

HERD THINNER

Curated by David Hunt

December 1, 2009 through February 28, 2010

The Gallery Is By Appointment Only

Charest-Weinberg Gallery is pleased to present *HERD THINNER*, a group exhibition curated by David Hunt.

Pedro Barbeito, Slater Bradley, Suntek Chung, Richard Dupont, Martha Friedman, Sheree Hovsepian, Rashid Johnson, Simone Leigh, André Masson, Fernando Mastrangelo, Raha Raissnia, Marc Seguin, Seher Shah, Erin Shirreff, Jeff Sonhouse and Ouattara Watts.

BOOK I

ON THE THINNING OF THE HERD, GENERALLY. CONTAINING AS MUCH INFORMATION AS NECESSARY TO ACQUAINT OUR READER WITH THE BEGINNING OF THIS HISTORY.

- I. Toward a new grammar of pruning containing a few common matters, with a very uncommon observation upon them...
- II. A brief disquisition on Thomas Friedman's measured polemic *Hot, Flat and Crowded*, wherein our assiduous reader learns the fate of our doomed planet some fifty years hence containing such deep and grave matters, that some pupils – apt and otherwise - perhaps, may not relish it...
- III. A startling confession by the United Nations wherein 9 billion people are introduced into our once spacious, fertile plains by 2053 thanks to improvements in health care, disease eradication and economic development, and a short addendum on the consequences of felicitous matrimony and the ensuing hubbub over the trimming of reproductive privileges whereby our necessarily imperfect custodian preemptively dissuades the flock about the ill-advised nature of its knee-jerk instinct toward murder, considering that said custodian's mere role as messenger and bearer of - in this case - bad tidings, should not merit homicide....
- IV. A plea by our humble custodian to dispense with the prevailing dialectic of alarmed indignation on one hand, and bovine complacency on the other, wherein the dilation between these two polar extremes is suddenly revealed to be just one more instance of totalitarian control and ritual abasement designed to corral the flock...
- V. The discovery of a misplaced dossier in the regency chest of the lead Decepticon retailing the clear-cutting of the rain forest for the express purpose of gathering bio-fuel, which, as luck would have it, paradoxically increases CO2 emissions, although, here, under the guise of corporate altruism...

BOOK II

IN WHICH OUR HERO, THE LONELY SHEPERD, CLIMBS A CRAGGY BLUFF TO PLACE A SINGLE SMALL PEBBLE ON A GAELIC CAIRN, DECLARING HIS TERRITORY THROUGH ACTS BOTH SYMBOLIC AND SUBLIME, UP TO AND INCLUDING A BRIEF DIGRESSION ON THE DARWINIAN SUPREMACY OF ALL SEMIOTIC SYSTEMS IN AN AGE OF TWO STYROFOAM CUPS AND A PIECE OF STRING.

- I. Irrational Exuberance as Roulette: or the Birth of the Modern Casino, whereby our hero, the lonely shepherd, accrues by games of chance, the necessary social capital to persuade the vampiric Decepticons that molecule for molecule, methane's heat-trapping power is twenty-one times stronger than carbon dioxide, the most abundant greenhouse gas, and consequently - but without any parliamentary throat-clearing or time-wasting pageantry - that not only should the herd be groomed to manageable proportions, but immediately and entirely replaced with the New Monuments, of which they are the primary exponents...

- II. A knotty point in the global court of conscience, indeed, containing, of course, a retailing of further anticipatory salvos doubtless generated by the passing of the baton to a proud and noble lineage of symbol-keepers (ergo, once again, our hero, the lonely shepherd and his comrades in arms), previously engaged in agrarian vigilance as it pertains to the nexus of animal husbandry and surveillance, but now, suddenly charged with the more glamorous, although infinitely more complex task of being the representative go-to guys in times of calamity, loss of faith, and generalized despair, of which the fast encroaching middle-future definitely qualifies...
- III. Containing the predictable uproar from the sedentary herd in which the new office of Grand Imperial Herd Thinner is pilloried for its hermetic ways and the attendant atmosphere of suffocating discernment which follows it everywhere, declared a pox on humanity and the unfortunate aftermath of a society of bourgeois leisure, and a lengthy description of the lighting of the torches in the town square...

BOOK III

A BREAKING OF THE HALLOWED 4TH WALL, WHEREBY THIS MODEST SCRIBE – HIMSELF A DIRECT DESCENDENT OF THE NOMADIC, ALIENATED TRADITION THAT BINDS HIM IRREVOCABLY TO THE HERD THINNERS – GENTLY DEMURS TO OFFER A BRIEF EXPLANATION IN LIEU OF A CATCHY MANIFESTO AS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HERD THINNERS' ADMITTEDLY MASONIC TRADITIONS, THEIR NEED FOR CONSTANT APPROVAL AND REASSURANCE, BUT ULTIMATELY THEIR INTRINSIC VALUE AS GINORMOUS WAXEN CANDLES, LIGHTHOUSE BEACONS, AND SATELLITE SYSTEMS FUELED WITH AMBERGRIS IN THE DARK DAYS THAT ARE, SOME MIGHT SAY, ALREADY UPON US.

- IV. A hint in list form, so as not to confuse the reader, designed to placate the incredulous nay-sayers for all time, as to the enduring importance of the Herd Thinner ways, their strange incantatory rituals and alchemical transubstantiations, their conjuring of deep compressions of the galactic and the prehistoric, their insistence upon leavening the contemporary with routine excursions into antiquity, and their unique ability to fulfill the destiny of ultimate purveyor of signs, whilst still maintaining the stylistic integrity that sets apart one Herd Thinner from another...
- V. Of those who lawfully may, and of those who may not, write such histories as this, a cautionary warning...A very surprising adventure indeed, wherein emotion trumps capital, the ruin displaces the shiny bauble, and the ambient economy reigns supreme over endless recapitulations of the New Economy, which itself is revealed in a singularly flamboyant act of pulling back the curtain, insufficient to capture the imagination of the herd...A farewell to the reader with a parting shot and a gracious invitation to witness the unpacking of the Herd Thinner's smorgasbord of available strategies to perhaps lift you, our patient reader, out of the paralyzing quagmire of options that clings to your withered frock coat like so much molasses...