





Leslie Wayne

The Way I See It

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by

Leslie Wayne

## Frank Kermode

I met Frank Kermode, who died Tuesday at age 90, more than 20 years ago over coffee at Columbia University, where he was teaching. I had come to prepare writing a profile about him, a project that went nowhere mainly because the obligation I had hoped to write for didn't write about literary critics in those days. Kermode didn't discuss the idea, and so I learned, that afternoon, about the Isle of Man, where he was born in "a hermitic village" as he later wrote.

I wanted to write about Kermode because I admired him. In my years in academia, I had watched the study of literature go down any number of rabbit holes — chasing after theory and ideology and system. The very point of reading and talking about what we read seemed to have been lost in a kind of strangulating self-seriousness and education. That's where Kermode came in.

He was drawn to the entanglements of the text and its critical mysteries rather than some scaffolding of theory. In his many books and essays, he protected the

reader's freedom to be interested in whatever was interesting. That meant writing a prose that was never wholly academic and that over the years became more and more open to the intersection of literature and the lives of the actually living.

Kermode will be remembered for many books, including "The Sense of an Ending" (1967), "The Classic" (1979), and "Shakespeare's Language" (2000). He'll also be remembered for the engaging literary essays, distinguished as reviews, he wrote for the London Review of Books in his later years. He was the most agile of readers, and he reminded us constantly that readers, like poems and novels, hate to be pinned down.

In a review published in 2001, Kermode — a lifelong Shakespearean — sums up one of the reasons he loved Shakespeare: "To be able to decide one's life or without forgetting that art is frivolous is a transcendental achievement or, perhaps, madness." That was Kermode's achievement, too. — **VERLYN KLINKENBORG**

I found this little clip from the NY Times stuck in one of my journals. I like how I underlined those two passages. I was obviously thinking about life as an artist — that driving drumbeat of searching for purpose that never lets up — and the smallness of the outcome when held up to the stars. It's irreconcilable. And yet, to concede to its ultimate frivolity is to deny our humanity. What could be more important than beauty as an expression of our compassion?

I have a little tiny desk in my studio and above it, the wall is covered in cards and announcements (remember those?) that I've collected or received from friends and galleries over the years. They're taped and pinned up there in a funny arrangement of visual synchronicity. The connections are coincidental and have no scaffold of theory behind them. I am simply drawn to the entanglements of shape and color and their rational mysteries.

And so, in this little book I indulge a deeply satisfying delight in looking for connections by indulging another impulse, which is of course, to categorize. There are:

Entrances and Exits, Bifurcations, Faceoffs, Coincidences, Spikey Landscapes, Repetitive Patterns, Great Dames and Saints, Accumulations, and Reflections.

This is by no means exhaustive or scientific.

Barnet Newman famously said, "Aesthetics is to artists as ornithology is to birds." I concur.

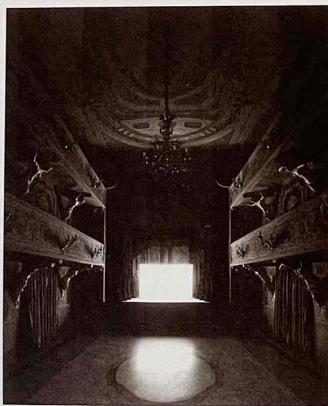
But one could also say that aesthetics is to birds as ornithology is to artists. That is to say, we now know that aesthetics plays a decidedly volitional role in the evolutionary development of birds, that of aesthetic preference motivated by sheer pleasure. So it seems to me that taxonomy for artists, an instinct that provides aesthetic pleasure as well, could also lead to the survival of the species. Though that has yet to be determined.

Leslie Wayne  
2021

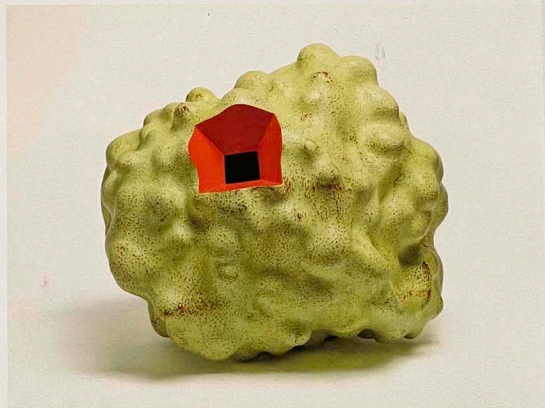
Entrances and Exits



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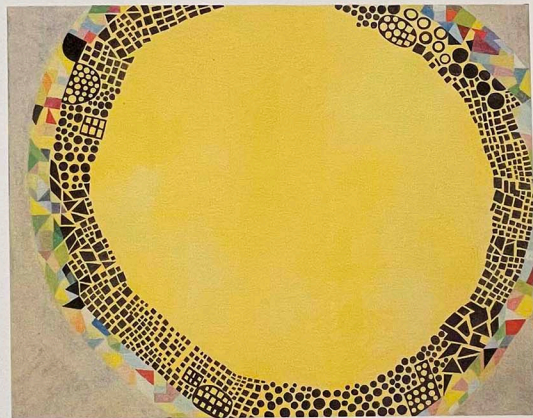
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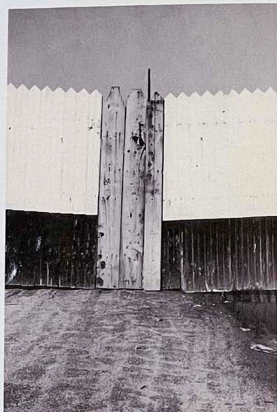
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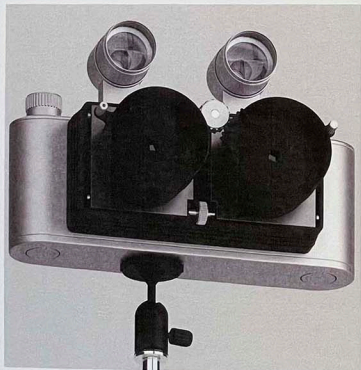
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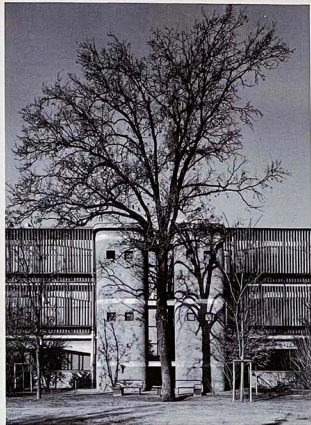
Bifurcations



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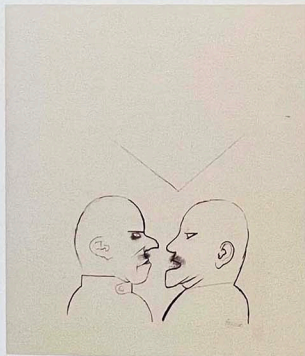
Faceoffs



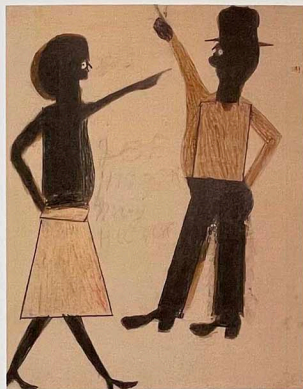
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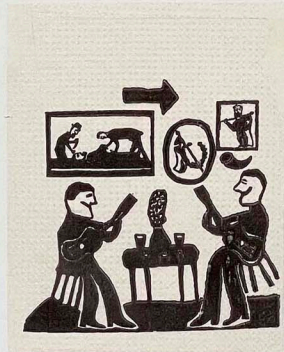
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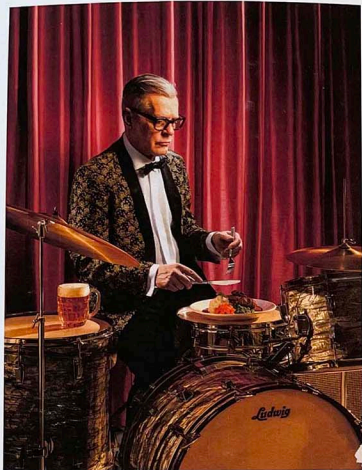


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Coincidences



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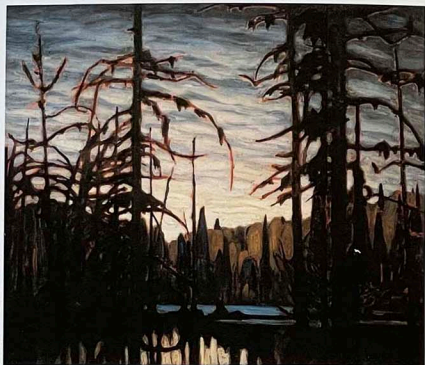


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Spikey Landscapes



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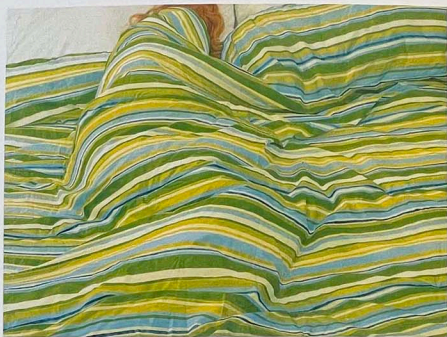
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Repetitive Patterns



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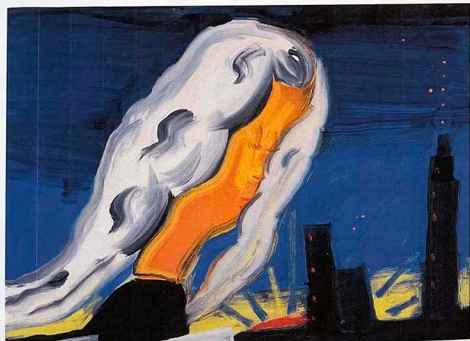


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Great Dames and Saints



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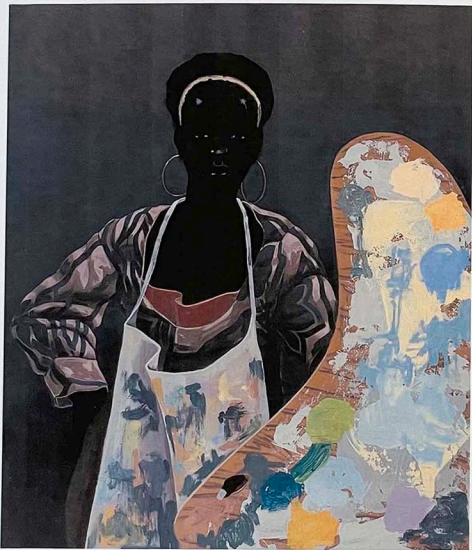
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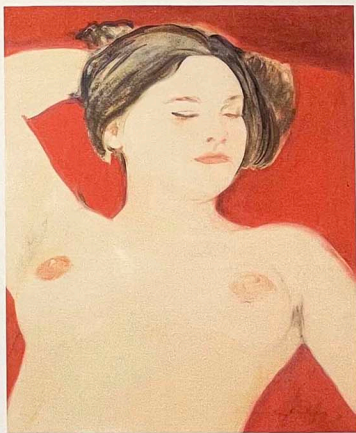
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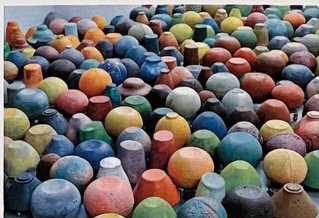


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Accumulations



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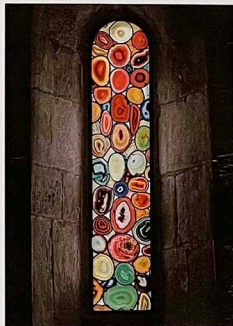
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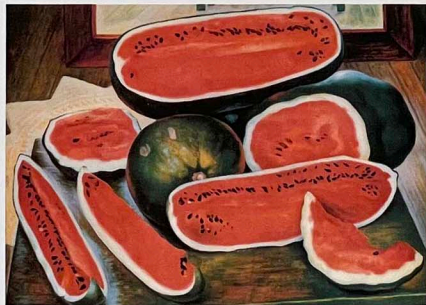
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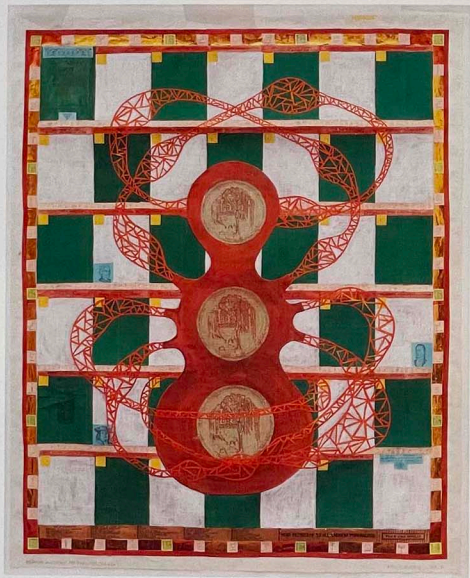


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*the Mafia, Garbage Reigns*



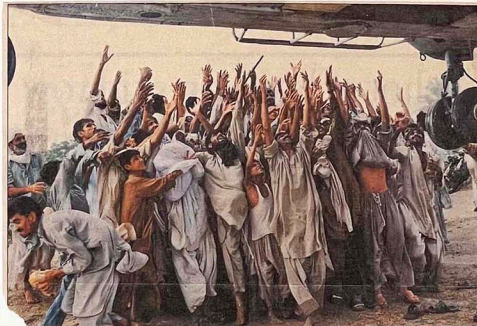
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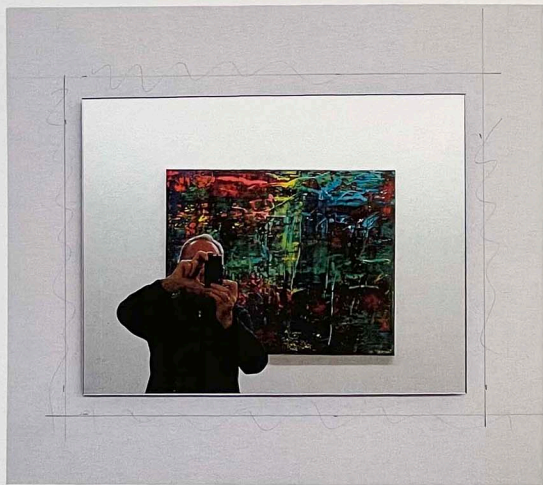


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Reflections



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Attributions

1. Kevin Moore. Larabanga mosque, Northern Ghana, taken on February 16, 2006, color photograph, 4 x 6 inches, courtesy of the photographer
2. Hiroshi Sugimoto. "Villa Manzorati, Bologna" 2015, gelatin silver print, 58 3/4 x 47 inches, edition of 5
3. Ken Price. "Pastel" 1995, fired and painted clay, 14 1/2 x 15 x 14 inches, courtesy of the Ken Price Estate
4. Mamma Andersson. "Gilded / Forgotten" 2016, oil and acrylic on panel, 100 x 122cm. photo: Per-Erik Adamsson, courtesy of Galleri Magnus Karlsson, Stephen Friedman Gallery and David Zwirner
5. Thomas Moskowski. "Untitled (9-69)" 2019, oil on linen on panel, 22 x 28 inches
6. Martha Clippinger. "Spiral" 2021, machine-pieced and hand quilted reclaimed fabrics, 69 x 62 inches, courtesy of the artist
7. Rudy Burckhardt. "Wood Fence" 1940, gelatin silver print, 9 1/4 x 6 1/4 inches, courtesy of Tom Burckhardt
8. Tamas Walickcy. "Stereo Camera" 2017, computer graphic print on lightbox, 100 x 100 cm
9. Claudia Marini. Home of le Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy
10. Duane Michals. "Empty New York" 1964, vintage gelatin silver print, 8 x 10 inches
11. Sandro Boticelli. "Ideal Portrait of a Lady (Simonetta Vespucci)" 1475-1480, 3 1/4 x 21 1/4 inches
12. Antonio Pollaiuolo. "Profile Portrait of a Young Lady" 1465, oil and tempera on poplar panel, 10 1/8 x 4 3/4 inches
13. George Grosz. "Two Men Arguing" 1920, ink on paper, 15 3/4 x 13 1/4 inches
14. Bill Treaylor. "Joe and Mary Hicock" 19--, colored pencil on cardboard, 13 3/4 x 4 inches
15. Napkin from a bar in Santiago, Chile
16. Rodney Graham. "Dinner Break (Salisbury Steak)" 2017, tinted aluminum lightbox with transmuted chromogenic transparency, 44 5/8 x 34 5/8 x 7 inches, © the artist.
17. Leslie Wayne. Roman bathtub, circa 2000s, color photograph, 4 x 6 inches
18. L.H. Jungnickel. "Grille" 1910, Wiener Werkstatt, Farblithographie
19. Lauren Harris. "Beever Swamp" 1920, oil on canvas, 120.7 x 141 cm.
20. Charles Burchfield. "Dismantling Boxcars" 1936, watercolor and pencil on paper, 19 5/8 x 16 inches
21. Chiura Obata. "Getting Sun on Sacramento" 1930, color woodcut, 15 3/4 x 11 inches
22. Philip Guston. "To J.S." 1977. Oil on canvas, 68 x 104 inches, 192.7 x 264.2 cm, © The Estate of Philip Guston, courtesy Hauser & Wirth
23. Catherine Murphy. "Comforter" 2007, oil on canvas, 54 x 72 inches, courtesy of the artist
24. I have no idea
25. Barbara Takenaga. "Folds" 2015, acrylic on linen, 42 x 35 inches, courtesy of the artist
26. Beatrice Pediconi. "Alieno A" 2016, archival pigment print on Mahmeuble barista paper, courtesy of the artist
27. Elise Siegel. "Portrait Bust With Dark Gray Bodies" 2018, ceramic, 24 1/2 x 12 x 7 inches, courtesy of the artist
28. Elena Sisto. "Vagabond (for Agnes Varda)" 2018, oil on linen, 12 x 16 inches, courtesy of the artist
29. Mosaic of Empress Theodora, 500-548, Basilica San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy
30. Anonymous. Turkish tile
31. Kerry James Marshall. "Untitled (Painter)" 2008, acrylic on PVC, 28 3/4 x 24 3/4 inches, © Kerry James Marshall. Courtesy of the artist and Jack Shainman Gallery, New York
32. Deborah Luster. "Sunday Morning" 1993, silver gelatin print, 24 x 24 inches, courtesy of the artist
33. Robert Lebeck. "Romy Schneider, Berlin, 1976", © Robert Lebeck 2008
34. Jane Freilicher. "Asleep" 1966, oil on linen, 28 3/4 x 23 7/8 inches, courtesy of Elizabeth Hazan
35. Andy Warhol. "Eggs" 1984, unique polaroid print, 4 1/4 x 3 3/8 inches
36. Don Porcario. "The World is Full" 2012, detail of installation at Humanities Gallery, LIU, Brooklyn, 700 cast sculptures, concrete, aqua resin, paint and metal, 25' circle
37. Sheila Hicks. "Escalade Beyond Crossed Lands" 2016-2017, installation view, The Bass, mixed media, natural and synthetic fibres, cloth, slate and bamboo
38. Leslie Wayne. "Paint Mound" 2003, oil, plate, -48 x 16 x 16 inches
39. Sigmar Polke. Achatfenster, 2009, Agate, 69 x 14 1/2 inches, Grossminster, Zürich, Switzerland
40. Diego Rivera. "Las Sandias" 1957, oil and sand on canvas, 48.7 x 92.7 cm
41. Nancy Bowen. "NB 52 All American (Male) Personalities" 2017, collage, gouache and puff paint on found book, 44 x 36 1/2 inches, courtesy of the artist
42. Unknown photographer. Parisian park chairs
43. Unknown photographer. NY Times article, "In Mire of Politics and the Mafia, Garbage Reigns" by Ian Fisher, May 31, 2007
44. Jacopo Tintoretto. "L'Ascensione di Cristo" 1578-81, oil on canvas, 538 x 325 cm
45. Annie Attridge. "Termitte Boobie" 2010, Bronze, 5 x 4 x 5 inches
46. Unknown photographer. Pleading for help.
47. Unknown photographer. Refugees on a truck.
48. Gerhard Richter. Annotated self-portrait, from catalogue "Neue Bilder," Museum Ludwig, Köln, February 9, 2017
49. Leslie Wayne. "Self Reflection" 2020, oil on wood, 28 1/4 x 24 inches

#### Acknowledgements

Several people were key in the successful completion of this project. Thanks to Amy Goldrich for her professional advice, Leslie Miller for her design expertise and guidance, and Don Porcaro for his love and support.

Thank you to all those who gave me permission to use their images, and formost appreciation to all the artists whose works continue to inspire and challenge me daily.

#### Colophon

*The Way I See It* is a handmade book designed and created by Leslie Wayne in a limited edition of five with one artist's proof.

Each book contains archival digital prints scanned from original photographs, postcards, announcements and images from other sources. The paper is Moab Entrada Bright 190 gsm. The typeface is Courier. The binding was sewn by Sarah Nicholls and the cover was designed and made by the artist.

This is copy number