



# ***Independence Day Fun!***

## **July Newsletter**

### **Greetings!**

The July 4th weekend is upon us, and all those cookouts, vacations, and family reunions inevitably lead to powerful memories and lots of photographs! Preserve those memories and smiles with custom framing done right!

School is out, and that means Graduation photos, diplomas, and lots of memorabilia from that once in a lifetime event!

The student in your family will thank you for preserving and framing those mementos that can never come again...Prom photos and memorabilia, graduation cards, their cap and tassles, and that diploma they have worked so hard for...they all deserve to be remembered and protected for all time.

Stop by one of our stores this week to have one of our Art and Design experts help you make your students' senior year a truly priceless memory they will always treasure!

Visit our website at [www.customframestore.com](http://www.customframestore.com) for locations and contact information!



## *SoCal Art Happenings -*

### **Duncan Miller Gallery:**



### **Ben Nixon: Surface Tension**

**June 12 - August 7, 2010**

#### **About**

Ben Nixon's photographs describe a connection to history that is both geological and photographic. Utilizing the 19th century "collodion technique" Nixon's photographs reference the nostalgia of the American West. The chance nature inherent in the wet-plate process suggests a distinctive mood and atmosphere steeped in the history of American lore. The collodion process is delicate and precise and Nixon's imagery captures this quiet fragility combined with the fierce elegance and grandness of the American landscape. In much the same way Ansel Adams' photographs paid tribute to the natural world, Nixon's

imagery explores the rough but simple beauty of canyons and gullies, pumic domes and surrounding volcanic craters wherein these images reflect a sensitivity and a passionate concern for the natural world, even as it is being ravaged and stripped away. Nixon's exhibition is the second in the series of revolving solo shows from four San Francisco-based artists. These are the first solo exhibitions for each of these artists in Los Angeles.

#### *HOURS*

*Thursday through Saturday  
11am - 6pm and by appointment*

#### *DIRECTIONS*

*The Duncan Miller Gallery is located in West Los Angeles, 1/3 mile East of the 405 Freeway.*

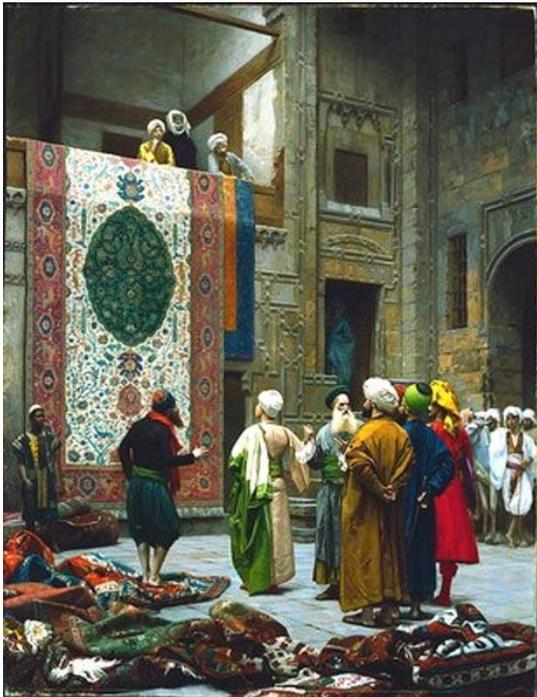
*ADDRESS: 10959 Venice Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90034*

*From the San Diego (405) freeway, take the Venice Blvd exit, and go East. Venice Blvd is the exit just South of the 10 freeway. Our building is 1/3 mile East of the 405, on the North side of the street. Look for the large lit*

*number sign "10959" atop the building. Plenty of street parking.*

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## **The Getty:**



## **The Spectacular Art of Jean-Léon Gérôme**

**May 20 - June 26, 2010**

## About

Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904) was among the most officially honored and financially successful French artists of the second half of the 19th century. His brilliantly painted and often provocative pictures were at the center of heated debates over the present and future of the great French painting tradition. Reproduced using brand new photomechanical processes and dispersed across Europe and America, Gérôme's images indelibly marked the popular imagination, directly influencing spectacular forms of mass entertainment, from theater to film.

Through most of the 20th century, however, Gérôme's critical reputation was tarnished by his alleged commercialism and his stubborn opposition to the triumphant avant-garde movements of Impressionism and Postimpressionism.

The first comprehensive exhibition of his work in almost 40 years, this exhibition offers the opportunity to reconsider the variety and complexity of Gérôme's masterful oeuvre.

The exhibition brings together works that span Gérôme's entire career, from his early "Néo-Grec" paintings with their lighthearted take on classical antiquity, to his wide variety of historical scenes that still impress with their dramatic realism. A core group of Gérôme's Orientalist genre paintings are also on view. These paintings were inspired by the people and architecture he saw on his many voyages, beginning in the late 1850s, to Egypt, the Holy Land, and Asia Minor.

Late in life, Gérôme shifted his focus to sculpture, conducting innovative experiments with polychromy that were informed by the latest archeological knowledge of antique sculpture. Although derided by critics, Gérôme's colorful, ornate statues—key examples of which are included in the exhibition—were popular among collectors, for whom he had them reproduced in a variety of sizes and materials.

*This exhibition is organized by the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, and the Réunion des musées nationaux, Paris, in association with the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid. The exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.*

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# LACMA:



## **John Baldessari: Pure Beauty**

**June 27 - September 12, 2010**

### **About**

John Baldessari is one of the most influential American artists working today. This long overdue retrospective will feature more than 150 works spanning the artist's career from 1962 to the present day, and include works on canvas, photography, videos and artist's books. Baldessari's text and image paintings from the mid-1960s are widely recognized as among the earliest examples of Conceptual Art, while his 1980s photo compositions derived from film stills rank as pivotal to the development of appropriation art and other practices that address the social and cultural impact of mass culture. Throughout and continuing today, Baldessari's interest in language, both written and visual, raises questions about the nature of communication. The exhibition is curated by LACMA's Leslie Jones, Prints and Drawings, with Jessica Morgan, Contemporary Art, at Tate Modern. It will

also feature a special installation conceived just for this retrospective.

*This exhibition was organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in association with Tate Modern, London. Additional support for the Los Angeles presentation was provided by LACMA's Wallis Annenberg Director's Endowment Fund and the Jamie and Steve Tisch Foundation Inc. This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities. In-kind media support provided by KCRW.*

*Tetrad Series: What Was Seen, 1999, digital print and acrylic on canvas, 94 x 94 in. (238.8 x 238.8 cm) overall, collection of Craig Robins, Miami, © 2009 John Baldessari, photo courtesy of Baldessari Studio.*

## *In the Studio -*

# Art Theory 101:

## **Elements of Art :**

### **Form, Shape and Space**

Form and shape are areas or masses which define objects in space. Form and shape imply space; indeed they cannot exist without space.

There are various ways to categorize form and shape. Form and shape can be thought of as either two dimensional or three dimensional. Two dimensional form has width and height. It can also create the illusion of three dimension objects. Three dimensional shape has depth as well as width and height.

Form and shape can also be described as either organic or geometric. Organic forms such as these snow-covered boulders typically are irregular in outline, and often asymmetrical. Organic forms are most often thought of as naturally occurring.

Geometric forms are those which correspond to named regular shapes, such as squares, rectangles, circles, cubes, spheres, cones, and other regular forms. Architecture, such as this example by Frank Lloyd Wright, is usually composed of geometric forms. These forms are most often thought of as constructed or made.

However, not all made objects are geometric; many designed forms have irregular contours. Although this kimono is geometric in its construction, the surface design is organic in form.

Nor are all naturally occurring objects organic; snowflakes and soap bubbles are among many geometric forms found in nature.

There are some other terms commonly used to describe form and shape in composition; these have to do with what kind of representations the forms have. If we can recognize every day objects and environments, we refer to the images as being realistic, or naturalistic. However, if the images are difficult or impossible to identify in terms of our normal, daily visual experience, we may refer to the images as abstract.

There are several kinds of abstract images. Generally, abstractions are "abstracted" or derived from realistic images - perhaps even distorted--, but perhaps in such a way that the source is not immediately apparent. An example of this would be one of Georgia O'keefe's paintings of a detail from a flower. This kind of abstraction in art is sometimes referred to as an objective image -- that is, it is derived from an actual object. On the other hand, some abstract art images are based on a pure study of form, line, and color, and do not refer to any real-world object or scene. such art works are sometimes referred to as non-objective images.

Charicature is a special instance of abstraction, in which realistic images are distorted to make a statement about the people, places, or objects portrayed. This is probably the kind of abstraction we are most familiar with, as it is constantly presented to us via all sorts of popular media. However, it is important to remember that had not the more difficult-to-understand conventions of abstraction in the fine arts not broken ground with experiments in distortion, we would not be able to make sense out of some charicature images. A century ago, there was really nothing equivalent to our modern cartoons.

Our perception of shape and form are affected by several factors. The position or viewpoint from which we see an object will emphasize or obscure certain features, and therefore affect the impression it makes. As you can see in this series of photographs, all featuring the same wooden artist's mannequin, the character of the space around the object can distract, focus, or alter our impression. A cluttered background tends to diminish the importance of the object, while a plain background draws attention to it.

The character and source of light also changes the perceived character of the object. Lighting in a photographic portrait, for example, can make the subject look older, younger, dramatic, or rather abstract.

## **Two Dimensional Form**

Two dimensional form is the foundation of pictorial organization or composition in painting, photography, and many other media. It is created in a number of ways.

It can be defined by line, in all the ways described above. Line, either explicit or implied, provides the contour of forms.

Value (the relative lightness or darkness of a color) can also define form. Strong contrasts in value within a composition may define the boundaries of forms. Gradations of value, or shading, can also

create the illusion of contour and volume.

In the same way, hue contrasts and gradations can also define forms. Form may also be defined by change in texture, even when hue and value remain essentially consistent. However, most typically, form is defined by a combination of these factors.

### **Form in relation to positive and negative space**

Forms and shapes can be thought of as positive or negative. In a two dimensional composition, the objects constitute the positive forms, while the background is the negative space. For beginning art and design students, effective use of negative space is often an especially important concept to be mastered.

Some artists play with the reversal of positive and negative space to create complex illusions. The prints of M. C. Escher often feature interlocking images that play with our perception of what is foreground and what is background. Other artists take these illusions of positive and negative images to even greater lengths, hiding images within images. Perception of form and shape are conditioned by our ingrained "instinct" to impute meaning and order to visual data. When we look at an image and initially form an impression, there is a tendency to latch on to that conclusion about its meaning, and then ignore other possible solutions. This may make it hard to see the other images. Training the eye to keep on looking beyond first impressions is a crucial step in developing true visual literacy.

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Wishing you all a happy, wonderful California summer, full of memories, art, color and fun!

**Sincerely,**

Chuck Mitchell

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