

Well Done, Professor!

(Translated from French)

The Civilization of Llhuros | Akron Art Institute
The Akron Beacon Journal | Carolyn Carr | September 24, 1972

The Civilization of Llhuros on view at the Akron Art Institute until Oct. 23 is a marvelous exhibition.

Conceived by Norman Daly, a professor of art and sculpture at Cornell University, this civilization, a wholly fictitious creation, is, on one level, wonderful spoof or the art history and archaeology world with its precious pompous verbiage which it uses to justify its scholarship.

ANYONE who has ever had to deal with the writings of those scholars of ancient civilizations will be regaled by the way Daly divides and subdivides his cultures, by his extensive citing of sources which are always written by someone with an elaborate name such as Sir Hilion Rupert Bailey, and by his many references to articles in foreign journals (which if they add no significant information prove the author's linguistic ability)

Heaping cliché upon cliché, Professor (I have this overwhelming desire to write Confessor) Daly quotes ancient literary references about Llhuros, as well as the ancient poetry of the civilization. His poems have an eloquent cadence, but they are often totally absurd in what they say.

Poking fun at the museum world, Daly creates labels entitled "Oval Cista with Thruhai Finial," with a translation "Toilet Box with Bird on Top" (why don't they just say so in the first place?), followed by self-evident descriptions of material and the state of preservation.

IF DALY'S exhibition were only a spoof, it would not work as well as it does. It succeeds (I shudder at the thought of falling into the very trap that Daly has exposed) not only because of the totality of his idea and the completeness of his execution, but because the objects succeed as self-sufficient statements outside the context of the show. Their formal, spatial and textural properties make them viable entities.

For the most part, Daly works with found objects; an orange juice squeezer is given a bronze patina and becomes a vessel for oil, a shovel handle becomes an ancient weapon, while a honda packing case becomes a bronze gateway.

The use of contemporary ephemera can of course be traced back to the use of trash by Picasso in the Archaic Modern Phase of early 20th Century art. While Daly's total concept is involved with a comment on our contemporary society, his individual images seem concerned primarily with the transformation of the object.

THAT DALY should envision his work in the context of an environment is also part of the phenomena of the Late Modern Phase. The belief that art is the totality of one's experience may have its origins in the work of Jackson Pollack or in Happenings, depending on which source you wish to cite (re: C.K. Carr, *Recherches sur les origines des Tableaux*).

Why did Daly begin to work in the pseudo anthropological manner? Because he wanted the viewer to really look at his work. By creating this unusual or paradoxical context for his pieces, he can get his audience to get rid of its preconceived notions and expectations and come to his work with more open and receptive sensibilities.



Oval Cista with Thruhai Finial

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Art



By
Carolyn Carr

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Explanation

By Artist

Norman Daly, creator of "The Civilization of Lihuros," will give a lecture Monday at 8 p. m. on the mythical society he has on exhibit.

The lecture will be in the Art Institute auditorium. Admission is \$1 for non-members of the Art Institute.

Included in Daly's lecture will be an explanation of how and why "The Civilization of Lihuros" was created and how that society relates to our contemporary society.