



Southeast

ATHENS

Although Curator Donald Keyes acknowledges that certain exclusions were made in **COLLABORATING COUPLES** (Georgia Museum of Art, June 3–August 2), his approach is not to the detriment of the breadth and depth of work displayed. Because neither of the chosen couples' partners works in the same medium as the other, the concise representation of work is sufficiently varied. The compromises reached by two different perspectives effectively undermine the singular, possessive identity claimed by so many early modern masters.

Not only is the artwork collaborative, but also comprised of interactive electronics. The multi-media and technological nature of much of the artwork here renders it more performative, requiring the active participation of the viewer. Furthermore, each piece disappropriates itself both materially and as

viewer's emission ceases, the other two puppets attack the first with hate speech. The derogatory statements are taken from various web sites, which are displayed on a monitor above.

In *Pencil to the Paper* (2000), LeeAnn Mitchell and Jim Buonaccorsi take quite a direct approach to criticizing the social and political neglect that is quickly extinguishing the independent farmer. The title refers to a term used when farmers take "pencil to the paper" to determine crop profitability. An immense barn placed in the center of the room is open on two ends to reveal a plow structure and bags of wheat "Grown and Packed with Pride Since 1950" within. In the frame of the exhibit, simple objects—sheet metal, barnwood, wheat—are transformed beyond a mere art piece or social statement and into a cultural and historical artifact. The work is primarily conceptual, starting first from an idea and working through the art to express itself. The art is therefore more the medium, not the end in itself.

Deborah McClary and Hunt Clark almost always work together, yet their work is, interestingly, the most obscure. *swirling nervous outrage suggests forced emotional discipline* (2000) plays with the notion of appearances and artifice by bringing that which is sublime to the surface. Belying their multi-media installation is a primitive sentiment, stemming from their secluded, non-industrialized lifestyle, where the ambits of ontological theory and empirical science antagonize one another. The result is a subliminal reference to the sub-states of civilization.

Smoothly wood-carved, fractured torsos are poised like beheaded, gutted carcasses in a small room shared by two video projectors. Although the minimal, structured composition allows the viewer to easily walk through the space, the dim, spottil atmosphere is dauntingly prohibitive, accentuating the theme. Prominent, a one-legged man stands with penis intact as anomalous images appear on and behind him: a naked man with a masked face atop a horse; naked women dancing; a naked, hermaphroditic child jumping repetitively. Also in the space

is half a female body strewn sideways on the floor with trees projected upon the body's spiraling wood grain patterns. And swaying freely from the ceiling is a bulbous female bust, vulgarized by Polaroid transfers at the navel and nipples. The viewer's perception struggles with the slates to impose some kind of explanation. In this sense, the initial artistic collaboration conceptually unravels into manifold interpretations.

Art and culture critic Phil Auslander and painter Deanna Selin, both of whom occasionally write for this publication, join efforts again in *Flux I* (2000), a digitally enlarged image of one of Siclin's gestural, expressive abstract landscapes placed into the museum's grid of window panes. As the hues reflect off tile floors and white wall, they transform the actual architecture of the museum into an accomplice in the artwork as both a creator and a subject of critique.

Keyes also brings in a new collaboration for Susan Roberts and Michael Simon in sculpting, photography, printmaking and painting. While it's apparent that these artists are consciously linking fine art to mass media production, they also explore the physical boundaries of pluralistic identities in art, society and personal relationships. They test the boundaries of collaboration by fusing into a singular identity in their final product.

There is no great advantage to stressing the coupled foundation of these artists, however, because the artwork successfully stands as inclusive yet non-specific. What should be emphasized is how successfully social commentary is communicated when individualistic accreditation and artistic self-referentiality are relinquished.

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Georgia-raised and Brooklyn-bound **JOSH SHADDOCK** aimed to tease with a cogent covey of conceptual objects in "5 New Things," his Georgia swan song (1942 Gallery, July 6–July 29). An ex-Poll Set major, Shaddock's switch over to art was precipitated by his chance encounter with "From Minimal to Conceptual Art," the Vogel Collection's tour to Washington, D.C. in 1994, where he was a congressional intern. Shaddock's subsequent years of self-study paid off, as the 27-year-old's intuitive knack for meaningful play is fortified by his familiarity with contemporary art.

subject matter, making the viewer into both object and subject. In this way, the art easily becomes equally the source of criticism as that which is critiqued.

This reversal phenomenon is most clearly demonstrated in *West* (2000), a work by David Zucker Saltz and Lizzie Zucker Saltz, who writes for this publication. Three modified ventriloquist's dummies, each a stereotype—the urban African American, the staunchly Anglo male, and the primed Jewish woman—sit in semi-circle formation on a stage. With hyper-extended necks, their heads are alienated from their stuffed bodies. The viewer stands in front of a vintage radio microphone and a mere sound prompts one of the puppets to chatter. As soon as the