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Digital images available (see thumbnails
 on final page of this document)



**EXHIBITION COMMON SENSE: ART AND THE QUOTIDIAN
 EXPLORES THE 20TH CENTURY PROBLEM OF THE EVERYDAY**

Exhibition dates: February 6 through May 23, 2010
 Preview party: Friday, February 5, 5–8 p.m.

Minneapolis, MN—The Weisman Art Museum presents *Common Sense: Art and the Quotidian*, opening February 6, 2010 and running through May 23, 2010. The public is invited to attend a free preview party on Friday, February 5, 2009 from 5 to 8 p.m..

The exhibition explores the problem of the everyday in twentieth century art. *Common Sense: Art and the Quotidian* examines how artists of the twentieth century used themes of the common—in the sense of ordinary (“common man”), in the sense of shared (“common ground”), and in the sense of everyday (“common behavior”)—to challenge accepted ideas of what an art work should be.

For example, twentieth century artist Andy Warhol, whose print *New England Clam Chowder* appears in the exhibition, used “subject matter that was low and common,” according to WAM associate curator Diane Mullin. “People thought it was too common to be art. They wondered, ‘Why would you make a painting of a soup can?’” But the fact that he raised those very issues, Mullin says, is what made Warhol so innovative. He called into question the public’s expectations and rules about what art should be. “Pop artists like Warhol were using ordinary subject matter to critique the prevailing methods and themes of art at the time,” Mullin said.

Earlier in the century, American artists like Lewis Hine and Isabel Bishop depicted common people—urban denizens and New York laborers. Painter Thomas Hart Benton depicted midwesterners engaged in common activities like conversation. Artists later in the century continued this theme of the common—artists like David Goldes, who photographed everyday people at Minnesota county fairs in the 1980s.

Common Sense also explores the idea of common, or shared, ideals and values. According to Mullin, all art needs a viewer to complete and refine its meaning—and as such, that meaning changes over time and for different audiences, users, and participants. “In a larger sense,” Mullin says, “art can be thought of as a shared belief in the value of discourse, where ideas are put into play in a common arena and then new ideas and values emerge.”

“People often think of art as something that’s separate from us,” said Mullin. “The artists in this exhibition try to make art more connected to our lives, more sublime, and more meaningful to us because we have a common stake in it. It’s shared.”

Lastly, *Common Sense* also takes a look at artists whose work exemplifies common behaviors—things they do every day. For example, R. Justin Stewart’s *self-portrait (bus October 7th–November 6th)* traces his use of the public bus system for a month.

“There’s always a conflict between the individual and the common, as well as between the notion of ordinary and extraordinary,” Mullin said. “We tend to think of individuality and commonality as opposites, but that’s not necessarily the case. They’re closer than one might think. That tension is at the core of this exhibition.”



press
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weisman art museum

RELATED PROGRAMS

Unless otherwise noted, programs are free and take place at the Weisman Art Museum.

Preview Party

Friday, February 5, 5–8 p.m.

Be among the first to see the engaging work in *Common Sense: Art and the Quotidian*. Enjoy complimentary hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. Limited parking is available in the Weisman garage. Additional parking is available in the East River Road Garage. More information at weisman.umn.edu/visiting

Gallery tours for members

WAM a.m./p.m.

Tuesday, February 2, 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

These monthly events for Weisman members only include a guided gallery tour followed by a reception with light refreshments. Come for a morning or late afternoon tour. This month's tour focuses on the exhibition *Surface Quality*.

Family education program

Weekends with the Weisguides

Saturday, February 13 and Sunday, February 14, 1:30 p.m.–3 p.m.

Investigate the diversity of art! The Weisguides, WAM's team of trained art gallery teachers, lead families and art lovers of any age in tours, lively discussions, and hand-on art-making activities. Bring yourself, a friend, or the whole family—and experience the Weisman in a brand new way.

Gallery tours for members

WAM a.m./p.m.

Tuesday, March 2, 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

These monthly events for Weisman members only include a guided gallery tour followed by a reception with light refreshments. Come for a morning or late afternoon tour. This month's tour focuses on the exhibition *Common Sense*.

Family education program

Weekends with the Weisguides

Saturday, March 13 and Sunday, March 14, 1:30 p.m.–3 p.m.

Investigate the diversity of art! The Weisguides, WAM's team of trained art gallery teachers, lead families and art lovers of any age in tours, lively discussions, and hand-on art-making activities. Bring yourself, a friend, or the whole family—and experience the Weisman in a brand new way.

WAM Chatter

Art Can't Be Common, Right?

Thursday, March 25, 7 p.m.

In this panel discussion, scholars and artists explore whether or not art can ever be considered common. The event is presented in the popular pecha kucha presentation format, with each speaker presenting twenty slides for exactly twenty seconds each.

Weisman Art Museum

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(continued)

RELATED PROGRAMS (continued)

Late-night series

WAMplified! featuring Har Mar Superstar

Saturday, April 3, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Tickets: \$18; \$14 WAM members and students.

Tickets go on sale Friday, January 22, 2010. For tickets, visit weisman.umn.edu or call 612-624-2345.

Music is at the center of WAMplified!, a new late-night series at the Weisman. Offered three times a year, WAMplified! presents a live performance by a band or musician with a thematic connection to the major exhibition in the galleries. In conjunction with the exhibition *Common Sense: Art and the Quotidian*, Har Mar Superstar headlines this installment. Each WAMplified! event also includes food, drink, a video game lounge, and a midnight tour of the exhibition led by a curator or artist. Read more about the music at harmarsuperstar.com

Gallery tours for members

WAM a.m./p.m.

Tuesday, April 6, 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

These monthly events for Weisman members only include a guided gallery tour followed by a reception with light refreshments. Come for a morning or late afternoon tour. This month's tour focuses on the exhibition *Everyday Life at the Crossroads of the Ancient Mediterranean*.

Family education program

Weekends with the Weisguides

Saturday, April 10 and Sunday, April 11, 1:30 p.m.–3 p.m.

Investigate the diversity of art! The Weisguides, WAM's team of trained art gallery teachers, lead families and art lovers of any age in tours, lively discussions, and hand-on art-making activities. Bring yourself, a friend, or the whole family—and experience the Weisman in a brand new way.

Gallery tours for members

WAM a.m./p.m.

Tuesday, May 4, 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

These monthly events for Weisman members only include a guided gallery tour followed by a reception with light refreshments. Come for a morning or late afternoon tour. This month's tour focuses on the topic of architecture.

Family education program

Weekends with the Weisguides

Saturday, May 8 and Sunday, May 9, 1:30 p.m.–3 p.m.

Investigate the diversity of art! The Weisguides, WAM's team of trained art gallery teachers, lead families and art lovers of any age in tours, lively discussions, and hand-on art-making activities. Bring yourself, a friend, or the whole family—and experience the Weisman in a brand new way.

ART AND THE EVERYDAY: A YEARLONG EXPLOARTION AT THE WEISMAN

Popular social and cultural trends (Home videos posted on YouTube; personal photos shared with the world on Flickr; the widespread appeal of the Do-It-Yourself cable channel) indicate a pervasive interest in “everyday” life in America.

“The status of the art object has, since classical times, been understood as transcendental and separate from common experience,” curator Diane Mullin explained. “The moment seems ripe to think about what our definition of everyday life is. Because of a new global culture, our shifting economic situation, our new political realities—how do those forces shape our collective notion of the everyday? WAM as an art museum can look at how artists have thought about this problem. WAM’s strength in modern American art makes us uniquely qualified to explore this tangle of the everyday.” The Weisman’s 2009–10 exhibition season explores themes of the common and the everyday in art. The yearlong exploration began with WAM’s fall exhibition, *To Have It About You: The Dorothy and Herbert Vogel Collection*. It continues with *Common Sense* and concludes with the summer exhibition *Ordinarily Here* (see below).

ORDINARILY HERE

June 19–October* 2010

To close the year-long series exploring art and the everyday, the Weisman will present an exhibition of Minnesota artists whose work addresses the issue of art and everyday life. Artists will include Elizabeth Simonson, Vince Leo, and David Lefkowitz, among others. Programs will include artist tours in the galleries and a WAM Chatter with selected artists moderated by curator Diane Mullin.

*date TBD

OTHER EXHIBITIONS AT THE WEISMAN

A REVERENCE FOR MATERIALS: WOODWORKERS LOOK AT TRADITIONAL KOREAN FURNITURE

Through February 7, 2010

SURFACE QUALITY

Through June 13, 2010

EVERYDAY LIFE AT THE CROSSROADS OF THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

March 6–June 13, 2010

ABOUT THE WEISMAN

Since its origin in 1934, the Weisman Art Museum has been a teaching museum for the University of Minnesota. Today, education remains central to the museum’s mission to make the arts accessible – intellectually, emotionally, and physically – to the University and public communities.

The Weisman Art Museum is located at 333 East River Road, Minneapolis, on the University of Minnesota campus. Admission to exhibition galleries is always free. For more information on museum hours, driving directions, and parking options, visit weisman.umn.edu.

COMMON SENSE: ART AND THE QUOTIDIAN

Digital images available upon request. Email Christopher James at james052@umn.edu or call 612-625-9685.

REPRESENTATIVE IMAGES:



IMAGE CREDITS

Joseph Beuys, *Noiseless Blackboard Eraser*, 1974, felt, ink on paper (top left)

Louis Hine, *Fresh Air for the Baby, East Side, New York*, 1907-1915, photograph (top right)

Thomas Hart Benton, *Gateside Conversation*, 1946, lithograph on paper (bottom left)

Nina Katchadourian, *Untitled (salt and pepper shakers)*, 2007, glass, metal, plastic shavings (bottom right)