

PHOTO GALLERIES

Slideshow: Highlights From The 100 Best Fall Shows

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Bret Slater

Elaine Levy Project

September 7-October 13

Brussels

Pictured here: "Belhor," 2012, acrylic on canvas

Courtesy the Artist

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Two divergent Texas artists. Two careers on hold. Two million bookshelves shared. Professor MICHAEL COOPER, chair of the Division of Art at SMU, catalogs some order.

DOUBLE
VISIONS

Submitted by: WALTER E. FORD

1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680, 26

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at 1000 Hz and 1000 Hz.

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flames per second times 30 minutes. The five sparks of gray stay between clips and now occupy a triangle of considerable size. Jeff says:

The New Yorker has been practicing using the most advanced method concerning statistics. It graphs, geometric, shadow-colored nonconformity patterns itself. A giant robot, like a big underlining the solid phase of a building on the edge of a cliff. (Images of deep purple, perhaps, like blue like a wonderland.) A background, perhaps, for a study but of film just, just not digital, and it's a little difficult to make out the action, but it's all there — geometric! Fluorescing is a tricky business. Jeff thinks. Like that, Jeff says a gently, Jeff also says a gap. When a target he will hold it.

Jeff believes a woman whose dignity of hand is not at stake, putting it over as it comes. Even when you know how it's done and think you know what you are looking at, Jeff is usually pulling the rug out from under you. King thinks! These days, there is only honor for an artist who plays the fool. Contrary to popular belief, who is not concerned. Jeff confuses people because it never means less. We laugh. They cry. Commemorative approach. Jeff's work with individuals. They stand before

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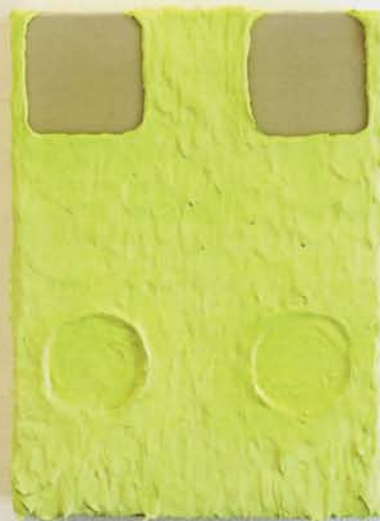
with an angry report. Somewhere off-camera, the director is reading out a shot list: "Long aerial shot. Show gun. Reverse. Cut!" It's a long list in the end. But there, it isn't. It's all over the show. Another day.

MICHAEL CORRIS is a professor, writer and artist. He is the chair of the Department of Art at Southern Methodist University. He is an editor, *Transmission Journal*, an interdisciplinary discourse on ecology of art and culture as published by 2007 and Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, England. His email is mcorris@smu.edu.

THE NEED-TO-KNOWS

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APPENDIX
 1. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)
 2. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)
 3. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)
 4. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)
 5. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)
 6. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)
 7. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)
 8. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)
 9. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)
 10. *Journal of International Law and Economics*
 (London, 2002)



BRET SLATER descends from a long line of artists who make quirky little objects that look like paintings but are not. (What does a painting look like, anyway? Is a painting necessarily a picture? Is it a sign or is it something in itself? Do we really need to worry about the distinction between a meaningful detail and a meaningless pattern? There is verisimilitude, there is abstraction, there is pattern and plan — and there are a multitude of positions in between. Some of us just throw up our hands and call it an image. But even that label is ambiguous. Is it a symbol? An index? An icon? Why it matters what we call this thing before us is because part of the pleasure of looking and thinking about art is to be able to widen our horizons about what art can be.) A new kind of object that looks like a painting-thingy is more interesting than a picture of the prairie at sundown. It's more interesting because it is indeterminate: We don't know what it means right off the bat, so we have to puzzle over it. Some of us enjoy a good puzzle.

For those who do, Bret is your man.

.Bret.bos@mba.davis.edu .Bret is your man, too

36 AUGUST 2012

How can this be? It's because Bret is a particular kind of artist who trades in ambiguity. Not every puzzle needs to be solved; sometimes, it's more fun to watch it hover like a cloud and pick out this shape and that, and give it a name. In a moment, the cloud will morph and a whole new puzzle emerges. Bret catches sight of something — a plastic toy, a bit of office stationery, a cardboard packing box — or just thinks about something, and with that evocation, a mystery is born. Not irreducibly mysterious, but just enough to tease. The gist of the thing is there, so it's more or less recognizable, but something is off. That looks like a detail of a spiral-bound notebook, but the colors are psychedelic. Hey, this painting-thingy actually glows in the dark!

What sort of infernal alchemy is this, matey? Look closer: It's a colored surface on a canvas ground, stretched over wooden stretcher bars. It's gloopy and pitted; it looks poured. Here it looks gouged out, a relief. There, it looks organic, all slithery and smooth. It's got rounded edges; it seems to be breathing. It's vaguely sci-fi in a J.G. Ballard sort of way. If it could talk, it would be cast in a David Cronenberg film. It's smallish, mostly; medium-sized dry goods. It hangs on a wall, and you'd like to talk to it. You

Two divergent Texas artists. Two careers on boil. Two million boundaries blurred. Professor MICHAEL CORRIS, chair of the Division of Art at SMU, attempts some order.

DOUBLE VISIONS

photographs by NAN COULTER

ABOVE: Artist Bret Slater at his Dallas studio. Slater's acrylic-on-canvas *Fear of the Dark*.

look at it, and it looks back at you. It is good company; an amulet that matters. Sometimes we feel that a work of art has a presence. It seems to have a life of its own. This is not sheer madness or retrograde fetishism. We can anthropomorphize anything — just look at the man in the moon. Those two cutouts, they look like eyes. Isn't that Frank, the rabbit in *Donnie Darko*? What's that sound in the background? A Swedish heavy-metal group, you say? What's the connection? All those song titles as titles of these painting-thingies. Take an experience, an event, a person, and a relationship; place a song title on it. The association is fixed, and that song becomes one of thousands of indelible soundtracks of a bit of your life. Neural networks have formed; a new puzzling architecture is made sensible, if only just. It's not High Fidelity: It's an existential way station, an outpost in a world gone mad. So what if the paintings are suffering an identity crisis. Whose art is it, anyway?

Bret Slater

Marty Walker Gallery

May 2012



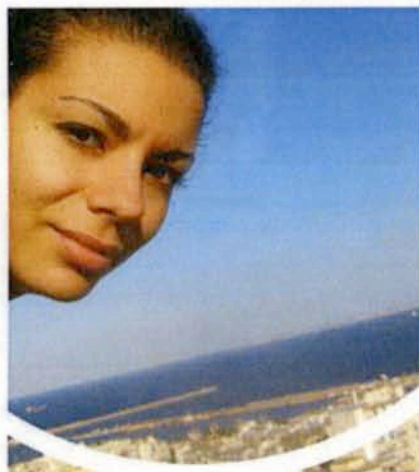
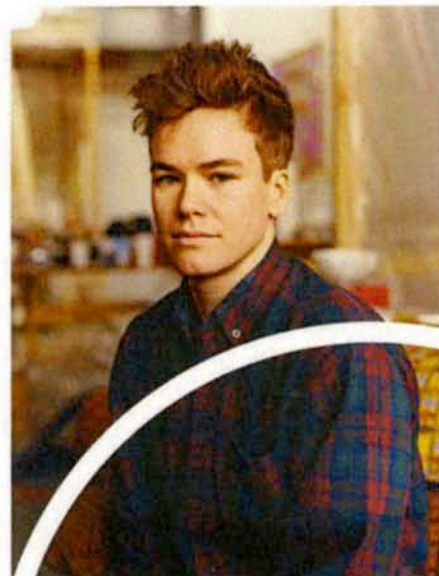
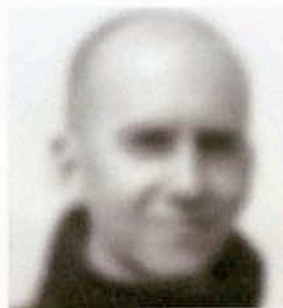
Bret Slater, "Sleeping Giant," 9.75 x 7 x 1.75 inches, acrylic on canvas, 2011

After his sold-out show at **Thomas Robertello Gallery** in Chicago was named as one of the top 100 fall gallery shows by *Modern Painter* magazine, recent SMU MFA grad **Bret Slater** was also named one of the 100 "artists to watch" by the same magazine. Locally, Marty Walker has recently added Slater to her roster of artists, with a show planned for April or May. She's already successfully bringing the young artist to the attention of esteemed local collectors. And it's no wonder people are paying attention, the work is incredibly refreshing. Often small, Slater's paintings are decadently rich but simple. They subtly employ everyday materials like dental floss and staples. Thick with smeared, monochrome paint applied to hand-holdable-sized canvases, the work seems deliciously palatable, instantly referring to buttered bread, wrapped candy bars and other sweet-tooth calmers. But Slater's work is a far cry from saccharine. Instead, it straddles the substantial shoulders of the last century's colorfield and minimalist painters, and strains the seams of those movements with a jolt of punkish energy and intelligent wit, not to mention gobs of luscious paint. — LS

MODERN PAINTERS

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ARTISTS TO WATCH



PLUS

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CRISTINA LEI RODRIGUEZ
DANA SCHUTZ
GLENN KAINO



FROM TOP:
Bret Slater
Little Chunk,
2011, Acrylic on
canvas, 6 x 8 in.

*Making Fools Out
of the Best of Us*,
*Making Robots
of the Rest of Us*,
2011, Acrylic on
canvas, 10 x 7 in.

BRET SLATER

DALLAS // THOMAS ROBERTELLO GALLERY, CHICAGO



Slater conscripts unique elements—glue, fabric, office supplies, even dental floss—to make installations, sculptures, and paintings. His interest in mundane objects brings to mind the novelist Nicholson Baker, equally obsessed with the minutiae of oft-ignored things. Slater, in fact, traces his genesis as an artist to a simple Kodak box his father gave him, which he added staples to and hung on the wall as a piece of art. "I was interested in looking around at the manufactured components that exist around us, and I was

finding all my source material in functional, really common things," the artist says of his early work. "I became really interested in this symmetrical rivet that happens in things like cereal boxes or in automobiles: It's a shape that dips down and comes back up. I liked the idea of borrowing composition, borrowing color from places where that color or that form exists for a reason and through the realm of visual art being able to look at it formally, without having to worry about what its function is." Slater has moved beyond those "assisted readymades," as he calls them, importing the same attention to detail, common function, and formal design into the media of painting and sculpture. Working within a language of Minimalism and with an emphasis on the tactile, he creates small works with an almost edible mass. The 2011 *Little Chunk*, for instance, resembles a slice of bread coated thickly with mustard, the pigment blobbing off the edges of the canvas. In sculptural works like *Baby Brother Is Watching*, 2011, Slater stitches fabric together using dental floss, an apt material for an artist who is equally at home discussing Piet Mondrian, Robert Rauschenberg, and the aesthetics of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. —SI



New American Paintings > Blog

JURIED EXHIBITIONS-IN-PRINT



BRET SLATER: PAINT, DRUGS, AND ROCK 'N' ROLL by New

American Paintings

December 5, 2012, 8:30 am

Filed under: [Art World](#) | Tags: [Bret Slater](#), [Marty Walker Gallery](#), [Otis Jones](#)

Many of our artists are featured globally in exhibitions, magazines, and other formats. For many artists, *New American Paintings* is the first substantial exposure that they receive, and that is exactly what the publication was built to do. We love receiving feedback about the influence that being published has had for our artists. In a recent interview, one such artist, Bret Slater, talks about how the publication inspired him early on and how it directly led to his finding a gallery.

But, even more flattering, is when an artist describes our magazine as an inspiration, a source of motivation and ambition. Recently, *D Magazine* published an article on Bret Slater, who was featured in *New American Paintings*, Number 87 and 102.

Below you can read the article about Slater. The original piece can be found online [here](#).



Photo by: Elizabeth Lavin

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ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

New American Paintings is a juried exhibition-in-print. Working with experienced curators, we review the work of thousands of emerging artists every year. Forty artists are selected to appear in each bi-monthly edition, and many go on to receive substantial critical and commercial success. Additional content focuses on the medium of painting, those who influence painting's direction, and the role painting plays within the art world.

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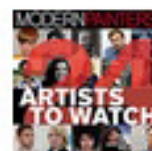
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QUESTIONS?

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MARCH 21, 2013, 8:22 PM

Studio Tracks: Bret Slater

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Dallas-based artist **Bret Slater's** New York solo debut opens on March 28, in the project room of Morgan Lehman Gallery. We asked him to put together a playlist of songs that—through their titles or lyrics—directly inspired specific works.



BRET SLATER, 'UNDER THE BLACK SUN', 129,5CM X 83,8CM
ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 2012

Elaine Levy Project présente actuellement un très jeune peintre américain, Bret Slater (*1987). Ses toiles, pour la plupart de petites dimensions, sont tendues sur un châssis épais, fabriqué par l'artiste dont les angles peuvent s'arrondir ce qui les place à la frontière entre le bidimensionnel et le tridimensionnel. Elles confrontent deux couleurs, parfois contrastées, parfois presque ton sur ton. La matière de la peinture est épaisse, elle devient un objet, une peau qui épouse la surface, parfois imperceptiblement ridée; toujours très présente, elle se prolonge en coulures ou en bavures sur la tranche. Entre les deux couleurs un jeu se noue, les petites formes traitées avec une autre matière, plus finement, semble appartenir à un fond que la couleur épaisse est occupée à envahir. La plupart des formes sont le reliquat de l'utilisation par l'artiste d'objets concrets récupérés. Ils sont ainsi réduits à leurs contours élémentaires, détachés de leur utilisation première, transfigurés dans une composition à la fois simple et exemplaire.

Au regard de l'ensemble de ces tableaux, tout se passe comme si la petite taille des tableaux permettait de contenir dans un même espace les deux couleurs. Lorsque la taille de l'œuvre augmente, la couleur sous-jacente disparaît pour laisser la place à une forme qui tient un peu de la peau de bête et qui s'accroche en laissant le mur apparaître dans ses espaces évidés. En fait de bête, il s'agit plutôt d'une forme qui trouve ses origines dans un objet commun manufacturé – la boîte des pizzas 'domino' a servi de patron à plusieurs de ces formes. Et l'on se prend alors à faire le rapport entre la peau de l'animal tué pour en faire un festin et la boîte d'un repas rapide, nouveau trophée de chasse au bout du téléphone ou au coin de la rue. Car c'est bien dans la jungle des villes que se trouve l'inspiration de Bret Slater, elle s'attache à son quotidien, aux formes élémentaires, aux couleurs empruntées aux objets les plus communs: un stylo bicolor, un briquet jetable, un badge, etc. L'artiste appartient à cette nouvelle génération de peintres qui, apparaissant au premier regard comme abstraits, à la limite du monochrome,

témoignent, en les magnifiant et leur rendant hommage, des mouvements souterrains de la ville aujourd'hui et de la poésie qui se niche au cœur d'un quotidien apparemment trivial.

Colette DUBOIS

Bret Slater jusqu'au 20 octobre chez Elaine Levy Project, rue Fourmois, 9, Bruxelles. Ouvert de 14h à 19h.
www.elainelevyproject.com