

# Pen&Inc.

Newsletter of Hamilton Artists' Inc.

Vol. 2 Issue 4

Autumn 1990



Jonathan Borofsky, *Self Portrait*, 1980, photograph, 75.5 x 104 cm

## Numbering: Curatorial Laboratory Project

by Kelly Hilton

One potatoe, two potatoe, three potatoe, four; five potatoe, six potatoe, seven potatoe, more, and more, and more. Modern man has endured three social-economic revolutions, thus far; the industrial, the technological, and presently, the information revolution.

With the advent of the computer, there is now more information, gathered more quickly, travelling the globe readily. In the midst of this revolution humans find themselves emersed in a sea of works, bombarded with numbers, living with a barrage of codes and signs, all which signify the modern age.

Ihor Holubizky, curator of the Art Gallery of Hamilton, has been able to mentally remove himself from the information revolution, to step outside language a communicative system in order to look inward at its linguistic mechanics and social references. Holubizky commented on "the increasing influence of numbers and coding systems in contemporary life" in his recent exhibition at the AGH.

The exhibit, titled **Numbering**, was the first in a series of eight exhibits which together make up Holubizky's Curatorial Laboratory Project.

Running through 1990 and 1991, the Curatorial Laboratory Project will be presented in two parts: four small scale, in-house exhibits curated by Holubizky, arranged on a thematic basis, and four guest-curated exhibits developed primarily from the Gallery's Permanent Collection.

The motivation for the Curatorial Laboratory Project, Holubizky explains, "comes from fifteen years of meditating the effect of

curatorial practice on an artist's work and the role of the museum/gallery in establishing a program of interpretation and collection".

Holubizky talks about the problematic phenomenon of the museum/gallery creating a forum for art, which in the end, creates "an economic measure which legitimizes art," and it is this, in part, which Holubizky is compelled to rethink.

In the Curatorial Laboratory Project, Holubizky strives to design an alternative curatorial model and a new mode of interpretation. It is through the use of the guest curator and accompanying catalogue that Holubizky tries to realize his goal of an "other" form of curating, a form which defies the closure of the past system, giving way to a more democratic window/perspective on art.

**Numbering** was the first practical execution of Holubizky's curatorial philosophy. While designed to uphold the curatorial mandate of the Laboratory Project, **Numbering**, like all of Holubizky's exhibits, was also challenged to take on a new form and meaning in terms of "The thematic exhibition".

Disliking the traditional curatorial process of the thematic exhibit, where the curator collects, arranges and loosely gums together pieces of art to support or explain his personal mind-set.

Holubizky attempts to arrange pieces which are "significantly different in media and meaning" avoiding the "theme developing into tireless thesis" syndrome.

Numbering cont. on page 2

## Changes

by Mary Keczan-Ebos

There are changes in the air in this region. These are changes that will affect perceptions and attitudes and will alter our concept of what 'feels right and natural' in the art world. The way things have been is that women take up most of the student spaces in art classrooms while being fed rigid information only about male artists making art about women as objects. The result has been the systematic exclusion of the idea of serious women's art and women artists from the community of the arts.

The new Women's Studies Programme at McMaster University will offer a place for changes in attitude to take place. According to the programme's director Joan Coldwell, there is a promise of "fresh new approaches" with a focus on "women's contributions to civilization in all fields of endeavour, past and present." The programme will examine "the ways in which ideas about women have developed and tests the validity of those ideas in the light of new knowledge and theories." In addition, "It establishes the importance of gender as a category of analysis in scholarly enquiry, social relations, cultural expression and belief systems."

However, the most important feature of the new programme is that it is interdisciplinary. For the art student, both male and female, it means the chance "to explore the relationship between different branches of knowledge and to test the presuppositions of established theoretical frameworks", according to Coldwell in the Women's Studies brochure. It means that the resulting new ideas will create changes in attitude and offer a challenge to old methods and formulas.

McMaster University art history professor Robert Belton has been quoted as saying, "By and large art history is a story of male domination." And in the same **Spectator** article Jane Gordon, founder of the Bay Area Artists for Women's Art adds that "Art history has been written on the female body." She continues that, in contrast, most art made by women is concerned more with exploring female identity than with attacking men and that reclaiming art for women is most important to her.

Before this reclaiming can take place, however, changes in basic ideologies must take place. Because the university is so powerful in shaping our thoughts and perceptions this development of the awareness and understanding of women's contribution to human civilization is critical. In describing the new programme, the University's brochure says that "so much of what we know is conditioned by the dominant male viewpoint, Woman's Studies introduces the female perspective to all areas of enquiry, with the hope of improving our knowledge of both men and women."

Because many local artists are graduates of McMaster's art programme or have taken courses offered by the University either at the Dundas Valley School of Art, the Burlington Cultural Centre, or the Art Gallery of Hamilton these changes in attitude will be far reaching in this community. There will be a new perception of what feels right and natural.

The Hamilton Artists Inc.  
Exhibition  
Programming Schedule

The Split Subject  
September 28 - October 27

Eric Stach Free Music Unit  
October 12

Frances Leeming  
film screening  
October 26

Frances Leeming  
film workshop  
October 27

# Editor's Notes

Lawson Hunter

Andrew T. Hunter (what does the T stand for?) started working at the Inc. as Co-Director/Administrator just in time to begin working on our Ontario Arts Council operating grant application.

The application documents the accomplishments of the past year and forecasts the activities planned for the upcoming year, all the while explaining how the Inc. has enhanced the quality of life in our region.

What an indoctrination to Hamilton Artists Inc! But then, Andrew has been an active member of the Inc. and already knew some of the details.

The Board agrees that our current application, prepared by Andrew with capable assistance from Ray Cinovskis and Sandy Mason, is an excellent document. If any Inc. member has the time and the inclination to find out what is going on at the Inc., you are welcome to read the application.

At any rate, welcome Andrew!

In this edition of Pen & Inc. we hear from Andrew in what we hope will be a regular feature, the Co-Director's Report.

Also within these pages you will find Kelly Hilton's inciteful analysis of a recent Art Gallery of Hamilton exhibition **Numbering**, and a thought provoking look at the creative mind of Ihor Holubizky, the man who curated this show.

Mary Keczan-Ebos took time from her busy curatorial schedule (**Split Subject**, on now at the Inc.) to write an article on some of the "Changes" she sees in the mostly male dominated art scene.

And another first for **Pen & Inc.** is an article from the Printspace. Doug Carter details some of the upcoming events to look for at Printspace located right next to the Inc.

As well, we have our Classifieds, News from other Galleries and the stuff that I like to call TCB, Taking Care of Business.

With the fall season here you might take a few moments to consider renewing your commitment to the Inc. Hamilton Artists Inc. relies on volunteers for fundraising, gallery sitting, Exhibition openings and feedback. We are, after all, an artists-run centre.

Til next time.

## Numbering cont. from page 1

In addition, Holubizky's use of the exhibit catalogue as a cross reference to other artists and their material, enhances the notion of a more open ended thematic display. The catalogue for **Numbering** brought other works into the show, creating a dialogue between works that reached beyond the boundaries of the gallery walls.

Numbers become linguistic signs through common usage. Holubizky explains, "emergency telephone numbers 911 or 999, 1040 the standard American income tax form, UB40 the

English unemployment office, now have shared meaning and reference."

Marking and tallying-up activities in society (pure mathematics and statistics) translates number-values into a language of its own. There is no doubt, as Holubizky discusses in his catalogue, that breaking through the codes and signs used in business and commerce is a bonus for those who can effectively speak and correctly interpret the language.

"In a perverse manifestation", Holubizky writes, "we have invented Las Vegas, a city whose primary existence is predicated on the principles of greed through the manipulation of numbers and chance."

Holubizky is continuously alerting his audiences to these signs and codes of our current revolution. His exhibition, however, completely emptied itself of the urgency we experience in our everyday-life association with the information revolution.

**Numbering** took on a sort of calm, which is perhaps fundamental to the viewer in order to escape the "trance of the revolution". Once the viewer has become "unhypnotized" they can begin to digest the significance of the exhibit, be brought full-face to the language as a system of signs and codes, to stand, like Holubizky, outside the information revolution.

Significantly, the works assembled from nine artists who had used numbers in selective places, or as motif in some of their work, but not as the definitive subject matter making up the body of their practice in art-making. In this way, the viewer was connected with the artists, "individual-number-experience" relating to the artist's encounter with the information revolution.

Whether we look at Holt Quentel's piece, a black number 3 painted on a weathered tarp,

looming larger than life, "suggesting a discarded urban fragment", or Norman White's "Quand-meme", an electronic blinking sign which flashes out various nonsensical combinations of digits intending to "disrupt our assumption of a machine constant and counting logic", we are reminded that they are all bits and pieces which serve as a collective reminder of the modern age.

Holubizky has managed to tune into what is happening in the modern world, and concurrently, affecting the contemporary artist. As well, he was able to ask the question "What

does the institution do with, or more accurately do to this active phenomenon of man in his modern world and the artist's expression of that.

Holubizky quotes Robert Longo on the position of the artist, "You have made the art system, now you must deal with me." Through the use of the guest curator, the exhibit catalogue and his unyielding fascination with art, Holubizky was able to 'deal' with the artist. And, just as Holubizky allowed the artist to speak more directly to the viewer, the viewer was able to address their personal conscience more directly.

Through **Numbering** we saw the changes of codes and signs formed and deformed by modern man, which we act and react to, because, in the end, the revolution is a mirror.

## Pen&Inc.

Hamilton Artists' Inc. Newsletter

Pen and Inc. is published bimonthly by the Hamilton Artists' Inc., 145 James St. N., Hamilton, Ont., Canada L8R 2K8.

If you would like to advertise in Pen & Inc. Please give us a call at 529-3355. Opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily shared by the H.A.I. membership.

Please address letters to the Editor at the above address. Writers in Pen & Inc. must be H.A.I. members. Deadline for next edition submissions is November 8/90.

Editor Lawson Hunter  
Contributing Writers Kelly Hilton  
Mary Keczan-Ebos  
Doug Carter  
Andrew T. Hunter

The Hamilton Artists' Inc. Gallery is a charitable non-profit artist run centre which belongs to CARO and ANNPAC. Membership is open to artists and patrons alike.

We now are operating 900 square feet of exhibition space as well as general office space and The Printmaking Studio one door north on James Street, Gallery hours are Tuesday to Friday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### NOTICE

Please note that it is not in our mandate, or any other charitable organizations mandate, to lobby any level of government.

Our survey in the last issue of Pen & Inc. incorrectly listed this activity as being offered by the Inc.

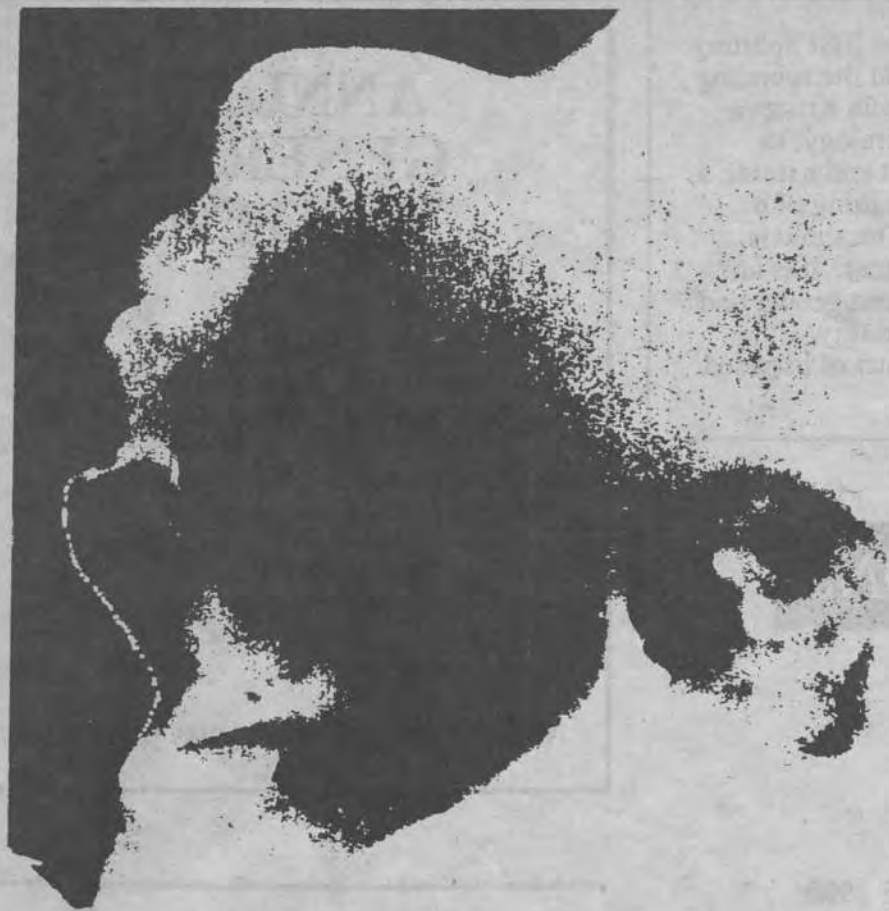
We apologize for any misunderstanding that may have arisen as a result of this error.

Editor.

## PRICE LIST FOR PEN & INC NEWSLETTER

Full Page:	\$400.00
1/2 Page:	\$200.00
1/4 Page:	\$100.00
1/8 Page:	\$50.00
Business Card:	\$27.00

All ads are subject to Board Approval



Jim Riley, Self Portrait



## Co-Director's Report

Andrew T. Hunter

## Printspace News

by Doug Carter

Printspace regular Jim Riley will create a mixed print media installation, **INTOLERANCE**, in the Printspace window. The installation will explore the mixing of etching, monotype, xerox, light and found object in expressing socio commentary in a public format. It is meant to be viewed at night as well as day.

Riley's intention is to question the increasing intolerance that he senses both within himself and others in our society. He believes that we have grown increasingly less tolerant of each other as is represented by how we have reacted to native sovereignty, turbans in the RCMP, women's issues and global situations.

Our emphasis on our difference is choking our chances of developing more constructive attitudes towards understanding our basic human need of acceptance.

The show runs to October 27.

Printspace's Annual Fundraising Sale of Prints and Works on Paper is coming to the Inc. in November. Donations of Prints and Works on Paper are needed by Oct. 15. Please drop off donations at the Printspace or at the Inc. during regular gallery hours or call 523-6603.

This year's sale will be in the form of a Silent Auction.

Prospective buyers will have 3 weeks commencing Fri. Nov. 2 to view and bid on work. A closing party will be held Fri. Nov. 23 at 7:00 p.m. at the Inc. The highest bid at 9:00 p.m. wins.

Come on in and make prints. Fees are \$6.00/day, \$28 for 8 days, \$55 per month and \$160 for one year. Monthly and yearly fees include 24 hr. access. For further information contact Doug Carter at Printspace, 145 James St. N., 523-6603.

A rather busy summer for the staff at the Hamilton Artists' Inc. has come to a close and we now look ahead to our 1990-1991 programming year. While the galleries were closed for the month of August, members of the Board of Directors and staff were kept occupied preparing the annual Ontario Arts Council grant application. Our proposal was submitted on August 15th and we can expect a response from the O.A.C. around the end of October. With the freezing of Ontario Arts Council funding which occurred this past year we do not expect any increase in our funding, however we are confident that we will receive support equal to this past years' award.

Compared with past grant proposals, this year's application gives a good indication of a shift in focus and programming at the Inc. One of the most obvious changes in programming has to be the emphasis on house curated exhibitions. Exhibitions such as "The Split Subject" (September 28 to October 27, 1990) and "The Flower Show - Reclaiming and Renaming the Flower Image" (May 24 to June 22, 1991) are both good examples of this new emphasis in programming.

Our involvement in such projects as "Art Under A Clear Blue Sky: Curating Outside the Umbrella of Metropolitan Toronto", a bay area wide curatorial discourse developed through the Bay Area Arts Collective and coordinated by Jane Gordon, and the "Kid Inc." are well documented in the grant proposal and serve to illustrate and reinforce our commitment to the development and enhancement of the arts in the region. Further information on these and other programmes can be obtained by contacting the Hamilton Artists' Inc. staff, furthermore, copies of the grant will be made available for any member who wishes to read it.

Of particular interest to the membership should be our plan to undertake the regular publication of critical and didactic catalogues to accompany all H.A.I. exhibitions. We are presently searching for alternative funding to support this project and believe its' success will allow the Hamilton Artists' Inc. to assume a higher profile not only at a regional level but also on a national level. In relation to our plan to promote the writing of artists and curator's writing, the

renewed efforts of the editorial staff of Pen & Inc. have resulted in an increase in volunteer involvement from the membership and hopefully we will see more of you contributing to future issues.

On a more sober note, I would like to bring the following items to the attention of the membership. First, included in the July/August issue of Pen & Inc. was "The Inc. Survey". The response from the membership has been highly disappointing. If the Inc. is to be run effectively the staff and the Board of Directors must have a clear idea of what the membership wants.

As the role of the Inc. begins to change within the Hamilton Region and as the mandates for artist-run-centres in Canada are being re-evaluated, it is of the utmost importance that members become far more involved and make the effort to keep myself and my colleagues better informed. Secondly, as of September 4th regularly scheduled Bingo nights have been planned for the upcoming year. After lengthy discussions at a number of Board meetings, it was decided that, until an alternative form of fundraising can be found, we will continue what has been a highly successful programme. I am well aware of some of the difficulties, health or ethical reasons, members have with this program.

However, if we are to continue to develop innovative programming while governments are busy putting a cap on funding to the arts we must consider Bingo as a viable fundraising option. If you do not wish to participate in this volunteer program I encourage you to become involved in some other aspect of our operation and to give some thought to a legitimate alternative to this type of fundraising.

On a more positive note, we can look ahead to a year of quality programming. Through our involvement in the Bay Area Arts Collective we will be undertaking a number of collaborative projects with other arts groups in the region and I encourage the membership to continue to actively support not only the programmes of the Hamilton Artists' Inc. but also the offerings of all arts organizations within the region. I look forward to hearing from all of you over the coming year.

## THE SPLIT SUBJECT

SEPTEMBER 28 - OCTOBER 27, 1990  
HAMILTON ARTISTS' INC.

CURATOR: MARY KECZAN-EBOS

FILM SCREENING  
BY FRANCIS LEEMING, OCT. 26

The exhibition title focuses on the first 'splitting' into conscious and unconscious of the founding subject: the feminine subject. Julia Kristeva uses "split" or "clive", as in mineralogy, to suggest a division that is inherent and natural: a natural fragmentation, as in the slitting of a diamond into cleavage planes. The show is gender related and regional in intent. It is an exploration of the dialectic between gender and ethnicity, industrialization, materiality, textuality and the cultural construct of imposed religion.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### ELECTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS

November 18,  
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

At the Inc. Refreshments provided.

## CLASSIFIEDS/ CALLS FOR SUBMISSIONS

In an effort to keep HAI members informed of Calls for Entry and Exhibition at other art centres, notices are provided in this newsletter and at the Inc. studio space as a point of information only. The Board of Directors does not support any Exhibitions that require the artist to pay an entry fee.

### THE ART OF THE HANDMADE BOOK

The Hamilton Public Library will be sponsoring a program featuring local writers and artists involved in the craft of making books by hand. Bookmakers, Gerard Brender a Brandis and Wesley Bates, and local writers, David Andrus and Bernadette Rule, will discuss their craft, and their relationship to each other and the book. Co-sponsored by the Canada Council. For more information please call the Hamilton Public Library 529-8111 and ask for the Languages and Literature Department.

Thursday, October 18, 1990, 7:30 p.m.  
Central Library Activity Area, Hamilton Public Library, 55 York Blvd.

### BINGO DATES 1990

Each Bingo starts at 7:00 p.m. and finishes at 10:00 - 10:30 p.m. est. However it is suggested that the volunteers come around 6:00 p.m. to set up and run through the important points. The Bingo runs biweekly on every second Monday, see list for specific dates. The address is 1565 Upper James.

Starting: October 9, 23  
November 6, 20  
December 4, 18

Volunteers are still necessary to run the Bingo's. If any members are able to give any form of assistance, could they please contact the gallery at (416) 529-3355.

### CALL FOR ENTRY

Hamilton Public Library - Fine Arts Department welcomes submissions from artists who would like to display their work for one month (during the time period March 1991-1992). There is space for about 15 works -- paintings, prints or photographs. Include a resume, artist's statement and 10 slides &/or photos. Send to Frances Frommer, Fine Arts Librarian, Hamilton Public Library, Fine Arts Dept., 55 York Blvd., box 2700, Station A, Hamilton, Ont., L8N 4E4. Deadline: January 15, 1991

### MCMASTER UNIVERSITY October 14 - November 11

Main Gallery **ARTS/FACTS:** An interactive educational exhibition about the physical properties of works of art.  
Small Gallery **JAMES MORRISON:**  
**RECENT WORK:** A selection of works on paper by local artist James Morrison.  
Gallery Talk October 16 at 12:30 p.m. Free coffee.

### DUNDAS VALLEY SCHOOL OF ART

*Women and Visual Art:* A special 8 week program of slide presentations and lectures by artists including Paulette Phillips, Sheila Ayerst, Arlene Stamp, Jeannie Thib, etc. Supported by the Ontario Arts Council.

This program began September 26, 1990. For further information call 682-6357.

**Thank You** goes to Keith Sills, co-op student, who over the summer months helped in a number of areas including volunteer recruitment and the newsletter.

**PARALLELOGRAMME** the contemporary Canadian Art News magazine is available (free for members) at Hamilton Artists Inc. 50 copies are delivered 3-4 times a year. Pick up your copy today. First come first served.

**The Hamilton Press Club**, 58 Jackson St. W., is holding an exhibition of small collages and works on paper by Michael Allgoewer. The exhibition opened Fri. Sept. 14 and can be seen Monday to Friday until Nov. 9 during regular club hours.

**The Hamilton Press Club**, 58 Jackson St. W., is inviting individuals and groups of artists to submit exhibition proposals. Prints, photos and works on paper most suitable for space, approx. 10-16 pieces. Contact Doug Carter c/o Printspace, 523-6603.

### MEMBER'S SHOWS

Andrew T. Hunter will exhibit **20 Paintings** October 6 - 20 at the Dofasco Gallery, Dundas Valley School of Art.

Paul Lisson will exhibit **Pointed Portraits** - A Photo Documentary October 15 to November 16 at the Fine Arts Department, Central Library.

The  
**WHITE LINE**  
CONTEMPORARY CANADIAN  
WOOD ENGRAVING 1945-1990  
October 5<sup>th</sup> - October 30<sup>th</sup>



Premier Opening  
October 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 p.m.

to launch this national  
touring exhibition organized by  
**THE CARNEGIE GALLERY**



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