

The New Criterion

Features

June 2007

Why the art world is a disaster

by [Roger Kimball](#)

On a visit to Bard College in the Hudson Valley.

It is now that we begin to encounter the fevered quest for novelty at any price, it is now that we see insincere and superficial cynicism and deliberate conscious bluff; we meet, in a word, the calculated exploitation of this art as a means of destroying all order. The mercenary swindle multiplies a hundredfold, as does the deceit of men themselves deceived and the brazen self-portraiture of vileness.

—Hans Sedlmayr, *Art in Crisis*

Some of what she said was technical, and you would have had to be a welder to appreciate it; the rest was aesthetic or generally philosophical, and to appreciate it you would have had to be an imbecile.

—Randall Jarrell, *Pictures from an Institution*

Last month, a friend telephoned and urged me to travel to Bard College to see “Wrestle,” the inaugural exhibition mounted to celebrate the opening of &l ...

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This article originally appeared in *The New Criterion*, Volume 25 June 2007, on page 4

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