

VISUAL ARTS

REVIEW

'Design, Flow, Interpret, Repeat' abounds with 'intellectual happiness'

ANTHONY BANNON
GUEST CRITIC

Yes, the show is called "Design, Flow, Interpret, Repeat: Contemporary Abstractions" — each a prompt to suggest plump ideas in art.

"Design, Flow..." also is a soft-touch summer show in the main gallery of the Strohl Art Center, where tints rule over tones and intellectual overtones spread out head over heels across the gallery with lots of intellectual happiness. Six artists contribute, each selected by Judy Barie, the Susan and Jack Turben Director of Galleries at Chautauqua Institution.

One of the artists, Adam Kenney, a glassmaker from Pittsburgh, was invited to fashion vessels that respond to works by the others.

Another, Harris Deller, created elegant porcelain sculptures for a special cross-gallery installation that opens the door for an aesthetic cross-talk among artists.

So Barie's exhibition concept has the outside (Morrill) looking in, and the inside works installed in such a way that the audience is welcomed to join the dance: to join the artists in act of creation.

Deller's work directs that traffic.

His sculpture slashes across the gallery on a diagonal — five pieces on pedestals of succeeding smaller (or larger) size; smaller or larger depends on where you start and how you cast your eye. Each of Deller's five pieces consist of two quadrilaterals joined together: one penetrating the other, a large base supporting a smaller shape. The five march along the gray scale,

using only a scuffed-up white and an incised black. Each is incised, inlaid with a black glaze and placed in a rhyme scheme with the other four works.

Thus, in an ABBAX scheme, a sculpture with straight-lined incisions is sequenced with two subsequent pieces, which utilize a design motif of concentric arcs, followed by another with black lines: Incised lines to arcs to lines again. The last piece is an X factor, the largest and most complex, deep incisions, only some of them inlaid to make a complex design of concentrics. (Likewise, the work is sequenced by size, large-small-large-small-huge: ABABX.)

It is another Barie bold installation. And not surprisingly, the Deller porcelains radically occupy the foreground of any glance across the gallery, fronting works on the wall with a design intensity. The wall works include:

Fabulous minimal color fields of tinted polymer panels staged in horizontal blocks of often contrasting hues, each a variation on a true color, such as tints of green progressing toward a green tone at the center. Susan English, from Nelsonville in mid-state New York, called one of her five pieces "New Green," an amazing array of possible greens.

Kate Nielsen from Brooklyn plays a presence-and-absence game in her work, ripping tiny holes out of a handmade paper and encircling the cutout and some faux cutouts with, for example, a dark green upon a blued paper in "Where Forest Meets the Sea."

Michael divides his lin-



DAVE MUNCH / PHOTO EDITOR

Above, pieces are displayed in the "Design, Flow, Interpret, Repeat: Contemporary Abstractions" exhibition in Strohl Art Center.

The exhibition runs through July 21. At right, glasswork by artist Adam Kenney and pieces by Michael Morrill are displayed. Bottom right, a piece by artist Stephanie Armbruster is displayed in the exhibition in Strohl.

en-covered panels with a wandering vertical line, which define quadrants for a tone against a tint; for example, a rusty red posed with an earthy tint.

Each artist in their different ways presents design propositions, thus the first notion in the title. But Stephanie Armbruster from Pittsburgh steps outside the order with a mid-20th century move toward edge-to-edge massing and spilling and smudgy hues that are struck with errant lines that suggest an order, such as an attempt toward parallels or grids.



Each artist works within an articulate series, thus establishing a flow of related ideas, building toward an interpretation that breaks or builds upon previous aesthetic experiences.

There are many languages so called in art: line, light, form, hue, design among them. Glass artist Kenney from Pittsburgh, the man asked to create a commentary upon the art by others in the show, used these notions to call attention to the strategies of his colleagues. Kenney's lovely vessels explore a range of gentle tints, some with engraved and etched surfaces, throwing a light not only for themselves but

also toward the others.

"Design, Flow..." continues through Aug. 21.

Anthony Bannon writes about art and culture, concentrating now on books and exhibition catalogs. He has written for the popular and scholar-

ly press and has directed the George Eastman Museum in Rochester and the Burchfield Penney Art Center at SUNY Buffalo State. Forthcoming is a book with Damiani Press featuring portraits by the photographer William Coupon.



The Gleason Hotel

The Gleason Hotel is a true Chautauqua Institution classic (renting rooms for over 50 years). The Gleason Hotel has amazing water views and it is located right on the lake. Just north of the Miller Bell Tower and centrally located to everything including the Amphitheater and Bestor Plaza. Rentals are still available and our prices are very reasonable. We will be renting rooms from the end of May to mid November. Our beautiful rentals start at only \$750 per week with breathtaking water views and lovely porches. Please contact us to make your reservation now! We are a private family owned hotel with the main goal of pleasing all of our guests! Thank You!



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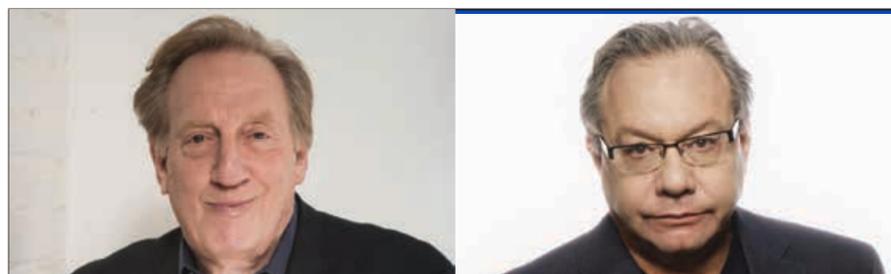
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Programs and Classes Presented in Partnership with the National Comedy Center

A Career in Comedy: A Conversation between Alan Zweibel and Lewis Black

3:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 1 • Hall of Philosophy

Comedy greats Alan Zweibel and Lewis Black join forces for a special conversation on their respective careers. Chautauqua is pleased to present this program, and the master classes with Zweibel described below, in partnership with the National Comedy Center in Jamestown, New York, which celebrates its grand opening Aug. 1-5.

One-day Master Class: "Comedy and Storytelling"

3:30-5 p.m. Monday, July 30 • Smith Wilkes Hall • \$75

Join legendary comedy writer Alan Zweibel — known for his work on "Saturday Night Live," "It's Garry Shandling's Show," "Late Show With David Letterman" and "Curb Your Enthusiasm" — for an afternoon of hilarious stories and insight into writing funny.

Three-day Workshop: "Writing Funny: From Jokes to Sketches to Screenplays"

9-10:30 a.m. Tuesday-Thursday
Prose Room, Literary Arts Center at Alumni Hall • \$185

Turn your funny real-life stories into comedy gold, with legendary comedy writer Alan Zweibel as your guide! From the wannabe to the novice to anyone who has ever had the desire to make someone laugh is welcome. Students should come with writing of their own, ready to workshop over three days and potentially prepare a script by the end of the week.

Register in person at any ticketing location or by calling 716.357.6250.