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LINCOLN CENTER presents **Mostly Mozart** 40th Anniversary July 28 to August 26 Click here to view the season

Art in Review

Published: August 11, 2006

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So, is this an art show or what? It certainly gave me an art experience. I found the labels absorbing, and most of the objects at least as interesting as what I've seen in Chelsea this summer, for the sense of lives, values and ideas they convey. It's the old Duchamp lesson, which is also a history lesson: art is an attitude, and the mind is every bit as much a shaping organ as the hand and the eye.

HOLLAND COTTER

PREVAILING CLIMATE

Readers' Opinions

Forum: Artists and Exhibitions

Sara Meltzer Gallery
525-531 West 26th Street, Chelsea
Through Aug. 18

This intelligent group show, organized by Rachel Gugelberger and Jeffrey Walkowiak, is as much about psychic and political weather as it is about environmental conditions. Joy Garnett's paintings of fiery, storm-swollen skies are about turbulence in a larger sense, as is Christoph Draeger's jigsaw-puzzle photograph of the aftermath of a tsunami.

Boukje Janssen's small silhouette paintings of running figures, combined with Yumi Janairo Roth's sculptures of mirrored police barricades (she calls them disco barriers), introduce that greater disturbance on a light-touch note. Joan Linder gives it weight in a life-size drawing, half realistic, half cartoon, of a gas-masked soldier. And in a hand-stitched wall piece by Anna von Mertens, danger becomes specific. Titled "8:45 a.m. to 10:28 a.m., Sept. 11, 2001 (Above New York City Looking Towards Boston)," the piece, which suggests the image of readings on a radar screen, records the position of stars at a fateful moment in recent history.

Catarina Leitão's forest-green pup tent in the center of the gallery is designed for meditative retreat, though it seems far too fragile to withstand the explosion in John Jurayj's "Untitled (Bomb 2005, #2)." Of Lebanese descent, Mr. Jurayj derived the images in his paintings from news photographs, including some of the devastation of Beirut in the 1990's. Enough to say that his new work catches the current climate in that brilliant and unfortunate city all too well. HOLLAND COTTER

PEPE MAR

Hunga Bunga

Freight & Volume
542 West 24th Street, Chelsea
Through Aug. 18

Pepe Mar constructs delightful, funny and scary child-size monsters in three dimensions out of glue and scraps of paper cut from all kinds of found printed material. The one- and two-footed figures have snarling faces with big, staring eyes lifted from fashion photographs and other sources, and carnivorous animal mouths or swollen human lips and dirty teeth derived from photographic images.

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Bach and Handel

August 12, 8:30 PM
Film Night at Tanglewood

August 13, 2:30 PM
Beethoven and Tchaikovsky

August 18, 8:30 PM
Turina, Falla, Debussy, and Ravel

August 19, 8:30 PM
Dvorak and Beethoven

August 20, 2:30 PM
All-Brahms Program

August 20, 8:30 PM
Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra

Boston Symphony Orchestra
Summer 2006

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Bristling with spiky manes, the heads are on thin, patchwork Cubist bodies with skinny legs and splayed feet; the figures could be killing machines from an animated sci-fi movie or overwrought rock 'n' roll stars. One predominantly blue figure has a cut-out guitar, evoking both [Picasso's](#) seminal collage construction "Guitar" of 1912-13 and the ridiculously aggressive spirit of heavy-metal music. The collaged fashion monsters of Wangechi Mutu also come to mind, but those of Mr. Mar, a young Miami-based artist having his first solo show in New York, have their own combustive sculptural hysteria.

Looking closely, you discover in Mr. Mar's source materials a wide range of traditional and contemporary patterns and imagery, including pieces of medieval sculpture, Art Nouveau-ish motifs, a reproduction of an early Frank Stella painting and pictures of jewelry and precious stones. So while his monsters embody a ferocious, prehistoric ID, they also personify the visually devouring soul of modern mass media. KEN JOHNSON

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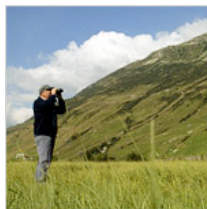
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