



Diane Arbus
Identical Twins

GEORGIA TOTTO O'KEEFFE (1887-1986)

O'Keeffe knew from a very young age that she was going to be an artist. Once her gift had been noticed she was taught privately for five years then moved around art schools, not settling in. After she resigned her job as a drawing supervisor she began to paint the way she wanted, things only she had in her head.

In 1916, O'Keeffe's paintings were shown to Alfred Stieglitz and she had her first show in 1917. Georgia and Stieglitz ran away together in 1918 and married in 1924. She then began her giant flowers, her most popular work. After Stieglitz's death in 1946 she carried on painting more flowers and travelling until her health and eyesight started to fail.
Sophie Thompson, student

ANNIKA STROM

Annika Strom is a contemporary Swedish artist who makes films, performs songs and produces works on paper which sometimes act as billboards, with messages like 'this work refers to no-one' and 'everything in this show could be used against me'. Her most recent project, 'Call for a Demonstration for a Contemporary Fine Art Museum in Hove' challenged what she sees as the provincialism of the city and Frank Gehry's proposed regeneration plans. Annika's 'Tate Hove' would be a funky multi-site with a 'rocket room, unicorn room, waterfall room, a massive swimming pool and a tropical garden'. She says, "personally I am very fond of sauna bathing so I want a massive one with sea views, while someone is reading poems for me. After my dip in an ice-cold swimming pool I want to see a great show in the 24 hour open artspace". Significantly, most of the artists Annika would put in the Museum (if she could act as Director), would be women.

She strongly believes that women have a tough time in the art world, claiming: "It is a hell. Mediocre male artists get the big solo museum shows with catalogues and massive budgets one after the other and all the great women end up bunched together in group shows. Just call any museum and ask for the percentage of the work they own made by women and how much they spend on buying work by female artists. Last year, I made a text piece – 'this work refers to all male art' – in order to help me, but it didn't. It is a catastrophe. Shame on you all museums".
www.annikastrom.net

Colette Meacher, Features Editor, Latest Art

ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI (1593-1652)

Artemisia Gentileschi was one of the first female artists to go beyond painting from still life and creating portraits. Although rejected by art schools and academies, she studied under both her father (successful Roman artist Orazio Gentileschi) and later her father's friend, Agostino

Tassi. Tassi was later accused of raping Artemisia – a film made about her life in 1998 suggested that this event exerted a powerful influence on what she subsequently chose to represent in her art. Painting religious tableaux and historical scenes, Artemisia's post-Renaissance imagery often focuses upon female heroines taking revenge upon tyrannical male figures.

One of the world's most accomplished female painters, Artemisia remains largely uncelebrated for her evocative and powerful paintings. It is difficult to understand why her work should be so neglected.

Colette Meacher, Features Editor, Latest Art

DIANE ARBUS (1923-1971)

An American photographer noted for her portraits of people on the fringes of society, she courted controversy by often depicting her subjects in unflattering situations and poses that served to highlight her voyeuristic approach.

Previously a fashion photographer and photojournalist Arbus' work came of age when she exhibited with other outstanding American photo-documentarists of the 60s such as Lee Friedlander and Gary Winogrand in the late 60s.

She committed suicide aged 48 in 1971, and the tragic circumstances of which have helped to gain her legendary status to such an extent that one of her photographs ('Identical Twins') is one of the most expensive photographs ever bought.

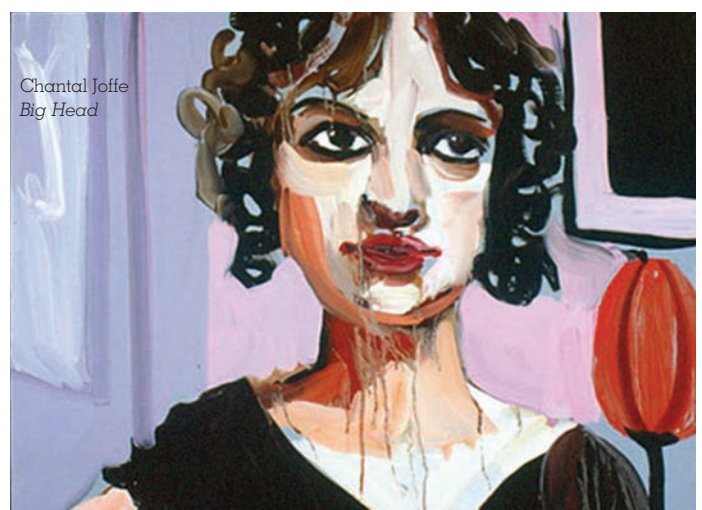
Jeff Hemmings

TRACEY EMIN (b.1963)

Tracey Emin's sexuality is the most interesting in the field right now, in spite of her slightly ageing mannerisms. Her art consists chiefly of a torn self which is then pieced together and realized concretely in apparently fragile structures, granting the appearance of being assembled by cheap labour wanting in leadership. This blurred and coherent acceptance of pain for fame appears flexible and accommodating to the basic desire of a businessman thinking himself leader of the pack. That is, if his ambition is essentially tuned onto desire for money; pounds Sterling and US dollars, the Swiss Franc for good measure: to be accompanied by a portable tent of femininity to be enjoyed; an international woman wet with fear, ready to receive the grace of such desire. No one does this vibrant tenting as vividly as Ms Emin. She is truly the perfect international woman, squatting effortlessly in the fluid space of contemporary femininity. One can only marvel at Longchamp's genius.
Mikkel Astrup is Research Fellow in Literary Theory at the University Of Oslo, Norway. His current research is on Sick Reading.

CHANTAL JOFFE (b.1969)

Chantal Joffe's paintings work in a clever, mesmerising way. Elfin faced girl-women with brittle limbs, big eyes and a Lolita-like sexuality peer and peek out of Joffe's frames – yet the paintings are often huge, 10' large giantesses filling the walls. Dripping, fluid, cute, quirky, collaged, Joffe's paintings are simply exquisite representations of femininity in its more frivolous guises – masked, moody, vapid, coquettish, sated. Her women are not simply cool, but also coolly appraise the viewer. Chantal's success has recently superceded that of her brother Jasper Joffe, another Saatchi protegee. This year, her painting 'Blond girl, black dress' was popularly voted the winner of the Royal Academy's £25,000 Charles Wollaston Prize.
Colette Meacher, Features Editor, Latest Art



Chantal Joffe
Big Head