

STROKE

Connecting artists globally and
cultivating a community of
contemporary art through dialogue,
collaboration and diverse creative
expression.

Articles

[Bunked In](#)
[Demanding Demand](#)
[Anti-Climactic](#)
[No Access](#)
[Patent Painting Patterns](#)
[The Power of the Right](#)
[Rapidly Blooming](#)
[Shit's Getting Expensive](#)
[Contemporary Traditions](#)
[To Kill a Mockingdog](#)
[Real Abstraction](#)
[Minimal via It's Maximalism](#)
[Shea Sells By The Guggenheim](#)
[The more you have, the less you
appreciate?](#)
[When Condo Went West](#)
[Nourishing a Dangerous Mind](#)

Bunked In



Boros Collection, Berlin.

Guided, explained, and the sexiest
bunker I know.

Each space within the bunker is
dedicated to an artist's body of work.
It's clean, simple, and powerfully
articulated, thanks to the dry yet
charismatic guide.

I found it to be a great example of the
art scene in Berlin, hidden within an
expansive space.

Once inside, your perspective shifts;
time is dictated by how captivated you
are by the works. The concrete
encloses you, but your mind is set free
by the art.

The collection itself is sexy, dark,
kinetic, sculptural, and unafraid, a mix
of German and international artists.

And I wouldn't want to experience it
any other way.

Demanding demand



Berghain, where the art of being
discreet becomes reality.

From Anne Uddenberg to Wolfgang
Tillmans, this club seems to trade
oxygen for smoke, allowing almost no
visible reaction to the artworks on
display. Yet emotionally, the works are
present, the atmosphere shifts, and in
a brief, flickering moment, it becomes
strangely reactive.

It works, my attention was taken and I
experienced art that affected me, in a
loud, over crowded space.

Words by Yioryios Papayioryiou

Anti-Climactic



Currently showing at Hamburger
Bahnhof, Berlin-based artist Annika
Kahrs uses music as her medium.

For Two To Play On One, 2012

A museum invigilator greeted me at the
door, kindly suggesting that I enter, and
of course I did, even before I had the
chance to read the description. (In
most cases, I don't, so this was a
lesson for me.)

I could hear the strength of a piano
being played, and I felt intrigued, ready
for the music to surround me. First, I
walked through a corridor, then another
door. As soon as I entered that door,
the music abruptly stopped, my
presence had interrupted it.
I was met with awkward stares, unsure
whether to leave or stay, hoping the
music would start again if I waited. I
stayed, no music. I sat politely, still no
music. I left, and only then did the
music return.

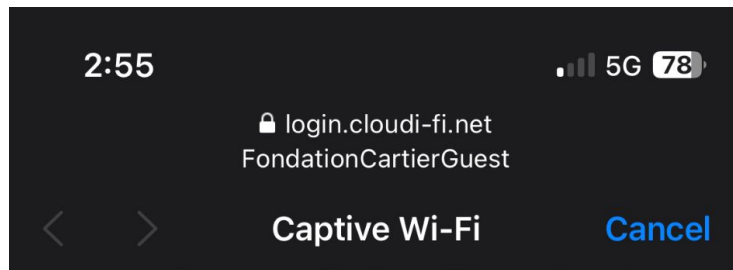
I felt as if I had interrupted someone
having sex. This intimate space had
been violated by an audience unaware
of what they were doing.

The work was simple yet effective,
evoking emotions I hated to feel. It was
live, immediate, and fleeting. The
performance disappeared, and so did I.

Highly recommended

Words by Yioryios Papayoriou

No Access



premises of the Fondation
Cartier pour l'art
contemporain at 2 Place
du Palais-Royal, Paris.



You are at the Fondation
Cartier

☒ I agree with the [terms of use](#) and the [privacy policy](#).*

☐ I would like to receive the newsletter.

Sign up

It is becoming increasingly difficult to access my mobile network in museum spaces. You often completely lose mobile data coverage and are forced to connect to the museum's Wi-Fi, even when you are in the heart of a city.

When connecting to the museum Wi-Fi, you are required to agree to terms and conditions and are strongly encouraged to share your personal data. This raises concerns about how ethically museums handle visitor data and consent.

This feels particularly problematic when you have already paid a high ticket price to enter. It creates the sense that access to connectivity is conditional on surrendering additional personal information.

This was my recent experience at Fondation Cartier's new space in Paris.

And to my thoughts on the new building, art was displayed more like a natural history museum, with the addition of fabric-covered walls, highly decorative displays, and a very dark overall environment. Apart from a captivating Sarah Sze installation and an unsupervised James Turrell room.

Words by Yioryios Papayoriou

Patent Painting Patterns



Walking out of the Yayoi Kusama show was the best part of it. The last room, the smallest of them all, presented her innovation in performance art and showed how she has embedded her culturally dominated use of colour and patterns into the city of New York.

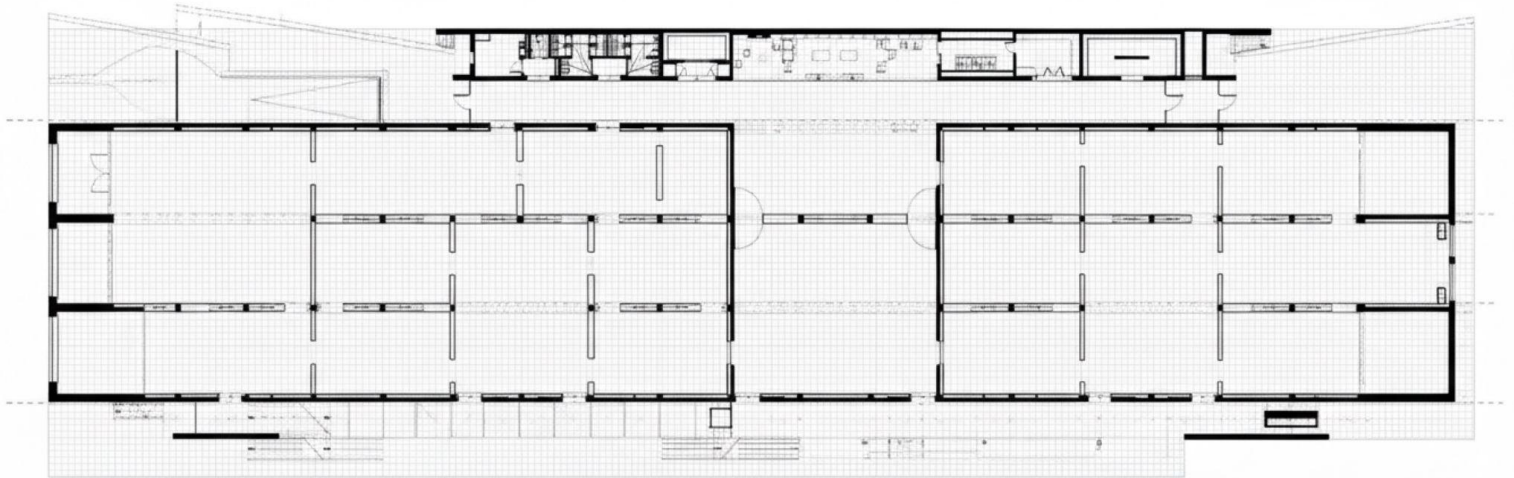
These works are innovative, sexual, dynamic, raw, and show no fear. We were only given a small glimpse of this part of the artist's practice, and are left wishing there was more.

Looking at these works almost drowned out the noise of babies crying and cashiers cha-ching.

Currently showing at Fondation Beyeler, Basel.

Reviewed by Yioryios Papayoriou

The Power of the Right



A floor plan can shape the way you view and experience an exhibition. If you always turn right, you'll likely have the exhibition neatly at hand. One of my greatest art fears is missing a work, or several, in an exhibition. I constantly question my movements, making sure I don't skip a room or overlook a space.

This voice becomes so insistent that it can be distracting. Is the right always right? Could the left be a better choice, or should you simply wander when the space calls you to? Do we let our unconscious decisions move us within a gallery, and does the movement of time guide us, always ticking right?

How do you walk through an exhibition, how do you start, enter, search for a work? Is this conscious or automatic? Should there be a start, middle, or end?

Thoughts by Yioryios Papayiorjiou

Rapidly Blooming



Rose Lowder's active films speed up the mundane day-to-day life. She shifts the moving image to form high-speed reactions. Ten screens, full intensity, for a simple subject matter, gardening.

Shot over three decades ago on 16mm film, even though the original film is being used, it feels contemporised and made relevant.

Along with her meticulously planned-out drawings, which for me contrast with the simplicity of her films.

Highly recommended.

Bouquets, Rose Lowder. Showing at Kunsthalle Zurich.

Reviewed by Yioryios Papayoriou

Shit's Getting Expensive



In Wim Delvoye's work Cloaca Professional, the process of digestion becomes a visual reality.

The architectural digest of the body needs a room of its own. The smell becomes unbearable, but the process grounds you.

What is the art form? Is it the mechanics, the sculptural kinetic ability, or the result? Well, the result is a highly intelligent piece of shit that has strong commercial value.

How is what we create different? It shouldn't be, but boy, it is. And this should be noted. I can't do this, or make this, or even think of it. But I can take in the artist's vision.

When the Earth shits, it turns into gold and so does Delvoye's works.

Museum of Old and New Art | Hobart,
Tasmania @monamuseum

Words by Yioryios Papayioryiou

Contemporary Traditions

CINEFIX

THURSDAY 13
NOVEMBER | 20:00

***I Do Not Know
What It Is I Am Like***
by Bill Viola



Bill Viola, *I Do Not Know What It Is I Am Like*, 1986
(video still). © Photo: Kira Perov.

CINEFIX: AN OPEN AIR CINEMA ON THE EMST ROOFTOP TERRACE

During summer, Greece has a ritual, for outdoor cinema. The heat can be intense and sticky, but it becomes bearable with a cold beer in one hand, a captivating art film and a shared community.

The National Museum of Contemporary Art (EMST) in Athens has embraced this tradition through its contemporary program. On a rooftop bathed in the glow of the Acropolis, films are screened every Thursday during the summer. And now autumn too.

I attended once, and somehow found myself returning every Thursday since. The program aligns artistic films and performances, offering a platform for works that are rarely seen outside traditional museum spaces.

The venue itself is part of the experience, the museum occupies the old Fix brewery, and a complimentary beer nods to its history.

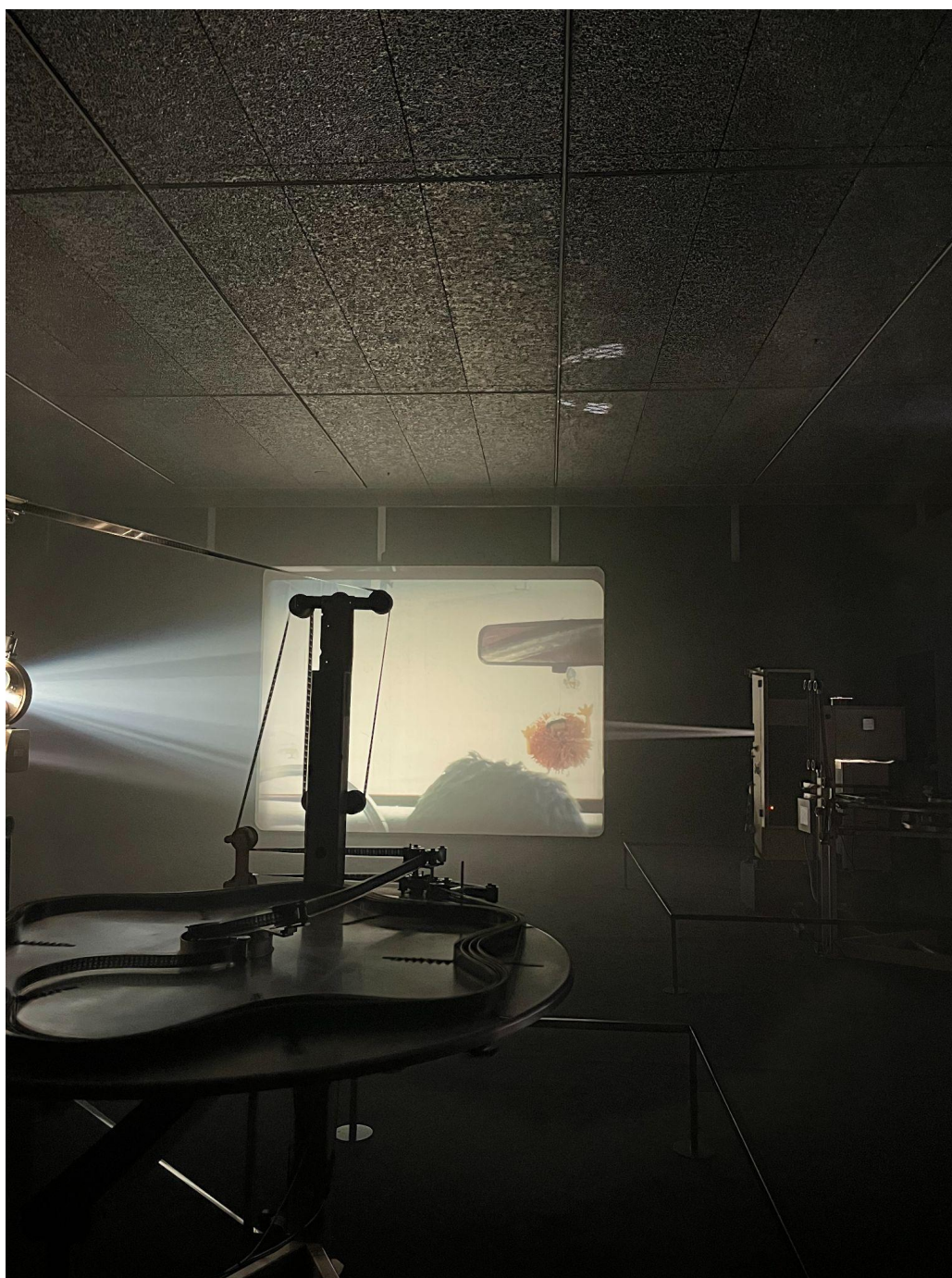
What's offered is a chance to see films that would otherwise be inaccessible, from Bill Viola tributes to premieres of artists' own cinematic works.

It's addictive and I can't imagine spending a summer in the city any other way.

See you there tonight!

Words by Yioryios Papayoriou

To Kill a Mockingdog



Sueño Perro leftovers take over the
Fondazione Prada. Raw images,
worked film, potent scenes!

Film that is spun on a mechanical web,
sculptural, loud, and full of energy. And
so too is the subject.

The love to fight and the love of a dog
are at the pinnacle of Perro's reference
to human nature and its destruction of
morality.

An awareness of the present through
our past simulates an important
self-dialogue.

Film travels through light onto global
screens, Perro creates environments
that can only be experienced in person.

Reviewed by Yioryios Papayoriou

Real Abstraction



From realism to abstraction, Gerhard Richter. Fondation Louis Vuitton.

A serious contrast of two styles by one artist.

Tight rooms for big works. This was the only downside to the exhibition, compared to previous shows offered by the Fondation.

From drawings to paintings to sculptures, then back to paintings. The majority from an earlier period of the artist's practice.

A strong series of works by an artist who has challenged the borders of mark-making.

Reviewed by Yioryios Papayoriou

Minimal via Its Maximalism



It's no surprise that something minimal
can bring a crowd.

Whilst waiting in the long line leading
up to the exhibition, thoughts ran on
the idea of minimalism and wondering
if space, visibility, and interruption are
part of the ethos of the works.

Are these works supposed to exist
uninterrupted, or is the presence of the
audience part of the lifestream?

Some works can be seen, some works
disappear into the architecture, for the
likes of Charlotte Posenenske, metal
air vents greet us at the entrance to the
exhibition.

Should time become minimal? Should
visibility become minimal? Should
noise become minimal? Should
imagination be minimal?

No, but yes!

An entirely beautiful exhibition which
speaks loudly in a soft voice.

Bourse de Commerce – Pinault
Collection

Words by Yioryios Papayiorjiou

Shea Sells By The Guggenheim



The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum - New York

Rashid Johnson: A Poem for Deep Thinkers

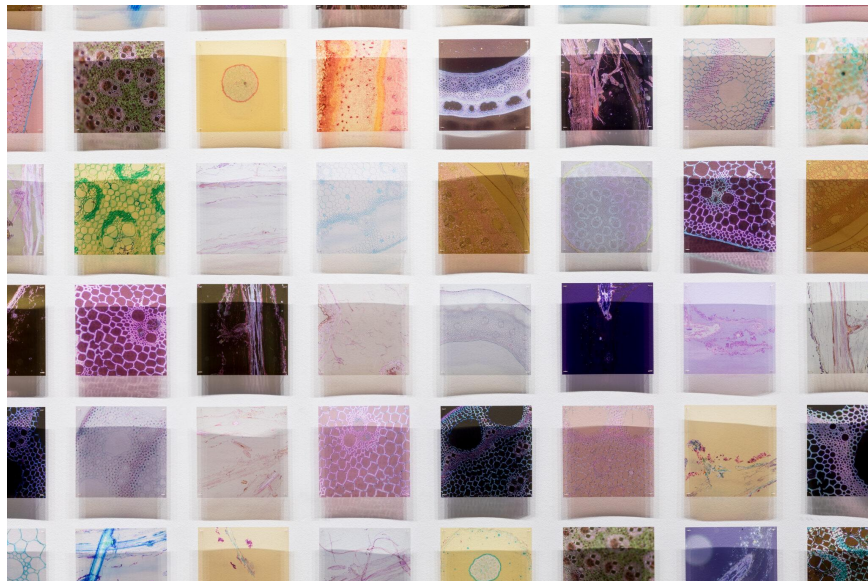
On view through January 2026, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum presents a major solo exhibition of works by Chicago-born artist Rashid Johnson. Spanning nearly three decades of his career, the exhibition brings together close to 90 works, offering the public a comprehensive opportunity to engage with Johnson's artistic practice.

Rashid Johnson's practice is anchored in a material drawn from the intimate textures of his own life, transformed into signifiers of broader cultural histories. Shea butter, for instance, occupies a central role in his work. A familiar substance within the home, it is at once a deeply personal reference and a diasporic marker, imported from West Africa and widely used across African-American communities. It's brilliant and wholesome, giving insight into Johnson's upbringing and reinterpreting it into physical material. Black soap, another recurring element (and historically West African), functions in a similar way. Both sincere and estranged, pointing to the absurdity and yet the power of substituting a material for lived experience. Within Johnson's installations, it becomes a poetic tale of inheritance and belonging, embodying the complex interplay between the personal and the collective. Through this use of matter, Johnson collapses distinctions between cultural memory and historical narrative, allowing his chosen objects to resonate with multiple interpretations.

This powerful exhibition was curated by The Guggenheim's Deputy Director Naomi Beckwith in collaboration with Andrea Karnes, Chief Curator of The Modern Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. Addition credit to Faith Hunter, curatorial assistant for the Guggenheim.

Words by Trey Hemmings

The more you have, the less you appreciate?



Artizon Museum – Tokyo
Echoes Unveiled: Art by First Nations Women
from Australia

Visiting the Artizon Museum revealed to me
how art should be displayed
mindfully, with care, and without prejudice.

This exhibition brought together 8 artists and
52 works, allowing each piece space to
breathe, to be understood.
Past, present, contemporary. Storytelling
through storytellers.

Each room I entered offered clarity,
inspiration, and a deep respect for the work.
Room after room, strong bodies of art stood
on their own, and I could walk around them
knowing I was witnessing a true expression of
each artist's practice.

At the same time, the Art Gallery of NSW in
Sydney was also hosting an Indigenous
exhibition:
Yolŋu power: the art of Yirrkala.

With 98 artists and nearly 300 works, the
experience was overwhelming.
Crowded, packed, and lost in translation.
By the final rooms, I was exhausted,
searching only for the exit.

The works themselves were beautiful, yet
how much can one truly absorb?

Sometimes, less is more.
Did the Japanese curate a stronger exhibition
than the Australian's?

I believe so.

Reviewed by Yioryios Papayiorjiou

WHEN CONDO WENT WEST

A look at one of artist George Condo's
most polarizing projects
As the 15th anniversary of My Beautiful
Dark Twisted Fantasy approaches,
Stroke Magazine revisits the five
striking covers George Condo created
for what remains one of the most
defining albums of the 21st century.



The Portrait by George Condo (2010,
United States)

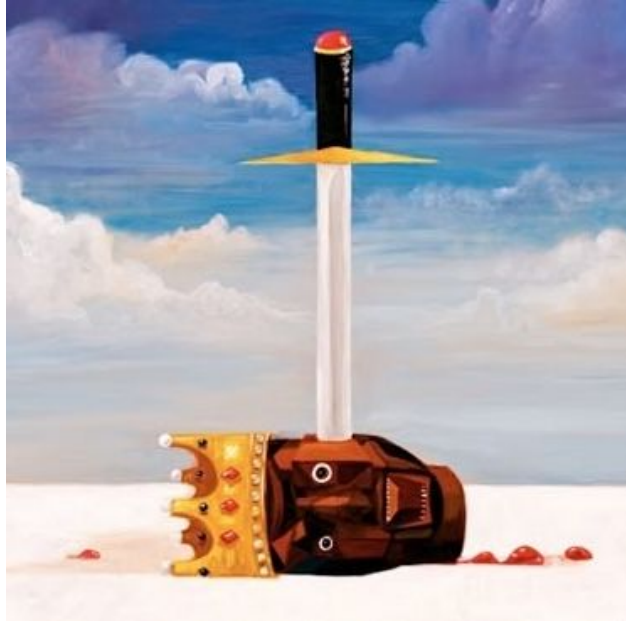
The Portrait.

A portrait of Ye shows a dark, twisted
mind.

The painting depicts a monstrous, almost puppet-like head with distorted features: bulging eyes, a cavernous, screaming mouth, and multiple sets of teeth. Here, Condo renders the face as a site of disintegration, its features fractured into a clamor of eyes, teeth, and voids. The gaping mouth operates as both scream and abyss, a portrait of anguish that borders on caricature.

The painting collapses a self-portrait into monstrosity, destabilizing any sense of identity. Its manic energy aligns with the idea of the dismantling of the ego, which is central to My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy. The work presents the figure as both powerful and undone. The grotesque becomes not merely aesthetic, but psychological.

The portrait of Ye, juxtaposed with the deep blue background, carries a sense of rage, hysteria, and almost of theatrical performance, as well as the extremes of ego and torment.



The Severed Head by George Condo
(2010, United States)

The Severed Head.

A dramatic, Shakespearean tale. The work shows the severed head of a crowned “king” lying on the ground with a sword plunged through it. Drops of blood scatter nearby, while the background sky is tranquil and almost optimistic of a beautiful day.

The crowned head pierced by a sword stages a stark meditation on power and its undoing. The crown, emblem of sovereignty and triumph, sits askew on a decapitated figure whose expression is frozen in a campy, cartoonish horror.

The pristine sky intensifies the violence, casting the scene as a grotesque coup played out on stage. In Condo’s lexicon, the image destabilizes heroic imagery, parodying kingship. It’s where cubism and classicism are merged into a single painting. “His tragedy was a kind of exile that Kanye imposed upon himself,” says Condo.

He’s lost his head, not his mind.
A fallen reign, with empire in ashes, yet the crown remained, both untouched and eternal.



The Portrait, Paranoid by George Condo (2010, United States)

The Portrait, Paranoid.

The figure wears what looks like an unmistakably priest-like black clerical. Its head is grotesque: bulging cheeks, asymmetrical eyes, wild tufts of hair, and multiple screaming mouths filled with jagged teeth. The deep black and blue background is dark and gridded, giving it an almost crucifixion-like framing.

The gaping central mouth, rendered with deep shadows and violent red accents, becomes the gravitational center of the piece, pulling the viewer's gaze into its abyss. It evokes a silent scream, or perhaps a scream too loud to contain within a single mouth. Multiple mouths, teeth, and eyes erupt across the visage, contorting the head into a surreal chimera of emotional extremes. He is rage, mania, repression, comedy, and terror all in one.

The screaming priest is not a single emotion, but a fractured portrait.

He's both the preacher and the heretic.



The Ballerina by George Condo (2010, United States)
The Ballerina.

The image depicts a French woman raising a glass of red wine, with a sort of distorted face, in a state of celebration.

The wine elevated by her feminine left arm in receptivity, perhaps, receptivity to defiance. The ballerina operates as a study in contrasts: she signifies refinement and fragility, yet her casual act of drinking unsettles the viewer, destabilizing the expected codes of grace. This juxtaposition reveals an unraveling beneath the polished exterior. It's a hidden wound that complicates her poise. As such, she functions as a Black Swan, where beauty is inextricably bound to distortion and darkness.

It is a "toast to the scumbags," Ye proclaims as he is greeted with the work Condo has painted. The idea was conceptualized when George Condo's wife, Anna, showed Ye a photo of French dancer Sylvie Guillem moving in slow motion. The work emphasizes the dynamics between power and fragility

The most recognizable uncensored album covers.
Oui, Salud!



The Pixilated Cover by George Condo
(2010, United States)

The pixilated cover.

The image depicts a nude Ye on a couch, being straddled by a nude, winged, armless woman. A fragment between a sphinx, phoenix, haunting ghost, and harpy.

This image stages an allegory of excess and rupture: the male figure, grotesquely rendered with snarling teeth, and the winged female nude embody both ecstasy and violence. Their coupling collapses boundaries between the oppositions. It is angelic and demonic, sacred and profane. Condo's distortion destabilizes desire, presenting intimacy as both carnivalesque and menacing. The bottle clutched in the figure's hand reinforces a vision of indulgence, intoxication, and self-destruction. In this way, the composition operates as a parable of beauty undone by its own appetite. The cover was immediately banned by Wal-Mart and iTunes for its sexual depiction.

The banning of the cover brought Condo great disgust. "The superimposition of people's perceptions on a cartoon is shocking," and "What's happening in their minds should be banned, Not the painting" insists Condo.

And he is absolutely right. Nothing about this album is conservative; everything is being put on display. There is no point in censoring a work that is already provocative in lyrics and controversial in plea.

Fifteen years on, these paintings remain just as polarizing as they were in 2010. Controversies aside, the record *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy* is a sonic odyssey through Ye's psyche. It is glamorous, paranoid, egotistical, and self-loathing all at once. He exposes himself as a hero, a villain, a genius, a narcissist. Ye and his perverted grandeur, amalgamated with Condo's talent, boast one of the most influential bodies of work to date.

Words by Trey Hemmings

Nourishing a Dangerous Mind



Jannis Kounellis creates environments
that confront us with
obstacles, where everyday objects
become charged with tension.

A knife before a fish is simply an object.
A knife before a human is a weapon.

Danger resides not in the blade, but in
the mind that perceives it.
So too with one's encounter at MONA.

Museum of Old and New Art | Hobart,
Tasmania

Words by Yioryios Papayoriou

Jannis Kounellis
Untitled, 1991–2011
*Ceramic plate, kitchen knife, wooden
chair, two goldfish, water*