

WELCOME

FROM BRIAN GOSLOW

Welcome to our first issue of 2018.

We start the new year with an issue filled with artwork and exhibitions covering many of the timely issues on our readers' minds through reviews of shows that were hanging as we went to press; we couldn't have done it without the help of curators, gallery directors and artists who shared their work with our writers so we could preview as-yet-unopened shows.

We address the environment and global warming through reviews of "We Might Climb a Tree, at Least," a group exhibition celebrating the writings of **Henry David Thoreau** at **Maine Museum of Photographic Arts** (by **Taryn Plumb**); "**James Chisholm: Reflections: Ocean Waves, Inland Streams**" at **Endicott College** (by **James Foritano**); and the artistry of **Clifford W. Ashley** in "Thou Shalt Knot" at **New Bedford Whaling Museum** by **Don Wilkinson**, which serves as a reminder of how much maritime history is part of our New England heritage. I had the pleasure of previewing "Expeditions: From Iceland to the Gobi Desert" that opens February 1 at **Paula Estey Gallery**.

As the #MeToo movement addressed issues kept hidden for decades, **Lisa Mikulski** was reviewing "Outspoken: 7 Women Photographers" at **Hess Gallery** at **Pine Manor College** while **J. Fatima Martins** was meeting with **Marsha Nouritza Odabashian**, president of the Boston chapter of **Women's Caucus for Art**, to discuss the two-part "Courting the Uncontrollable" exhibition at **Galatea Fine Art** in Boston's SoWa District this January and February.

The power of art to make a significant difference in people's lives is celebrated in "Mindful: Exploring Mental Health Through Art" at **Fuller Craft Museum** as explored by **Beth Neville**, and the **Artists Research Collaborative (ARC)**, a professional workspace and gallery collaborative between the Lowell arts community and the **University of Massachusetts Lowell**; it's spotlighted by **Flavia Cigliano**.

In early December, publisher **Kaveh Mojtabai** and national correspondent **Nancy Nesvet** were in Miami Beach for **Art Basel Miami Beach 2017** and **Miami Art Fair Week**; we're proud of how much the timeliness of shows in the New England region mirror what was on display to the international audience there, and that we've been invited once again to return to Basel, Switzerland this June to represent the region as an exhibitor in the Magazines Sector at **Art Basel 2018**.

While in South Beach, we did double-duty reporting, both for the moment on our social media pages on our **Zine**, **Instagram** and **Facebook** pages, and in preparation for this issue. Our magazine coverage is complemented by interviews Nesvet conducted in Miami Beach that you can view at [youtube.com/artscopemagazine](https://www.youtube.com/artscopemagazine) – where we'll have increased video coverage of exhibitions and artist talks in 2018.

By all accounts, attendance at these fairs reached record highs; global art sales are at an all-time high. Where traditionally established names filled the majority of the Basel halls, Nesvet reported that

this year's breakdown was 60-40 in favor of contemporary artists.

We're seeing this as well throughout the museums and galleries we cover in our **Artscope** pages, where we've always aimed to present New England artists alongside the best from around the world, with the goal of attracting new patrons, collectors and buyers to strengthen the region's creative economy.

We strive to accomplish this through the encouragement of cohesive and comprehensive dialogue between all segments of the arts community, and hope that within each issue, we have something for everyone, regardless of their tastes and interests.

Along these lines, Mojtabai and I discussed an article he had just read where gallerist **Larry Gagosian** stated that art is not a luxury item. "This is what we've been doing to the extent that art is necessary for humanity, and we're working toward making it visible or possible for everyone," Mojtabai told me, noting that the difference was that Gagosian sells his work at luxury item prices while we share all the options available, whether one is looking for artwork that doubles as a long-term investment or something that captures the flavor they want for their first apartment. We always appreciate our readers telling us they value this aspect of our coverage.

Many times, when we attend group shows, we take visual and mental notes on artists whose work grabs our attention and keep them in mind for future issues. It might be the next magazine, or one a few

years later, but we do eventually get the chance to cover them.

I first saw **Betsy Silverman's** collage creations of Boston landmarks while assisting Mojtabai in jurying the **Newton Open Studios Juried Art Fest** at Newton City Hall in 2016; Mikulski previews her "Semblances of Place" exhibition at the **Concord Center for the Visual Arts**.

More recently, Mojtabai was at **Catamount Arts** in Saint Johnsbury, Vermont, as a guest speaker at the opening reception for their current **ArtsConnect** exhibition which was attended by hundreds of people; after seeing the work, at his recommendation, the show is reviewed here by **Elayne Clift**.

Throughout the composition of this issue, the sudden loss of beloved sculptor and painter **David A. Lang** due to a tragic accident hung over us. Only hours before, I had made plans to have lunch with him the following week and he put in a good word for his friend, photographer **David Lee Black**, whose exhibition was opening that weekend. What was initially going to be a Facebook post announcing the dates turned into a series of questions for an **Artscope** zine post into a full feature for this issue. We honor Lang's request to expose his friend's work, and through Black's words, celebrate the life of a man who touched many.

Please enjoy this issue as much as we enjoyed covering the exhibitions, galleries and artists within its pages. May the year ahead be soulfully and artistically rewarding for you.

Brian Goslow, Managing Editor
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Passage, #17 in a series of 20, Nikon D18 digital camera, printed on museum quality rag paper, 16" x 20".



A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST...

DAVID LEE BLACK

Photographer David Lee Black's resume is one of a well-lived and experienced life: he earned a BS in music education at the University of Missouri in 1983 and was a Tullaloughaun Residency Fellowship Recipient in County Clare, Ireland in 2012 and 2014; professional career highlights include serving as associate artistic director for Orchestrations Conceptual Art, Inc. since 1985; as a juvenile parole officer for the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services from 1987-2014; as an expressive art ther-

apist with New England Expressive Arts Therapy; as a visual artist with Rhode Island's legendary Big Nazo puppet troupe and as artist-in-residence at David A. Lang Studios in Natick, Massachusetts.

It was Lang who urged Black to contact me in early November to help publicize "Passage," his then-upcoming exhibition at the Jewish Community Center in Worcester, Massachusetts. I received an email with a complete set of images from the show and its mission statement, which would prove eerily

timely: "Where do we go when we die? Is death only another moment? Where do we come from? What exactly is this dream between birth and dying?"

The following day, Lang called me to confirm I had received Black's email. A few hours later, he'd lose his life in a horrible traffic accident as he was returning home from the studio. In the aftermath, Black's photograph of a smiling Lang in Ireland earlier in the month would serve as a memorial to the man and his soul.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

DAVID LEE BLACK



David A. Lang in his beloved town of Ennistymon, Co. Clare in the basement of Nan Ahern's pub.

Three days later, Black would be in attendance at the opening for his "Passage" exhibition at the Jewish Community Center, one of many venues where his work was and is currently showing. Perhaps it's true the best way to survive our most difficult moments is to keep busy.

I had planned to send some of these questions to Black prior to the JCC opening for an article on Artscope's online zine; Lang's passing delayed that act, leading to a larger discussion of not only Black's exhibition and his many other shows in the New England region, but his friendship with Lang.

BRIAN GOSLOW: Tell me about the work in your "Passage" exhibition and how you came to show it at the Jewish Community Center...

DAVID LEE BLACK: "Passage" was initially inspired by working in David Lang's Natick studio, where a collection of vintage wooden stepladders and a large bolt of translucent fabric caught my eye. I had been photographing numerous contemporary ballet dancers juxtaposed in unusual environments, so having the ballerina models interact with the ladders and fabric just came together naturally. The location of the shoot was in a conservation area directly across from David's studio. David urged me to have the body of work printed on as high quality of paper as possible and exhibit it. [Photographer] Ron Rosenstock was contacted. He reviewed my work and invited me to show at the Worcester JCC Gallery.

I had been wrestling with current events. Perhaps as a distraction I wanted this body of work to explore larger questions of the human condition: infinity, eternity and the barriers that appear to hinder/help the process of understanding.

BG: How long had you planned out the photo sessions that lead to the final product?

DLB: Approximately eight years ago, David Lang and I were discussing a collaborative project involving thresholds, barriers and passages. Time passed and other projects came up, but once the materials, the models and the location were identified, the shoot and the majority of the editing was completed within one week.

BG: Who were the people who served as your models and what are you trying to convey through the clothing they're wearing?

DLB: Professional ballerinas Meredith Wells and Rachel Plattus were selected as models. I had done several conceptual shoots with Meredith in the past and she had recommended Rachel as

the second model. I suggested that the attire be "ethereal" and in keeping with the natural setting.

BG: A few people were a bit sensitive to the fact that some of their bodies were revealed through the material; what were their concerns and how did you address them? Was that reaction something you had anticipated (or sometimes anticipate in creating your work)? Some artists try to push limits for a reaction but I don't think this was your intention with this series...

DLB: Each model was fully clothed and often draped in fabric in a sense of past and present or ancient distant future. When it was brought to my attention that the show may have to be altered or removed due to complaints of "vulgarity, S & M or pornographic themes," I was at first dumbfounded as that was not my vision at all. But then I embraced the controversy as that is what art is supposed to do – rattle the cages, shake the snow globes, evoke and provoke emotions, good, bad or ugly. The viewer or ultimate observer brings

their own baggage, or at least a small tote, into the viewing experience and that is totally out of my control.

The Worcester JCC staff was amazingly gracious and wonderfully supportive throughout this process. Ron Rosenstock wrote a beautiful letter in support of my work remaining as-is, intact, and within a few days, the entire issue was a moot point.

BG: I believe you've already sold a few works from this show...

DLB: Yes! I am very happy to say that some work was sold within one week.

BG: A week prior to your opening, you were in Ireland with David A. Lang; a few days after you returned, we lost him through an unfortunate accident. What was the time in Ireland like with him and what plans did he have upon returning home? How had David helped you with your work?

DLB: David Lang was my mentor, guide and best friend. It is very difficult to try and articulate the deep sense of loss that remains. David had phoned me often to urge me to continue with "Passage" and helped in the selection of the final images. David introduced me to fine art reproduction printer David Seccaro, who printed the work.

I worked with David in the Natick Studio, assisted on installations and photographed him and his work.

I had been to Ireland on numerous occasions with David. The magical undefined energy of Ireland's landscape, people and history quickly resonated with me. We explored abandoned Irish farmhouses, cemeteries, art galleries and convents, liberated found objects to be used later in art, made music and sat in countless kitchens of friends having brown bread and tea.

His beloved Irish farmhouse, Tullyloughran in County Clare, is a very special place. This last 10-day trip to Ireland was with David, his wonderful brother Bob Lang and myself. We had the time of our lives. It was absolutely inspiring to bear witness to David playing the bodhrán in late night Irish music sessions, visiting dear friends and working around the house with a steady rhythm. David brought a large body of photographic work to Ireland and secured a show at the Courthouse Gallery in Ennistymon for May 2019.

As I write this, you've also got work on view at the Cambridge Art Association, Attleboro Art Museum (in the members exhibition through February 1), on display at Alden Park restaurant in Plymouth, Mass., the Providence Biltmore hotel and the Proctor Mansion Inn and the Looking Glass in Wrentham, Mass. And you'll have work in the "Space Invaders" juried exhibition at Fountain Street Fine Art that runs from January 3-28. How have you kept up with all of these obligations and how does your work differ from venue to venue?

DLB: I work hard at something that I love. It is that simple. I am lucky to have a supportive family and friends who have and put up with the quirky artist's life.

How often do you photograph and what are your current projects - and goals for 2018?

DLB: I usually have a camera with me at all times and photograph something daily, often for my own curiosity or amusement. I have an upcoming photography project involving the abandoned Superman Building in Providence, Rhode Island; some really interesting portraiture work and a return to the theme of barriers, veils and thresholds using a kiddie pool, vintage fabric and a Russian model. Recently I have created several sculpture pieces and look forward to exploring that medium further. 2018 looks promising with shows at Galatea Fine Art Gallery, Cambridge Art Association, Attleboro Arts Museum and hopefully a return to beloved County Clare, Ireland.

(After its conclusion at the Jewish Community Center Worcester, "David Lee Black: Passage" can be seen from January 19 through February 14 at the James Library and Center for the Arts, 24 West St., Norwell, Mass. To see more of Black's work, visit <https://www.zhibit.org/davidleeblack>.)



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