

# The New Criterion

## Features

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### 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 ...

**Roger Kimball** is co-Editor and Publisher of *The New Criterion*.

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