

# FRESH POP NYC



# The Drawers - Headbones Gallery

*Contemporary Drawing, Sculpture and Works on Paper*

September 11 - October 25, 2008

**FRESH POP NYC**

Billy Copley  
Jesse McCloskey

Featuring new sculpture by Ed Giordano Jr.

Commentaries by Julie Oakes

Fresh Pop NYC Billy Copley & Jesse McCloskey - Copyright © 2008, Headbones Gallery

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Billy Copley  
Jesse McCloskey  
Ed Giordano Jr.

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RICH FOG



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**Pop Art.** The rehashing of popular culture through the use of media, advertising and consumer based imagery.

'Pop' is also an outburst that causes an explosion and Pop Art saw the literal use referenced in such pieces as Eduardo Paolozzi's 1947 collage in which the word 'pop' is coming from a revolver and then again in 1957 when Richard Hamilton (*Just What Is It that Makes Today's Homes so Different, so Appealing?*) depicted a body builder holding a giant lollipop on which he placed the word 'pop'.

There is an aspect to pop art that did blow fine arts off of the elevated peaks where it had reigned in high and barely-touchable castles of elevated subject matter or medium based concepts, such as in the work of the abstract expressionists. The subject matter of the pop art of the fifties and sixties derived matter, not from the aesthetically sacrosanct realms, but from the supermarket, common-man-or-woman's wall paper, Polaroid photographs, multiples, kitsch and mechanical renditions of pop that had been previously deemed devoid of gesture. The pop artists were as cool as a cucumber.

But pop can lose its fizz if left open too long and turn into a sugary listless mixture of ingredients - unpalatable. How to freshen the pop? Come up with a new recipe for translating the insights that result from our cultural dilemma and va-va-va-voom! Fresh Pop!

We have chosen three artists from NYC whose work, although each from authentic and personal orientation, associates with Pop Art.

# FRESH



# POP NYC



**Billy Copley** has been working with popular imagery from California to New York City (where he was a friend of Warhol). His snappy cartoon-ish style combines with a painterly, processed maturity to yield a fresh take on pop.

**Jesse McCloskey** is the young renegade. He's plied a New England narrative to a pop consciousness and freely emoted. The result - fresh pop, though a little hot.

**Ed Giordano**, with humanitarian angst, shows the plight of the common man in his most disadvantaged insecurity. With a sculptural technique that relates to the work of George Segal, he presents the popular dilemma with the freshness of a well placed slap.



# Billy Copley

In the early days of Pop art, evidence of the artists hand gradually disappeared from art in favor of techniques of mechanical reproduction. This reinforced the concept of the multiple. Individuality was replaced by mass production.

Fifty years later, artists once again crave the authentic self. A one of a kind approach, recognizing the individual. The unique is once again desirable. The more subjective arrangement of images and surface treatment is the fresh take of Billy Copley's recent works.

Working with pre-painted papers, Copley seldom leaves a flat uninterrupted color field. He uses a rich range of colors that are created with patterns, washes and gradations, transmutations layered and collaged so that each area is unique. This also makes for illusions of depth which in turn allows the push and pull of the picture to be activated.

Within each piece there is a maximum of means and a maximizing of the opportunity to present a surface.

Rather than trying to convince us that there is a distance from the imagery, Copley acknowledges his engagement in the process and thus encourages the subsequent engagement by the viewer.

Copley melds the abstract and subjective with the discipline of an obsessive, precise aesthetic. With freedom to borrow from kitsch and sentimental rag barrels, he snips, pastes, prints, rubs and paints his way into a new corner, a place of no return for there are so many layers of visuals that the process of looking back to the beginning is indeterminate.

Relishing the creative process, there is a lip-smacking tastiness in the riot of elements, recognized and strange, within each work. Elements balance precariously in a circus ring like juggling balls.



Roses - 2007, Acrylic and rice paper collage on canvas 62 x 52 inches

While these appear to be happy works, there is also something disquieting about them. They scream for attention much like a child at play.

These works however, are mature no matter how loud they scream. Through the Power of visual presence, Copley extracts a varied beauty from the wacky objects and patterns he juxtaposes using styles from hard edge to mottled surfaces, visual treatments that carry braggadocio as if they were developed to wow the viewer.

With a painterly, psychedelic perspective, the foreground competes with the background and the relationship between the visual spaces becomes

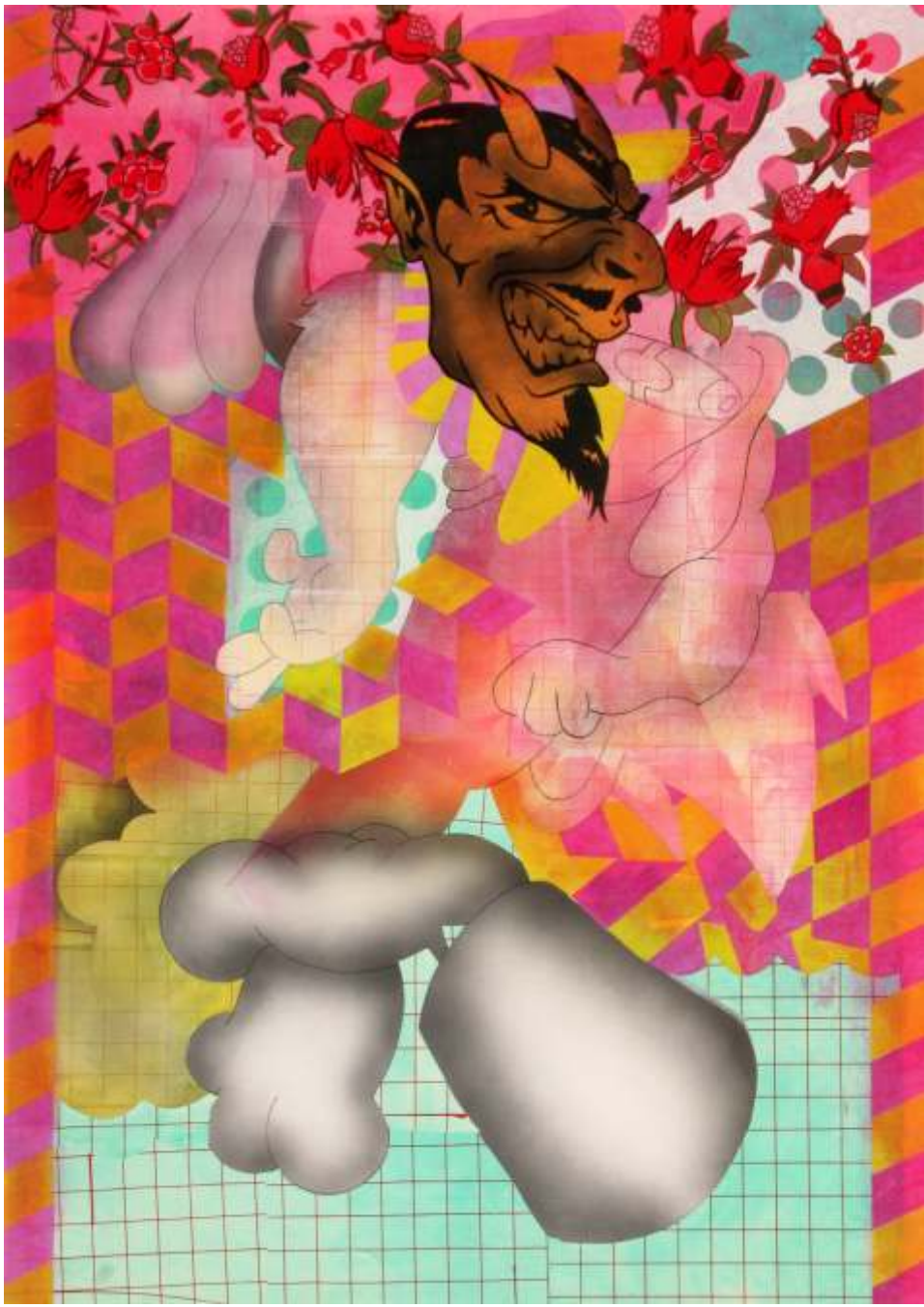
queered and all the elements fold into each other.

Billy Copley seems to be pushing all of the buttons at once and taking us on a ride that brings forth a thrilling if somewhat queasy jubilation. The imagery propels the precepts of earlier pop art into fast-forward (or perhaps fast-reverse) and this results in giddy interesting work which like the wackiness of Saturday morning cartoons is full of adventurous changes.

So with Copley, his use of the familiar - be it pin-up girl, rose, polka dot or grid becomes new again and creates a sensational pop! For those who get their kicks out of art, it's a rush. Copley gives a lot of energy to the work.



Finger & Spring - 2006, Acrylic and rice paper collage on paper 41 x 29 inches



Untitled Devil - 2006, Acrylic and rice paper collage on paper 40 x 29 inches



Girl With Rose - 2006, Acrylic and rice paper collage on paper 47 x 31 inches







Drink Problem - 2004, Acrylic and rice paper collage on paper, 40 1/2 x 36 inches



Dux - 2006, Acrylic and rice paper collage on paper, 41 x 28 inches





New Cat - 2008, Acrylic and rice paper collage on paper, 41 x 51 inches





Crucifix - 2007, Acrylic and rice paper collage on canvas 62 x 52 inches



Kids - 2002, Acrylic and rice paper collage on paper, 41 x 28 inches





Logic Magic - 2008, Acrylic and rice paper collage on paper, 41 1/2 x 26 3/4 inches





Untitled 02D113 - 2002, mixed media and rice paper collage on paper, 29 1/8 x 23 3/4 inches



Untitled Checkerboard - 2002, mixed media and rice paper collage on paper, 29 1/2 x 23 inches





Study for Mugwump - 2007, Acrylic and rice paper collage on paper, 55 x 44 inches





Green Cat - 2008, Acrylic and rice paper collage on stretched paper, 51 x 60 inches



Petco Bag (Redesigned)



Red Flower Bag

2006, Acrylic paint and rice paper collage on paper, 25 x 20 inches





Camouflage Bag (Pink #2)

2006, Acrylic paint and rice paper collage on paper, 24 x 20 inches

Daffey Duck/Target Bag





#### Rubber Stamp Prints

Untitled #8 - 2003, Etching ink on Kitakata paper. (Hand Edition of 10), 20 x 17 inches

Untitled #9 - 2003, Etching ink on Kitakata paper. (Hand Edition of 10), 17 x 20 inches

Untitled #1&2 - 2003, Etching ink on Kitakata paper. (Hand Edition of 10), 17 x 20 inches

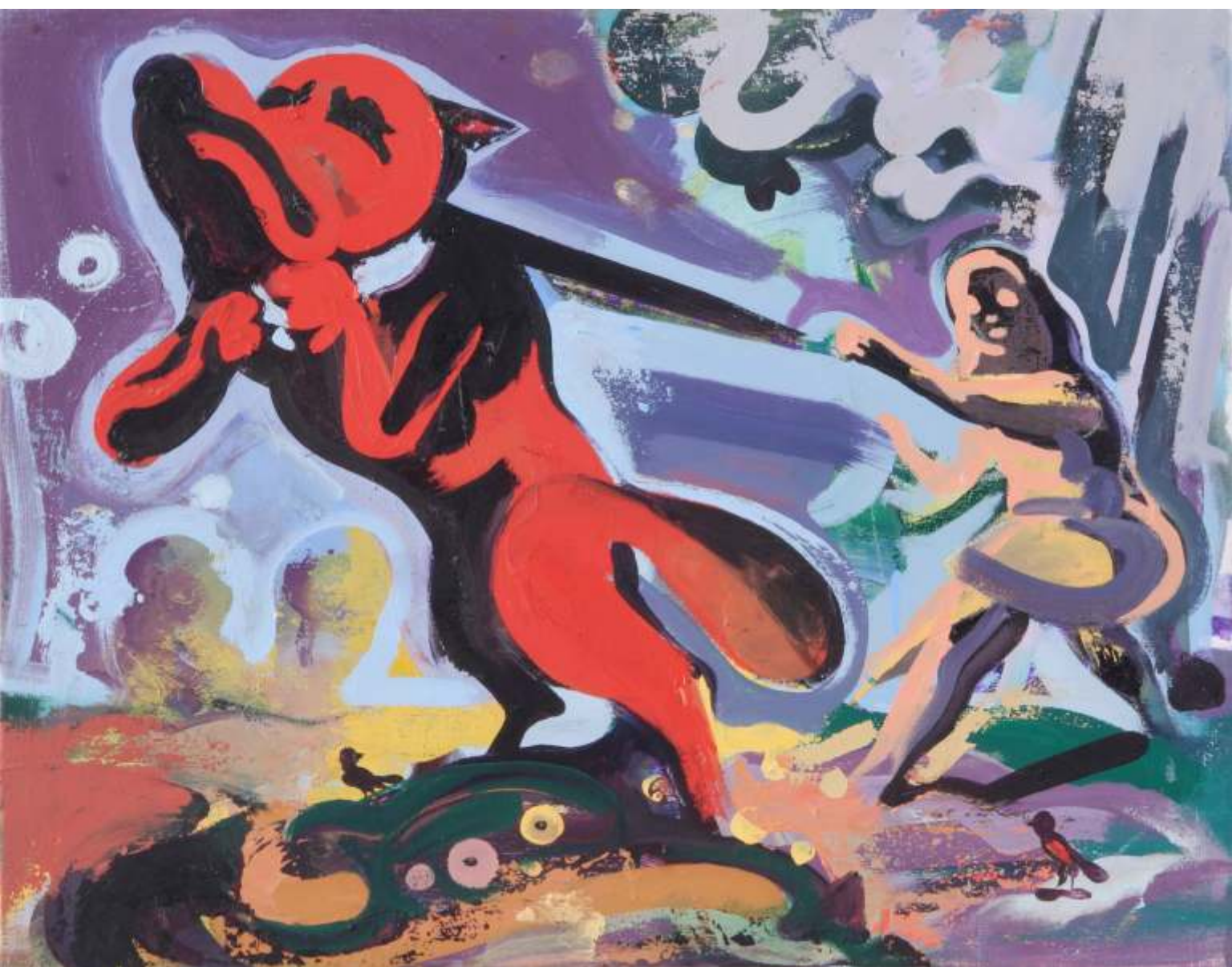
Untitled #3&4 - 2003, Etching ink on Kitakata paper. (Hand Edition of 10), 17 x 20 inches

Untitled #5&6 - 2003, Etching ink on Kitakata paper. (Hand Edition of 10), 17 x 20 inches









The Strangler – 2004, Oil on canvas, 21 x 27 inches



# Jesse McCloskey



Bird Hunt – 2005, Vinyl paint and paper collage on paper, 50 x 38 inches

There is a depth to the narrative behind Jesse McCloskey's shocking expletive where the dog/devil and girl/witch act out. The works of Warhol, Lichtenstein, Rauschenberg and Johns used references that came from childhood and adolescence - guns, toys, cartoons, maps, targets, cars, posters, advertisements, televisions and more. Their youth had come from the upswing of consumerism and their interest had been informed by the milieu of a prosperous America. Jesse McCloskey grew up in New England, home of the witch trials, Plymouth Rock and the Mayflower, Pocahontas and then the normal - bad boys, naughty girls and dogs. Mix these essential components in with a Fine Arts education replete with references from art history and there is a clue to McCloskey's secret ingredients.

There is an acknowledgment of suffering, wrongdoing, struggle and righteousness in the squiring of tales such as the one of a little girl of four years was

tied, hands to feet, during the Inquisition - that in reality was based on property rights - in order to extract information on the devil. Quite the story to tell. Or Pocahontas spraying graffiti as the puritans wiped out her people. The struggle is not so easy to categorise as being 'renegade' or 'reactionary' once the impetus behind this work is explored. Abhorrent situations can be spellbinding so when he studies historical reference books for content of a nasty nature, gobbles it up and spews it out with a frenetic energy, the witchcraft has begun.

There are stories that are common to cultures and ages that serve as templates for the common narrative of the time: the creation myths, the passion plays, the Greek tragedies, theatre del arte, classical allegories and biblical morality tales. The action within them serves to illustrate the temper of the time. Jesse McCloskey appears to have developed a current common narrative within the consistent imagery of the dog/devil and the girl/witch that he has used in paintings and drawings over a number of years. Are the dog and the girl with their hedonistic foreplay and wild abandon an apt metaphor for a debauched culture or is his work a release for both himself as the perpetrator of the imaginings and for the voyeuristic perspective?

What might have seemed to be solely a flight of fancy into naughty-making, has now gained the credence of a commitment and the story has even progressed to encompass raunchier sexual exploits with more brutal retaliation against the harassment metered out by the 'other', be it dog or girl. This work is not as simplistic as the pitching of good against evil, despite the angelic face of the girl or the gradual leaning of the physiognomy of the dog to goat-ishness for the girl gets down and dirty as well. Neither is hanging on to appearances and in fact the girl has been showing her witch-y side, throwing back the liquor with

apparent relish and riding the strangled canine hard.

This is permissive abandon, bestiality and bad messy fun. There seems to be no moral amidst the searing colors and libidinous sweeps of paint. From the contemporary awareness of a world with a political climate of masked purposes, incomprehensible corporate power-mongering and materialistic prompts, it's a relief to spend some quality time following the scatological incorrectness of McCloskey's girl and dog.

He is uncovering malaise, recognizing it and placing it in the face of a complacent society with as much aplomb as he can muster with his expressionistic handling of the picture surface. None of the cucumber cool of the early pop guys; he pushes and pulls the surface with vehemence and extracts the energy needed for his un-didactic wake-up call.

Jesse McCloskey is the *Red Bull* of pop.



Attack In The Park – 2005, Collage and Tempera on paper, 38 x 50 inches



Park Art – 2002, Paint and paper collage on paper, 38 x 50 inches





The Threat – 2005, Collage and Tempera on paper, 38 x 50 inches

Castration Enforcement – 2005, Collage and Tempera on paper, 38 x 50 inches





Drinking Party II – 2005, Paint and paper collage on paper, 22 x 30 inches

Red Sox – 2003, Paint and paper collage on paper, 22 x 30 inches





Pussy Devil – 2007, Vinyl paint and paper collage on paper, 22 x 30 inches





Devil Girl – 2007, Vinyl paint and paper collage on paper, 50 x 38 inches



Elixir – 2007, Vinyl paint and paper collage on canvas, 48 x 60 inches





Dora Good – 2007, Vinyl paint and paper collage on canvas, 50 x 60 inches





Ann Putnam - 2007, Hand painted block print, 24 x 18 inches



Devil Pissing Pussy - 2007, Hand painted block print, 24 x 18 inches



Life - 2008, Hand painted block print, 18 x 24 inches

Death and the Maiden - 2007, Hand painted block print, 18 x 24 inches







Death, Devil, Riding a Woman in the Graveyard - 2007, Hand painted block print, 18 x 24 inches



Three Witches - 2007, Hand painted block print, 24 x 30 inches



Extra Lipstick - 2007, Hand painted block print, 24 x 30 inches



## Ed Giordano Jr.

The acknowledgement of superficiality that the pop pioneers purported was punctuated by the poignancy of works by George Segal and Edward Kienholz. Both eschewed the religiosity towards materials that had come before them by using ordinary plaster as the end result rather than a step in the process of sculpting. They took found objects and set the context. They addressed topics that were psychological and they looked at contemporary consumerist orientation as the root of dysfunction. 'Loneliness' was not just a word in a pop song but the dripping faucet that was draining the resources from a morally depleted society.

Giordano had studied with Segal and the influence is felt. But he has distilled the final product, bringing the angst to its most intoxicating level and the plaster personifications cloy with a chalky under taste like the suspicious milky drink in Rosemary's baby served as an annunciation with a slightly demonic gene.

Ed Giordano's prognosis is bleak. His typical man seems unable to move off of his solitary and compromised perch. He is imprisoned in words, covered by statistics, pinioned by the message of modernity rather than set free by the fictionalization of his possibilities. There is no room to soar upwards and pursue the divine quest of finding himself. The 'overman' is someone else. This sad and stymied 'ordinary guy' is not going anywhere. This is the pith of the sorry matter and with true psychological zeitgeist the pieces transcend intrinsic commonality through the monumental truth of angst. By confronting the locked position of this vision of man, the opposite is invoked - freedom and all of it's liberating facets.

The diminutive size and rough rendering points a way around the grand philosophical mysteries without having to be overwhelmed by the impossibility of understanding. The more likely fault - missing the mark



Untitled (Red Gauze) - 2008, Plaster, wood, paint, tape gauze, 61 x 8 x 9 inches



Untitled (Box Front) - 2008, Plaster, wood, paint, 12.5 x 5.5 x 6 inches

- looses the stigmata of ignorance. The potential for expressing the human condition has been realised in these unassuming figures. They pose no threat upon our need to stay at least somewhat comfortable within our sentence. In fact, they grant a reverse dignity to our common plight by vesting humility with a presence, a powerful sculptural identity.

Ed Giordano's sculpture opens a door to compassion. It is void of arrogance and admits no challenge. It exists with a stubborn right to be blindly depressed. We feel sorry that it had gone this far, that the straight jacket has fused like a second skin, that we have not taken better care and been more attentive to this diminishing stature. It is his unflinching persistence that modernity is serving up less than it is capable of, that under-achievement is expected, that the weight of life is not equal to the potential for ascension that is first and foremost on his agenda. He is undauntingly pessimistic.

This is Ed's Fresh Pop - he insists the ingredients are toxic. His is not a bubbly intake but a draught with a bitter aftertaste.



Untitled (Bound) - 2008, Plaster, wood, paint, 22 x 12 x 7 inches





Untitled (Recline) - 2008, Plaster, wood, paint, 57.5 x 5 x 8 inches



Untitled (Upside-down) - 2008, Plaster, wood, paint, 17 x 6 x 7.5 inches



Father Domine - 1998, Plaster, wood, paint, 7.5 x 12 x 18 inches



## Billy Copley

**Born:** Los Angeles, California, 1946

**Education:**

Chouinard Art School, Los Angeles, California, 1964-1965

**Professional Experience:**

Assistant to James Metcalf (Sculptor), Paris, France 1965-1967

**Solo Exhibitions**

- 1992 Richard Green Gallery, Los Angeles, CA., *"Works on Paper"*
- 1993 Peder Bonnier Gallery, New York, NY., *"Works on Paper"*
- 1997 Brian Gross Fine Art, San Francisco, CA., *"Cereal Boxes", Works on Canvas.*
- 2004 Kathleen Cullen Fine Art, New York, N.Y. *"Paintings, Drawings and Prints"*

**Selected Group Shows**

- 1972 Guggenheim Museum, New York, N.Y., *"Ten Young Artists, Theodoron Awards"*
- 1985 Phyllis Kind Gallery, New York, N.Y., *"Splendidly not Simple Painting"*
- 1989 Lorence Monk Gallery, New York, N.Y., *"Drawings"*
- 1989 Weatherspoon Art Gallery, Greensboro, North Carolina. *"Art on Paper"*
- 1990 Massimo Audiello Gallery, New York, NY. *"The Last Laugh: Irony, Humor, Self Mockery and Derision"*, curated by Tricia Collins and Richard Milazzo
- 1990 The Drawing Center, New York, NY., *"Selections 49"*.
- 1990 Galerie Antoine Candau (Espace Dieu), Paris, France. *All Quiet on the Western Front*
- 1991 Mincher-Wilcox Gallery, San Francisco, CA. *"Telekinesis"*, curated by Patrick Painter
- 1991 Fay Gold Gallery, Atlanta, GA. *"Outside America: Going into the '90's."* Curated by Tricia Collins and Richard Milazzo
- 1991 Claudio Bottello Gallery, Turin, Italy. *"A New Low."* curated by Tricia Collins and Richard Milazzo
- 2004 International Print Center New York, New York, N.Y., *"Prints 2004/Spring"*
- 2005 Edward Thorp Gallery, New York, N.Y., *"Summer Sustenance"*
- 2007 Weatherspoon Art Museum, Greensboro, North Carolina. *"Art on Paper"*, November 12
- 2007 Rose Burlingham Contemporary Watercolor, New York, N.Y. *"Watercolor"*
- 2007 Heskin Contemporary, New York, N.Y., *"En Masse"*
- 2007 Pace Prints, New York, N.Y., *"New Editions"*
- 2007 Lennon, Weinberg Gallery, New York, N.Y., *"TAKING SHAPE"*
- 2007 Ingrid Dinter Fine Art, New York, N.Y. *"Death and Love in Modern Times"*
- 2007 Francis M. Naumann Fine Art LLC. New York, N.Y. *"The Demoiselles Revisited"*
- 2008 Lennon, Weinberg Gallery, New York, N.Y. *"Paper"*

**Collections**

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY

The Hirschorn Museum, Washington, DC

The Weatherspoon Art Gallery, Greensboro, NC

Chase Manhattan Bank, New York, NY

Holiday Inn Corporation, MD

Taco Bell Corporation, San Diego, CA

The Walt Disney Company, Inc., New York, NY

## **Jesse McCloskey**

### **SOLO SHOWS**

Christopher Henry Gallery, New York, NY	2008
Christopher Henry Gallery, New York, NY	2006
Capla Kesting Fine Art Williamsburg Brooklyn	2005
Brooklyn Brewery Exhibition Hall, Williamsburg	2000
Parkside Studio Open House	1999
Parkside Studio Open House	1998

### **GROUP SHOWS**

The Grolier Club/ Yaddo alumni	
<i>/ Shimmering Light Across American Culture/ NYC NY</i>	2008
Headbones, The Drawers, Highly Recommended	2007
Headbones, The Drawers, Inaugural Drawer's Selection	2006
Capla Kesting fine art, Preview show Williamsburg brooklyn	2005
Chicago Art Fair/ATM Gallery	2004
Barrett Art Center New Hudson River School exhibition	2003
Islip Art Museum "Noah's Ark" group exhibition	2003
Swain School Alumni and Faculty Show	2003
The Hudson River Museum Auction	2003
The Rye Arts Center	2001,2003
EMC2 Gallery , Williamsburg	2002
Side Show Gallery, Williamsburg	2002
Yaddo Variations 2002 Benefit	2002
Painting Center, Soho,exhibition with Paul Resika, David L Smith	1999
Searles/Spicer Showroom	1997
Cast Iron Gallery, Soho	1996

### **RESIDENCIES**

Yaddo	2006/2007
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### **FELLOWSHIPS**

Fellow in Printmaking/ Drawing/ Artists' Books from the New York Foundation for the Arts	2005
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### **REVIEWS**

The New York Times, work reviewed and reproduced by: Critic, Helen A Harrison	7/13/03
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## **Ed Giordano Jr.**

### **Education**

- 1985 M.S. Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York. Master of Science in Communication Design. Thesis Title: The Significance of Assemblage on 20th Century Design.
- 1975 Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island. Bachelor of Fine Arts with a major in sculpture.

### **Grants & Awards**

- 2008 Artist Student's League Artist Residency, Rockland County, NY
- 2003 Violette de Mazia Trust at The Barnes Foundation: Advanced Critical Studies in the Fine Arts.
- 2002 The Pollack-Krasner Foundation.
- 2001 Violette de Mazia Trust at The Barnes Foundation: Advanced Theoretical Studies in the Fine Arts.
- 1997 The Pollack-Krasner Foundation.
- 1995 The Joan Mitchell Foundation.  
Sculpture Space, Inc. Utica, New York.
- 1994 Delfina Studio Trust, London, England.  
Sculpture Space, Inc. Utica, New York.
- 1992 The Marie Walsh Sharpe Foundation, New York.
- 1988 Hohenberg Family Foundation Traveling Fellowship; Italy
- 1987 Robert Lehman Foundation.

### **Exhibitions**

- 2008 DJT Fine Art, Guest Artist, New York, NY
- 2006 Inaugural Drawers' Selection, Headbones Gallery, Toronto, ON
- 2006 New York Public Library, Aguliar Gallery, New York, NY, Solo Show
- 2005 Ocean County College, Fine Arts Center Gallery - Toms River, New Jersey, Solo Show
- 2002 Ace Gallery-Sharpe Foundation Tenth Year Group Show.  
Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Group Show.
- 2001 New York Studio School Gallery, Group Show.  
Sculpture Space, New York City Auction.
- 1999 d'Art Mag. LL Gallery: curated by Leeza Ahmady & R. Curcio
- 1998 "Humanoid": Genovese/Sullivan Gallery, Boston, Mass.
- 1997 Persona: 450 Gallery, New York, N.Y. Group Show.

- 1996 New York Studio School Gallery, New York. Group Show.  
"Closed and Open Form" curated by Michael Brenson.
- 1995 The Police Building - "Behind the Eight Ball" Group show curated by Susan Mastrangelo.
- 1993 Bernard Toale Gallery, Boston, Mass. Group Show.  
New York Studio School Gallery, New York. Group show curated by Judy Rifka.  
The Marie Walsh Sharpe Foundation, New York.
- 1992 White Columns, New York. Group Show.
- 1991 Drexel University sponsored artist's studio exhibition,
- 1988 New York Studio School Gallery, New York. Group Show.
- 1983 Tweed Gallery, Plainfield, New Jersey. Group Show.
- 1982 Rowan State College (formerly Glassboro State College) Glassboro, New Jersey.

### **Collections**

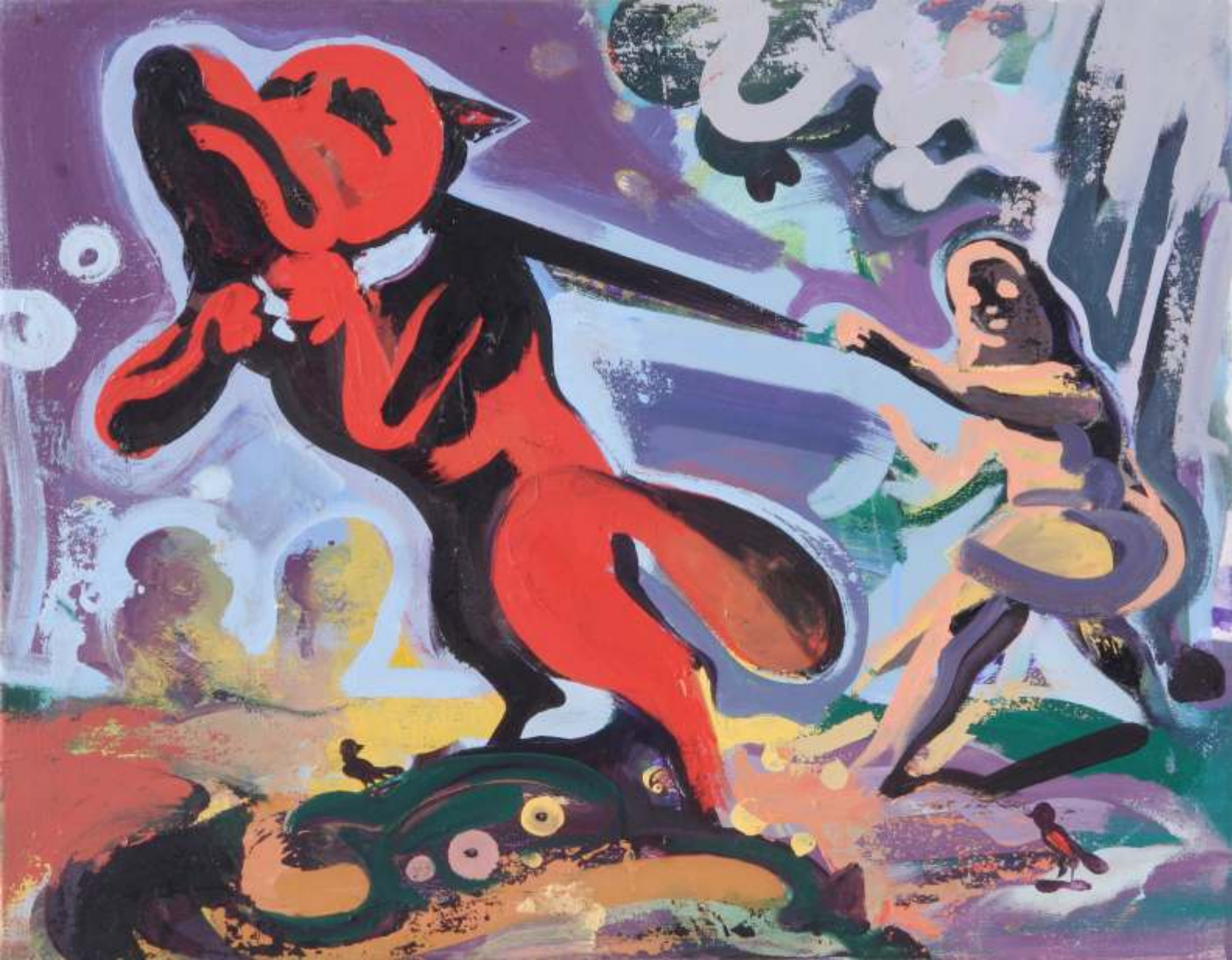
Ardente Collection, Providence, Rhode Island  
Dr. Andrew Messina Collection, Albany, New York  
Jose Pincay Delgado Collection, New York, N.Y.  
Ivy Club, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey  
Alien Scheuch Collection, New York, N.Y.  
Scheuch Collection, Hartford, Connecticut  
Oliver Wyman & Company, New York, N.Y.  
Reeve Collection, Stanford, Connecticut.  
Alexander Savitsky, Magnitogorsk City, Russia.  
Hasko De Jong Collection, Asterdam, The Netherlands.

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**Billy Copley** Ed Giordano Jr. **Jesse McCloskey**