comparisons among widely divergent art styles, aesthetic forms, and methods. In contrast to Ross's too-narrow art definitions, the marvelous diversity of art available to today's students and teachers means that there's no easy, singular answer to the question "what should the art teacher teach?" Unfortunately, the ARC's denials of non-realist art also means denials of anything but a narrow definition of European, figurative, oil painting traditions.

Eurocentrism and the ARC's Leadership

The ARC sometimes pitches diatribes against what they see as cultural miscreancy. Ross's cohorts, in this case ARC co-founder Brian Yoder, seem to deny the legitimacy of any art other than their favored painters, especially when related to education as a whole:

Can you tell me why a student ought to understand Cherokee culture and history? I'm not saying that there's something inherently bad about learning about Indian tribes. I'm saying that it is a minor and optional topic of study, not one that ought to be placed at the core of how we understand the world and educate our children, and I think that's true whether you are of Cherokee, Chippewa, French, or Maori ancestry.⁵

This Eurocentric view states that other cultures have only minimally valid or interesting things to say or teach about art, and that therefore they should be marginalized.⁶ And yet American aboriginal cultures gave us maple sugaring, farming technologies and grains, numerous art forms, sculpture, dances, songs, stories,

crafts, types of clothing, kayaks, etc. And some of those innovations can literally save your life if you live in the same aboriginal environments. Yoder's question appears to ask what should the priorities be, what's most important to teach? He selects his personal favorite Classical Realism, of course. But why is making priorities a problem? Isn't every art teacher expert in only one or two art forms, not all of them, such that the teacher's cultural priorities cannot not occur? Aren't priorities (or at least focal points) unavoidable?

When we are talking from a global, worldwide perspective, it is a fundamental mistake to place an *art style* at the core of art education. There are hundreds of styles, media, and types of art (the sky is blue!) The practices of these art forms are not simply a matter of making your own definition of art and then ruling everything else out – the ARC's approach is a top-down, one-size-fits-all template where if it isn't Classical Realism, it doesn't qualify as art. Instead, for most art teachers, one works from a basis of all the data (including the variety of the arts), that is, from the bottom-up, working incrementally from basic, observable evidence on up towards larger claims. Thus the core of art education is critical thinking paired with visual artistry and media, as evidenced by visual innovations and the savvy use of art media. Such critical, artistic production can be demonstrated, assessed and arrived at through many different art methods and media, through a wide array of varying cultures and visual experiences. We can, of course, learn visual innovation and sensitivity by studying and creating Chinese Southern Song Dynasty ink paintings, just as a poet can learn language and aesthetics by studying sonnets or haiku, and just as a mathematician could learn deep principles of logic by studying arithmetic, calculus, or geometry. Even if we were to limit ourselves to oil painting traditions, which really are European invention, where do we draw the line? Why not French Impressionist oil painting, why not Italian Futurism? Why not Dutch Abstract Minimalism or Dutch Realism? Why choose French Academy methods and its Neoclassicism, and not Italian methods and their Naturalism? Or rather than those oil painting styles closely allied with today's Classical Realism, why not landscape-oriented 19th Century German and British Academy methods that aided American landscape painting? What about social realism, magical realism, photorealism, hyperrealism and other types of art inspired by older figurative traditions? Ultimately, no one art style has a global monopoly on subtlety, goodness, critical thinking, aesthetics, or truthfulness. The problem with positioning a style of art as the core or center of art education is that the style isn't the core – the human imagination is, visual exploration and communication is, the physical properties of media is. Thus narrow definitions of art limit out too many excellent ways to make art, too many of the profound critical, visual activities shared by all artists from any culture. There are practices and tendencies shared by all of the arts, but these do not require artists to make paintings in the same styles, images, subjects, or media.

Does Classical Realism or its techniques limit the artist? One often hears that it does not, that the language of form and color that they rely on can make it possible to express the full range of human imagination. A phrase I often heard when I was in school, and that many realists use today, can be paraphrased as 'limited means but infinite applications.' This overstates the capabilities of any language. It would be a lot more precise to say that realistic painting can serve as a beautiful window into the world, and that other art forms may also create valuable but different windows into human experience. If what Yoder, Ross, and the ARC were saying was simply that anyone from any culture could study Classical Realist art methods and use them as a fruitful way to develop and promote critical thinking and artistry and technical skill, then they'd be correct. I agree that it's a wonderful and learnable art form. But ARC leaders want a lot more than this. Yoder continues to frame his political agenda very clearly:

The fact is that "educators" are out there turning kids against the United States, against capitalism, against science, and against good art, and their favorite tools are the theory of "cultural relativism"/"multiculturalism" and moral and epistemological relativism. Such ideas tend to immunize kids against believing or even being able to understand the scientific, industrial, and politically liberal culture of the United States. Look at the "liberal" support that Islamic militants are getting on our college campuses. They don't like these guys because they are liberals. They are among the most sexist, militaristic, racist, and religious nutcases on the face of the earth. They like them because they are the enemies of the United States, and for no other reason. They are using the same fallacious reasoning to turn them away from good art as well and for the same reasons.

Here Yoder gloms together totally unrelated concepts, attempting to mate Classical Realism with good science, market economics, nationalism, and so on. But consider, for example, how the artist Caravaggio was a murderer, how Michelangelo was a mystic, how Thomas Cole was a minister, how Jacques-Louis David made political paintings. These artists did not share (and literally couldn't share) the same political

outlooks, religions, or worldviews, yet all created excellent paintings. In other words, one's political leanings do not limit whether or not one might enjoy or be able to create good paintings. Whatever the limits of realistic modes of painting, the limits of their windowing are a lot wider than any one political agenda. Ross, Yoder, and the ARC may support some good art, but from it they make all the wrong conclusions, using it to emblemize their own patently conservative agenda.

Contemporary experimental art hasn't made anything easier for anyone. Probably most art audiences can cite some art that makes no sense, was disgusting, or violent. Today many of these can be associated with beliefs, ideals, and experiments of modern and postmodern deconstructivist art theory. The ARC also complains about such art and art theory – I do too. At the same time, a wide array of scholars have led the charge in critiquing postmodernist deconstructivism. Examples of articulate scholarship against deconstructivism are Dissanayake,⁷ Salingeros,⁸ Matthews⁹. Other heavyweights include Richard Dawkins¹⁰, Daniel Dennett, Rudolf Arnheim, and numerous philosophers and artists. College textbooks include Schick and Vaughn's *How to Think About Weird Things: Critical Thinking for a New Age*, specifically their fourth chapter "Relativism, Truth, and Reality." Postmodernist theories have even been hilariously parodied in the sciences, by New York University physicist Alan Sokal¹¹. The volume of academics who criticize postmodern art and theory produced literally thousands of articles and books; quite a bit more than what I can cite here. Agree with postmodernist art theories or not, it's pure nonsense for the ARC to categorize all college art training and art scholarship as though it were modernist or postmodernist theory, when significantly large groups of scholars have made quite serious and productive criticisms of various art theories. Here too, the ARC is using a top-down template (i.e., all 'educators' are epistemological relativists) instead of working from the bottom on up (asking what is the evidence, what do colleges and teacher teach and do? What is being taught today?)

Meanwhile the incorrectness and criticisms of some postmodernist art theories do not mean that Ross's claims are automatically better. In fact many older art theories are insufficient. For example, the color theory used by the 19th century Academies didn't explain how vision worked, why paint's pigments function as they do, or even what light really is (a physical fact not understood until the 20th Century). Does that mean you cannot look at or appreciate 19th Century Academic art? No, you can look at and interpret whatever art you'd like to study: the theory is not the same as the artwork. The artwork can be wonderful to look at even if the underlying art theory is no longer adequate. As such it's also possible for an artist today to use mid-century postmodern methods such as collage, assemblage, and mixed media without being a Marxist or Deconstructivist, just as one could use Surrealist strategies without being a Freudian, or draw realistic pictures without buying into Classical Realist conspiracy theories. Thus a nuanced view that recognizes how some realism is good and some non-realist artworks are also good, as well as that recognizes that some art theories overlap with but are not the same as art practices, is far more realistic than the ARC's grandiose denials of all non-realist art or all college education.

The ARC's anti-intellectual viewpoint can be summarized easily. In an online forum, the ARC's Yoder wrote, "Anyone interested in art shouldn't bother setting foot on a university campus. There's nothing to learn there." I responded directly, "You're totally wrong about that. There's lots to learn in many of the better art programs in universities, just as there's lots to learn in the better ateliers today."¹²

Participating Online with the ARC

Part of my own exploration of Classical Realist methods and ideals included participation with the ARC and some of its members, such as in online discussions within the "GoodArt" Yahoo! group.¹³ The GoodArt discussion group serves as a feeder of texts that are republished on the ARC's website. In fact some texts I wrote continue to be posted within the ARC's website. I had to laugh when I found out that they claim these "articles are written for ARC by some of the art world's greatest artistic minds, whether art historians, practicing artists, scholars, scientists, collectors, etc."¹⁴ In my case they just plucked the texts from the Yahoo! group – essentially a repackaging and postmodern appropriating of informal comments. It certainly is strange to recast anything I wrote as having been specifically written for the ARC. In any case, I'll take all the compliments I can get. I may have to put it on my resume that I'm one of the world's greatest artistic minds. (If only the Macarthur Foundation and it's 'genius awards' would agree!)

In my experience most of the GoodArt online discussions repeated the same arguments as Ross's article, even when numerous people attempted to clarify their flaws. Sometimes I lost patience. One professional artist emailed me outside of the discussion group to explain why he'd decided to abandon it:

My primary reason for leaving is the open hostility and contempt shown towards all forms of art that fall outside of [name removed]'s limited definition [of what art is or can be]. It's become too painful to read the repetitive vicious and ignorant rants put forth by various members of the group. ... I can be accepting of poor writing skills or a humble lack of knowledge in any given field, but I'm old enough, and have painted long enough to become leery of 'artists' who invest an inordinate amount of time trying to define themselves by negatively defining others.¹⁵

I often felt the same. I'd noted that among the group's seven-hundred or so subscribers, at least one artist-writer was banned outright during the time that I was reading the group's messages, and I suspect many others also were banned.¹⁶ Rather than helping participants learn what's good and wonderful about realist art, when they had serious art theoretical questions or serious criticisms, participants were usually berated and discounted. The history of Classical Realist thinking demonstrates a similar tendency.

Where Do Ross's Claims Come From? A Brief History of Classical Realism.

Ross's claims amplify the statements of a variety of painters over the last century. By the 1980's most of these were associated with the *American Society of Classical Realism* (ASCR). Classical Realism began in the 1930's when Robert Hale Ives-Gammell (1893-1981) marketed himself as an anti-modern defender of tradition. He was a student of William McGregor Paxton who had been a student of the eminent French academic artist, Jean-Leon Gerome. Gammell collected his thoughts into *The Twilight of Painting* (1946, republished 1990: Parnassus). Almost single-handedly beginning the contemporary Classical Realist's complaint, sweeping aside the innovations of Impressionism and Expressionism and Surrealism and much else, Gammell created this grand prediction and condemnation:

The ultimate importance of Modern Painting in the history of art will be seen to lie in the fact that it discredited and virtually destroyed the great technical traditions of European painting, laboriously built up through the centuries by a long succession of men of genius. The loss of these traditions has deprived our potential painters of their rightful heritage, a heritage without which it will be impossible for them to give full scope to such talent as they may possess.¹⁷

Gammell's words became the basis of the writings of his student, the oil painter Richard Lack, who wrote a feisty text *On The Training of Painters*. Lack helped found the ASCR, and also edited its *Classical Realism Journal*, which later published Ross's article. Lack also founded a private atelier which successfully trained numerous realist painters. Some authors claim Lack invented the term 'Classical Realism.' Lack's opinion bears repeating, because Ross appears to have adopted it almost entirely. More than 20 years after Gammell's litany, in 1969, Lack wrote this tirade:

Our iconoclastic age is thoughtlessly destroying valuable traditions as it tosses out the more expendable items from history's attic. We are like the overly zealous housecleaner who throws away the priceless Chippendale along with the rubbish. In no area is this lamentable fact more evident than in the art of painting. We live in an epoch in which the great language of painting, as inherited from the Renaissance, is on the verge of total collapse. At one time or another even the most casual gallery-goer, visiting an exhibition of contemporary painting, must have asked himself if today's artists are really able to paint as well as the masters of the past. Alas, the answer to this question is sadly negative. The loss of knowledge has been so extensive that there are few living painters who could execute a figure composition which would stand favorable comparison with even a second-rank nineteenth century work.¹⁸

Gammell's statement hinged on a prediction about Modern painting, whereas Lack's statements are more alarming: today people *are* destroying tradition. Lack had good reason to say this, as I will show later in this essay there indeed were some loud critics who actively derided older art forms. Like Ross 30 years after Lack, Lack also opined that "the truth is, of course, that the college cannot train a painter in the skills necessary to master his craft."¹⁹ For Lack, underlying all of this criticism is the simple fact that he believed what should be taught is academic realism, his kind.

In fact one of Lack's early competitors was Abstract Expressionist painter Jack Tworok (1900-1982), who for a time taught at the University of Minnesota near Lack's atelier. Lack made the university setting

the foil against his own methods, but to my knowledge Tworokov had no similar bias against traditional training. In fact, one of Tworokov's students, the acclaimed figurative painter Douglas Kinsey, was my first college art teacher at the University of Notre Dame. Kinsey even taught academic sight-size still life painting, as part of introductory courses. The simple fact: abstract painting and figurative painting aren't that different and that often there have been productive dialogues among these varying styles of art, their teachers, and students. In contrast to Tworokov's inclusive and cooperative stance, Lack obviously amplified the defensive, negative position that Gammell had advocated.

In recognizing these difficult balances, I've noted that Ross's tirades closely match earlier texts. But like Gammell and Lack, Ross didn't arrive at the same conceptual or critical outcomes that Renaissance artists demanded. Gammell's writing perverted even earlier writings into a false conservatism, misstating the conclusions about a common nostalgia that traces through European art history. For example, in the mid-1600's, the great painter Peter Paul Rubens wrote, "... we of this erroneous age, are so far degenerate, that we can produce nothing like [ancient art]: Whether it is, that our groveling genius will not permit us to soar to those heights which the ancients attained by their heroick sense, and superior parts; or that we are wrapt up in the darkness that overclouded our fathers."²⁰ But Rubens then suggested that exercise and discipline trump such decadent nostalgia. Two hundred years earlier, Alberti in *On Painting* stated a similar sense of loss in his first paragraph:

I used to marvel and at the same time grieve that so many excellent and superior arts and sciences from our most vigorous antique past could now seem lacking and almost wholly lost. We know from [remaining] works and through references to them that they were once widespread. Painters, sculptors, architects, musicians, geometricians, rhetoricians, seers and similar noble and amazing intellects are very rarely found today and there are few to praise them. Thus I believed, as many said, that Nature, the mistress of things, had grown old and tired. She no longer produced either geniuses or giants which in her more youthful and more glorious days she had produced so marvelously and abundantly.²¹

But like Rubens, Alberti argued himself out of his negative nostalgia by recognizing the brilliance of people working in contemporary times, however different their art than the art of the past. Shortly after his nostalgic lament, Alberti concluded, "Therefore, I believe the power of acquiring wide fame in any art or science lies in our industry and diligence more than in the times or in the gifts of nature." This optimistic message threads throughout Alberti's writings.

Whereas Ross and Lack negate various kinds of art and art forms (such as Action Painting, Modernism, Cubism, etc.), Alberti investigated and studied the new art of his time. If nothing else this demonstrates that the Renaissance ideals that helped create such a wide variety of figurative and representational art sometimes came from a radically different, much more progressive and exploratory mindset than today's most extreme forms of Classical Realism. Lack's and Ross's characterizations of figurative arts are about maintenance of tradition. Instead, Alberti's and others emphasized exploring, growing, building, and extending the arts.

Meanwhile, many Renaissance and later figurative artists weren't Realists in any sense of the word, and many had no classical aspirations. Michelangelo's figures stem from Neoplatonism, and he worked almost entirely from imagination not observation as the contemporary realist does. It's quite odd to claim that there was a cohesive, singular art tradition (2,500 years worth, according to Ross's essay's title). There were a great many Western art traditions, among which realism is the exception not the rule. Much more common is highly abstract conceptual realism rather than perceptual realism, of which today's Classical Realism is one variant. Seen in this light, Realism (what kind of realism? Magical realism? Social Realism? etc.) becomes a stylistic choice about what the artist chooses to express, and not a necessary attribute of all arts. Indeed if we took a broad historical view that encompassed all art worldwide over the last thousands of years, we would conclude as art historian H.W. Janson noted:

The advantage of realism at face value is that it *seems* easier to understand. The disadvantage is that representational art is, like prose, always bound to at least some extent by the literal meaning and appearance of the everyday world. Actually, realism is exceptional in the history of art and isn't even necessary to its purposes. ... Even the most convincing illusion is the product of the artist's imagination and understanding, so that we must always ask why he chose this subject and made it this way rather than some other way.²²

In other words, the artist creates a realistic artwork because of what the realism can do for the content, as necessary for the content. Sometimes the artist chooses other methods simply because of how they can be expressive in ways that realism cannot. The old cliché is that there's more than one way to tell the truth, and more than one truth to tell. We might reasonably expect that artists would use a wide variety of methods and styles depending on which truths and which aesthetic forms they choose to use. But not all art relies on truthfulness and critical inquiry, and in this regards, Classical Realism is not different and at times no less fantasy-oriented than other types of art, Modernism included. As investigators, like Alberti, of any artwork in any style we can ask 'how come the artist made this image, why work this way and not some other, why this subject matter?' I hope you are realizing just how very different that open-ended, investigative, exploratory approach is when compared to Gammell's denial of everything but his own idea of Classical Realism. The Renaissance teaches us that there's more than one way to stand on the shoulders of giants – but the history of Classical Realism, sadly, is mixed with a desire to position Classical Realism as the only legitimate way.

Pseudoscience and Classical Realism

Another reason why Classical Realism had difficulty being accepted in the university setting is its history of being combined with pseudoscientific fantasies. For example, Richard Lack sometimes referenced paranormalist Rupert Sheldrake.²³ Sheldrake's 'morphic field' hypothesis supported belief in psychics and spirit-worlds. This was fringe science at its worst. Other early Classical Realists made similar paranormalist claims. For example draftsman Ted Seth Jacobs, who taught a wide variety of today's realists through his work at the New York Academy of Art, as well as the Art Students League of New York. Jacobs wrote: "Certain mystics have affirmed that the entire skin surface of the body possesses the latent capability of sight. Others have reported they are able to 'see' through their fingertips. These exotic folk appear to have either been born with or at some point acquired this unusual ability."²⁴ That claim defies everything modern medicine knows about the skin, which is only photosensitive in that it produces Vitamin D and can get sunburnt. In fact the skin's outermost surfaces are dead cells that have no visual sensitivity at all. Jacobs also suggested, "Have the courage to reject all thought-constructs and face what remains."²⁵ Gee, use the Force, Luke. This anti-analytic, anti-intellectual approach to art permeates Jacob's writing; it is vitalism not science; it is mysticism not Academy-method art training. It's nothing at all like Leonardo da Vinci's evidence-based Italian Naturalism.

My point in illustrating the links among pseudoscience, paranormalism, and Classical Realism is to show that some ideas of Classical Realist artists and teachers are sometimes unfounded. Thus we must maintain our ability to critically analyze what they did and said, discarding untenable ideas and methods, replacing them with better or more refined ones. The very same critical thinking applies to non-realist art as well. We cannot legitimately apply it only to postmodern deconstructivism without also applying it to Classical Realist ideas and art. The greatest inventions of the Renaissance, as hinted at by Alberti and the works of so many innovators is not just what their art looks like – it was also their growing willingness to question, test, and assess claims of truth. This basic critical practice becomes the basis for imagination and science, what art historian Ernst Gombrich called the "leaven of the Western mind" that has existed "since the Renaissance and pervades our art no less than our science."²⁶

Another Source of Classical Realist Claims: Real Tensions Among 20th Century Art and Artists

Some of the tensions that Classical Realists focus on are the fights among art styles and approaches in the early 20th Century. These battles startled many, and were often vicious – perhaps analogous to the World Wars of the time. I attended the New York Academy of Art in 1992-93 where my advisor, the acclaimed classical draftsman and painter Edward Schmidt, once told stories of his experience when he studied during the late 1960's at the Ecole d'Beaux Artes in Paris, France. Schmidt reported that the school was overrun by artists and students who vandalized and even destroyed priceless antique plaster casts which had for generations been used as effective training for drawing students.

Many of these fights can be tracked back to 19th Century and earlier disputes among art styles such as Academism, Impressionism, PreRaphaelitism, Fauvism, and early Surrealism. Thus in understanding the shifts and trends in art education during the 20th century we must not forget that prior generations of artists and art students had it no easier. The correct backdrop for today's artists' tensions among art styles, philosophies, and art theories – and even their preferred art media and materials – is a series of cultural

dynamics that for centuries included vivid tensions among art styles, changes in popular taste and art celebrity, fashion trends, and massive changes in worldview and metaphysical beliefs. In that sense, shifts in 20th Century art training methods reflect much older tensions. Some historical examples: the Inquisition's Trial of Paolo Veronese, the vivid disagreements between Michelangelo and Leonardo, the battle of wits between Ingres and Delacroix, the more recent trial of John Ruskin against James Whistler, or even the Mapplethorpe/Cincinnati Art Center vs. Cincinnati. In each case, the art that conservatives attempted to dismiss resulted in gaining value, increased audience, and increased prestige. Fierce negative criticisms simply made 'the enemy' stronger. History shows that in the arts such attempts tend to backfire. Classical Realism is no different in its attempts to position itself within the larger arts economy by using a negative ad campaign against other art forms, creating an enemy against which reaction is possible. But when this tactic backfires, it undermines the very art that one would prefer to support.

Some art critics, artists and historians did attack realism. Consider how in the early 20th century, outspoken art critic and art historian Herbert Read amplified the revolts against figurative work in his famous and influential text, *Art and Society* [1937, 1966 Schocken Books]. Echoing earlier concerns of the Impressionists and Romanticists, Read felt that the smooth illusions of academic realism were a mere 'vulgarism' because anybody can view reality. In his view, representation and realism were faulty because they were based in common vision and not unique interpretations²⁷. Commenting on older methods of figuration such as taught by the French and British Academies, Read opines that such art although

Occasionally competent in a technical sense, [is] generally sentimental and always utterly insignificant, it is to be regarded as a commercial commodity which is neither aware of its fatuity nor yet ignorant of its fate. ... Once the subjectivity and relativity of the individual artist's vision are admitted, the avowed purpose of academic art becomes illusory; there seems no reason why the artist should limit himself in such an unimaginative way. ... most artists of talent would rather starve than compromise with the representational conventions of academic painting and sculpture.²⁸

Did Read ever see profoundly academic, realistic artworks of the 19th Century like Thomas Eakins' disturbing *Gross Clinic* or Jean-Leon Gerome's critical commentary on religion, *Prayers in the Mosque*? These certainly cannot be dismissed as fatuous, merely subjective, or primarily commercial. No less insulting than Read, some supporters of Academism lambasted the new Modernism:

All those catchwords: 'inner experience,' 'strong state of mind,' 'forceful will,' 'emotions pregnant with the future,' 'heroic attitude,' 'meaningful empathy,' 'experienced order of the times,' 'original primitivism,' etc. – all these dumb, mendacious excuses, this claptrap of jabbering will no longer be accepted as excuses or even recommendations for worthless, integrally unskilled products.

The writer was Adolf Hitler, in 1937, at the opening of the 'Great Exhibition of German Art'²⁹ just two years before Read's book, and at about the same time as Gammell's earliest writings.

Hitler conflated academic, figurative art and its appearance with ideas of what is skillful as well as with what is German. Many people today continue to associate Academism with fascist beliefs. Read conflated primitivism and idiosyncrasy with originality and freedom of expression with what is American. And similarly, many people today continue to associate 'contemporary' art with democracy and free-thinking. But like Read, Hitler relies on insult and invective. One wonders whether Hitler was looking at the art. Hitler clearly didn't understand the egalitarian and humanist sources of figurative art philosophies, some of which were distinctly against his genocidal mania (he himself had been denied access to the Austrian art academy). Read appears not to have understood critical, intelligent artworks made by the likes of Eakins or Gerome. Nevertheless, he attempted to use rhetoric so that the art could serve as propaganda for or against a cultural ideal. That's part of the problem: the art and art techniques may have nothing to do with the cultural movement. Ross's tactic is like Read's and Hitler's: create a controversy by denying one kind of art in order to prop up another, and thus, build a populist groundswell of support around shared beliefs against the controversy. Ross, Read, and Hitler all negate some valid kinds of art, conflating each with their own cultures which always-conveniently happen to match their own favored tastes, politics, and beliefs. This is a circular self-fulfillment. But in contrast, just as Alberti and Rubens noted, real art appreciation begins with a basic intellectual curiosity, a willingness to work hard and investigate rather than negate, deny, or condemn.

The Two Art Worlds Debated

The distinct aesthetic differences among today's figurative art with the tastes of the contemporary art museum world have led some theorists to propose a 'two-worlds' theory of art culture during the latter half of the 20th Century: fashionable conceptual and abstract art or abstract-inspired art from new Modern and Postmodern innovations, versus technically adept and astonishing contemporary figurative art inspired by older classical and realist means. Commenting on this schism, in 1982 art critic Mark Stevens wrote that "in the last twenty years, representational painters have established an alternative tradition to the mainstream of late modernism."³⁰ Was this a real schism? Stevens certainly thought so. He derided the museum establishment's apparent rejection of the better realist and figurative artists, claiming there was a complete lack of serious critical attention given to their artistry. Later, by 1993 major magazines such as *Art News* began carrying stories detailing the persistence and invention of newer figurative and representational art academies such as the New York Academy of Art, which had then grown to house more than a hundred graduate students.

There is also good reason to believe that Stevens was wrong in perpetuating the division of realistic painting against abstract painting: they were exhibited and displayed and bought and sold throughout the 20th century in literally thousands of exhibits, publications, and auctions. Critic Hilton Kramer had said, "What you have to understand is that one of the few constants on the art scene has been an absolutely uninterrupted succession of excellent realist painters... This argument has never died out. It isn't cyclical, it's just that people weren't paying attention."³¹ I would debate whether or not people were paying attention: numerous art historical studies and exhibit history all show that the realist artists were often celebrated and established as mainstays of the arts. Thus art historian Vern Swanson analogized that "In this day of reconciliation we find that classicism is like the builder's square to modernism's mariner's compass; the past and the future meeting in the present. Both have a lot to learn from the other."³²

Life Outside the Establishment and Why Some Realists Aren't in Museums even when Others Were

Overseas, some figurative artists simply avoided both Modernist and Postmodernist trends, and instead continued the artist-apprentice tradition. For example, Pietro Annigoni tutored quite a few painters in Italy. Annigoni was widely renowned for his portraits of British royalty, when artist Dawn Cookson managed to study with him. She noted how in 1945, Modernist figurative artist Giorgio de Chirico commented on Annigoni's remarkable technical ability long before Annigoni had gained worldwide fame:

In Florence there is also the painter Pietro Annigoni, an artist of great talent and immense seriousness. He, in contrast to many of his fellows, is a great worker and possesses a technique of which the majority of painters today, not only Italians but also foreigners, have not the faintest idea. Pietro Annigoni works seriously and goes straight along his road without heeding the chatter, snobbery, intellectualism and foolishness of our unhappy period, and also without taking any notice of the spite which such work arouses.³³

Annigoni taught two of today's most renowned portrait painters, Nelson Shanks and Michael John Angel. Shanks later taught at the Art Student League of New York, and now runs his own post-graduate school, the Studio Incamminati in Philadelphia. Angel more recently created the Angel Academy of Art, which is now a leading independent academy in Florence, Italy. Both Shanks and Angel have had great success as portraitists and as teachers of realist art. By creating their own schools, these artists continue to succeed.

But if they're so successful, why don't we see their art in major museums? Why aren't they in the Whitney Biennial, or the Venice Biennial? Quite simply, the vast majority of artists aren't in the major museums and top-tier contemporary art galleries. Additionally, most renowned portrait painters work by commission for private clients. These sales occur either directly through the artist, or through an artist's agent. Such sales happen almost entirely outside of the gallery and museum world. The portraitist's artwork normally resides in the client's home or business, not in a museum. If these artists had marketed themselves to the museum world, perhaps they'd be like their contemporaries Claudio Bravo, Kent Bellows, or Vincent Desiderio – noted, figurative artists who had and continue to have lively presences in the museum and gallery world.

Similarly, many exceptional illustrators made livings by selling their art to print media rather than galleries. For example, Norman Rockwell's art normally appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Whether or not one appreciates Rockwell's art, one must admit that it required strong realist painting skills and that his popular market garnered him millions of dollars outside the engine of the museum establishment. The simple fact is that many artists never exhibit in the gallery scene, but make good livings anyway. The same is true of non-realist illustrators and many other artists. Being in a New York gallery isn't everything. Meanwhile, Ross claims that Modernist thinking debilitated artists and undermined their ability to have lucrative careers. The opposite is true: more artists make good livings today than ever before in history, and this includes realists.

But if You Learn Modernism, You Won't Earn a Living; and, Why the Arts Need No Renewal

Representational drawing and painting skills can be very marketable and extremely useful. Such skills are helpful far outside of the fine arts too, for example in architecture, interior design, theatre design, computer graphics, and many special effects applications required for the film, Internet, and advertising industries. There's also skills for putting visual and conceptual ideas together, skills for texture, for non-classical composition, for innovation or experimentation, and a wide variety of photo and computing skills not normally taught in today's painting ateliers, etc. But Ross claims that no contemporary art procedures at all can help the art student learn to be an artist: "The glaring reality is that nothing could be more restricting than the impossible limitations of modernism and postmodernism. They remove from the aspiring artist every tool, including training, that could give them the ability to create great works of art."³⁴

In direct contrast to the idea that new 20th century art forms hurt or restricted the arts and artists, in fact arts careers expanded and grew dramatically throughout the time period. You can double check these facts using the *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, the 2002 U.S. *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, and National Endowment for the Arts reports: between 1970 and 1990 the number of professional artists in the U.S. doubled, with steady growth ever since; today there are roughly 3 million of all kinds of artists and performers, with tens of thousands of artists working in fine art painting, craft, and sculpture; Median wages for professional visual artists in the U.S. increased and now match national average wages for all careers (about \$42,000 annually); Many artists, art directors, and lead designers earn more than double the median; Rare superstars of the visual arts may earn millions but balancing the averages, of course, are a variety of artists who earn little or no money; During the 20th Century a wealth of new kinds of visual art careers grew related to computing, film, video, and other new technologies; The number of museums of all kinds in the U.S. grew to 4,400 – more than ever before in the history of humanity, with similar growth seen in commercial art galleries; The gross domestic product created by the arts (4.9%) is now slightly greater than all of agriculture combined (4.8%). In the last century and continuing today, the arts and arts economies have been and are growth sectors. From this data I believe it is fair to conclude that new ways of thinking about the arts and new methods for making art may have been so effective and so valued by the culture that visual arts careers grew a great deal.

That's very exciting news, because it means that artists today have improved chances of making a living. In light of the economic growth in the arts, we can see that the fine arts don't need Ross's 'renewal' against a suspicious modernism. The arts are already thriving at a scale and pace that is exponentially beyond the market dynamics of any prior century. Of course Ross response to this argument probably is that these artists aren't all making Classical Realism, that they're merely perpetuating the Modernist's con. Such a response would deny the right that every artist has to pursue and to study the aesthetic forms and priorities that she or he sees fit.

Ross's View of Classical Realism Denies Scholarship Altogether

For Ross, denying the validity of these economies goes a lot deeper than naysaying the art. It also means denying the validity of any texts, scholarship, or information taught by or in the college setting. In my opinion this is Ross's greatest blunder, one that reveals an ignorance of the studies available to artists. For example, Ross scolds art historians for being liars:

I must state in the strongest possible terms that art history textbooks written since the middle of this century are filled with distortions, half-truths, and outright lies in their description of this era [1850-

1910]. They have failed in their responsibility as historians to report the truth of what occurred as objectively as possible. These texts amount to propaganda brochures for modern art.³⁵

Herbert Read certainly did propagandize for Modernism, but many others did not. In fact most others didn't. Two of the most commonly used introductory college art history texts, surveys by Hartt and Janson, both contain good introductions to the many kinds of art during the 19th century: Academism, Realism, Social Realism, Impressionism, Pre-Raphaelites, etc. Other common texts, such as Fleming's *Art and Ideas* (10th edition) contain strong sections about similar art, and like most textbooks of introductory art history, many examples of other art styles too. Simply put, there is no lack of study, discussion and scholarship about the kinds of art that Ross values.

To clarify this important point, I've listed here a variety of art historical textbooks that may be of interest to Classical Realists. At mid-century, Ernst Gombrich's sophisticated *Art & Illusion* developed the real common ground among the arts, sciences, and humanities. It detailed quite a bit of the history of figurative art's training methods, including detailed discussions of pattern books like today's popular Bague-Gerome Drawing Course, so commonly found in contemporary ateliers. The landmark study of the Pre-Raphaelites was done by William Freedman, namely *Pre-Raphaelitism: A Bibliocritical Study* (Harvard University Press 1965); Boase *English Art 1800-1870* (Oxford University Press 1959); Reynolds *Victorian Painting* (Studio Vista 1966); Hilton *The Pre-Raphaelites* (Thames & Hudson, 1970); John Staley *The Pre-Raphaelite Landscape* (Oxford University Press 1973); Kenneth Clark wrote *Ruskin Today* (1964); George Landow *The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin* (Princeton, 1971); Linda Merrill *A Pot of Paint: Aesthetics on Trial in Whistler vs. Ruskin* (1992). As for marvelous artists like Bouguereau there are brilliant studies and exhibits throughout the 20th century: Fronia Wissman's *Bouguereau* (Pomegranate 1996); exhibit catalog by Robert Isaacson of the 1975 New York Cultural Center show of Bouguereau; etc. Edward Lucie-Smith's excellent book *American Realism* (Thames and Hudson 1994) contains citations from well over 100 texts about representational painting and drawing, written from 1940's through 1990's – many from the 70's. Similarly, if you investigate the bibliographies of the texts listed in this paragraph, you will find literally thousands more sources, articles, essays, gallery catalogues and so on written throughout the 20th century.

Please note that I've not included texts about the Hudson River School, nor texts about Leonardo, Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Ingres, Poussin, etc. Meder's *The Mastery of Drawing*, and Watrous's *The Craft of Old Master Drawings* serve as good introduction to the century's intensive art conservation science, that can give strong technical help to today's students. Most of the texts were written by an art or art history professor who worked at a university, or by an author who had significant college training. Thus they contributed to the college classroom, the lessons taught by these professors, and so on. Students had access in the classroom, libraries, and art journals. Similarly, throughout the 20th Century there were literally hundreds and hundreds of art exhibits of new and old fine art inspired by traditions of figurative, realistic, representational art. Major museums such as the Tate, the Wadsworth Athenaeum, and Metropolitan Museum all sponsored exhibits of 19th century art. One need only visit these museum's websites to find listings of exhibits that they sponsored throughout the 20th century; same with art auctions and galleries. These were not left out of the art market, nor out of the highest range of profitability in the museum or gallery scene, etc. The economics, the scholarship, and exhibits – the evidence demonstrates that Ross's larger claim that Modernism arrived at the expense of realistic styles of art is a false claim. Realism does not have to play the victim. It often succeeded marvelously throughout the century.

Realism in the College Art Degree Program

Ross and similar Classical Realists claim that you cannot find good information about making great traditional art inside the university system. They are wrong about this. A wide variety of well-known college programs taught traditional figurative and representational art skills throughout the 20th Century. Some even rely on the academy model, such as the Lyme Academy College of Art which currently offers college degrees and is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. Other art programs that throughout the 20th Century had noted figurative artists as professors included the University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Indiana-Bloomington, Washington University in St. Louis, Kansas City Art Institute, University of Notre Dame, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn College, Utah State University, University of Georgia-Athens, Yale University, Williams College, etc.³⁶ Motivated college students sought out the colleges that could teach the skills and art styles they wished to learn.

For example, when I studied at Utah State University, I had the opportunity to work with still-life painter Christopher Terry, a highly accomplished realist artist and still-life painter who exhibited at the Contemporary Realist Gallery in San Francisco, and who was more recently a resident artist at the American Academy in Rome³⁷. He'd previously studied at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. When I studied at Washington University in St. Louis, I took courses from anatomist Barry Schactman who held legendary status – his training had stemmed from Bernard Chaet, Hyman Bloom and Rico Lebrun, all of whom had been at Yale. They'd had indirect and direct connections with the older Italian Academy and its impassioned, careful, sculptural draftsmanship.

At the same time more than a few of the 'Living Masters' of representational art listed on the Art Renewal Center's website indeed earned college degrees from institutions that had one or more noted representational artist on its faculty. For example, the quite exceptional portrait painter Jacob Collins, who runs the Water Street Atelier, graduated with an MFA degree from the New York Academy of Art shortly before I attended the same program. It is deeply hypocritical for Ross to attack the validity of college art education when in fact many of today's artists succeeded in part because of their college training.

But What About All the ARC's Letters?

Ross's ARC claims to receive hundreds of letters from students, artists, and teachers who state that they cannot receive the arts training that they want within the college system. As serious as the letters' criticisms are, such letters are a good example of what researchers and scientists call "collection bias." That is, they are a non-controlled set of data that comes from a group of people who already more or less agree with you. They are fan mail. In other words, the letters cannot be construed as an accurate sampling of the entire population of college students, and therefore, cannot represent broad evidence against the college setting. What about college students who succeeded? And what about student who studied at a private atelier, but who failed to become career artists?

Significant, comprehensive studies of college and university art graduates do already exist – studies that took into account both positive and negative responses from wide arrays of students. For example, nationally, 4.9% of all awarded bachelor's degrees are art majors. Roughly 17% of all college students enroll in arts courses and more than 20% in art history courses – these are normally well-received, well-liked courses. Students are curious about the arts, and most college students enjoy their art courses³⁸. In fact the arts aid students in many important ways: increased student's scores on standardized tests; better school retention and lower dropout rates; students involved in arts appreciated their educations more highly than students who weren't involved, etc. Much of this information can be found in *Schools, Communities and the Arts: A Research Compendium*³⁹. This compendium is a great starting point for in-depth research. It includes 49 peer-reviewed case studies, reports, and research studies about the effectiveness of the arts in education.

Conclusions

One need neither agree nor disagree with Ross's tastes for Classical Realism to see that his position is supported by blunt assertion, scanty data, incomplete understandings of existing art scholarship, and misrepresentations of the current art market. Ross's statements also oversimplify existing art scholarship, arts careers, and art education. In my opinion, these problems do a disservice to talented figurative and realist painters by unnecessarily pitting them against the useful historical and technical scholarship that higher education and many forms of contemporary art can and do offer them. In contrast to the ARC's denials of so many art forms, today's incredible range of art, art media, and approaches to the arts demonstrates our cultures' love of and facility with the many arts.

Throughout all of this diversity, there are also important common threads among the arts, such as the uses of materials and media, the formal characteristics of artworks, types and kinds of visual patterns generally found pleasing, the striving to create meaning and metaphor, visual innovations, the human imagination, and of course intensive artistic exploration of the world. For those who desire good, informed art theory, the articulate studies of Ernst Gombrich, Rudolf Arnheim, Ellen Dissanayake and many others are more flexible, responsible and open-minded than Classical Realist diatribes of R.H. Ives-Gammell, Richard Lack, or today's ARC spokesmen. Also today some good, non-degree centers exist for the practice of realist, figurative art. Of these I would recommend the Angel Academy of Art (Florence, Italy), the Academy of Realist Art (Toronto), and the Studio Incamminati (Philadelphia), as all three create consistent,

high quality realist art. I believe that many colleges have a lot to learn from the more successful ateliers and academies, and similarly, that they also have much to learn from the better degree programs. The best of these non-college and college programs share a great deal in common, not least of which is an abiding practice and celebration of the many visual arts.

Endnotes

¹ Fred Ross, "The Great 20th Century Art Scam: How Arrogance, Greed and Folly Nearly Destroyed 2,500 Years of Western Art" *Classical Realism Journal*, vol VI, issue 1, Summer/Fall 2000, pp.26-38.

² Author unknown, "An Interview with Fred Ross" *Classical Realism Journal* vol VI issue 1 Summer/Fall 2000, p.39

³ See Ross, speech to the Academy Ducret 2005, at

http://www.artrenewal.org/articles/2005/Ducret_Speech/ducret1.asp

⁴ Brian Yoder on photography, see his text at

http://www.artrenewal.org/articles/2003/Best_of_ARC/best1.asp?msg=108&forumID=18 Here Mr. Yoder states that it isn't art because photography is primarily concerned with documentation rather than with the expressive goals of art. This is a truly silly thing to say. All that one needs to do to disprove his negation is show a variety of photographs that are exhibited, traded, and considered as art in appropriate arts venues – especially any photography that isn't mere documentation but involves special effects such as artworks by A. Gursky or G. Crewdson.

⁵ See ARC co-founder's Brian Yoder's comments in full at

http://www.artrenewal.org/articles/2003/Best_of_ARC/best1.asp?msg=113&forumID=18

⁶ Some bloggers such as artist Mark Vallen have made similar criticisms of the ARC's Eurocentric stance. For example, see <http://www.art-for-a-change.com/blog/2006/04/open-letter-to-art-renewal-center.html> and also see <http://www.art-for-a-change.com/blog/2005/12/art-renewal-center-return-to-past.html>

⁷ Dissanayake, Ellen "Art for Life's Sake," (*World and I* magazine, vol.4, 1990)

⁸ see "The Dangers of Deconstructivism" <http://www.math.utsa.edu/sphere/salingar/pericolo-english.html>, and also Salingaros and Mikiten, "Darwinian Processes and Memes in Architecture: A Memetic Theory of Modernism" *Journal of Memetics - Evolutionary Models of Information Transmission*, 2002.

⁹ Matthews, W.J. "Let's get real: The fallacy of post modernism." *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, 18, p16-33. (1998)

¹⁰ See his book *Unweaving the Rainbow*

¹¹ You can find out more about Alan Sokal's brilliant hoax using internet search engines. Just search 'Sokal hoax.'

¹² I posted my response to the GoodArt list on August 29, 2005, in a thread called 'Re: ARC comments.'

¹³ Brian Yoder's "Goodart" discussion group. See <http://www.goodart.org/goodart.htm> for info.

¹⁴ See their disclaimer, at <http://www.artrenewal.org/articles/articles.asp>

¹⁵ Personal email correspondence, September 1, 2005.

¹⁶ His meandering side of the story is at <http://www.mileswmathis.com/fired.html> Mathis's art certainly would fit the general stylistic habits that the ARC supports.

¹⁷ As quoted by M. M. Kamhi, in *Aristos*, May 1990. Article available online at

<http://www.aristos.org/backissu/gammell.htm> Kamhi's certainly an odd duck, one of the credulous anti-moderns and an obvious supporter of Lack and Gammell. Her crude book, coauthored with Louis Torres *What Art Is: The Esthetic Theory of Ayn Rand* (2000: Open House), makes many ARC-like claims, ad nauseum. Why are Ayn Rand's followers always so certain about everything?

¹⁸ Richard Lack *On the Training of Painters*, p.11 1969 reprinted American Society of Classical Realism: 2000

¹⁹ Lack, p.21

²⁰ Peter Paul Rubens 'De Imitatione Statuorum' as quoted by Harrison, Wood, Gaiger in *Art in Theory: 1648-1815* (Blackwell Publishing, 2000), p.145

²¹ Alberti, Leon Battista as trans. By J.R. Spencer *On Painting* p.39 'Prologue', Yale Univ. Press 1956

²² See H .W. Janson, *History of Art* (Prentice-Hall Abrams, 3rd Edition 1986) pp. 10-11

²³ Lack, p.105. Sheldrake's suspicious paranormalism, beliefs in psychics, etc., has been routinely criticized by numerous scientists. For hilarious examples, do a search of his name at the Committee for Scientific Inquiry (<http://www.csicop.org/>) especially as related to his decidedly magical beliefs in what he calls 'morphic resonance.' Lack appears to have bought into Sheldrake's nonsense hook, line, and sinker.

²⁴ Ted Seth Jacobs, *Drawing With an Open Mind: A Revolutionary Right-Brain Approach to Figure Drawing*. p. 18 Watson-Guptill (1986)

²⁵ Jacobs, p.135

²⁶ Ernst Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, Millenium Edition, Princeton University Press. p.172-173

²⁷ Incidentally, my view is the opposite of Read's: representational and realist art is useful aesthetically precisely because it relies on our shared, common vision – our abilities to see and understand the same images.

²⁸ See p.115-116 in Herbert Read, *Art & Society* 1966: Schocken Books

²⁹ Trans. by I. Falk, in H. Chipp's *Theories of Modern Art*, 1968

³⁰ Stevens, "Art: Revival of Realism" in *Newsweek* (7 June 1982) pp. 64-70

³¹ Vern Swanson, p. 52 "Godward and the Death of Greco-Roman Painting" in *Classical Realism Journal* vol 3 issue 2. Swanson quoted Hilton Kramer as quoted by P. Landesman in "Reality Bites Back" *New York Magazine* (2 Oct 1995).

³² *Ibid.*, p.52. Although he does make some ASCR or ARC-style conspiracy claims, this is Swanson concluding paragraph, his final and main point.

³³ p.124, Cookson *Painting with Annigoni: A Halcyon Decade as a Student in Florence 1958-1968*, 2000: Unicorn Press.

³⁴ Ross, p.37

³⁵ see Ross, p.28

³⁶ Students would be well-advised to research college programs carefully – there is a normal amount of faculty turnover in any school, e.g. none of the 3 main teachers I studied with at Washington University teach there anymore (two retired, one now teaches elsewhere).

³⁷ I did not study realism with Prof. Terry, but he adeptly helped me take a critical approach to my interests in *Art Brut*.

³⁸ L. Mizell, Phd. *College Course-Taking Patterns in the Arts*, NEA report #88 available online at the National Endowment for the Arts.

³⁹ The research compendium was developed by Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University, on behalf of the National Endowment for the Arts' (1995).