

The New Criterion

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Week in review

by Andrew L. Shea

Recent links of note:

“Bill de Blasio, Culture-meister”

Barton Swaim, *The Weekly Standard*

In a mid-July “Week in Review,” we noted our own editor Roger Kimball’s editorial in *The Wall Street Journal*, which decries the monetary waste that endowments such as the nea and the neh perpetrate on the national level. This week in *The Weekly Standard*, Barton Swaim takes aim at a similarly spirited cultural funding program that the Mayor of New York City Bill de Blasio unveiled in July. The program, titled “CreateNYC,” proposes to reorganize the city’s disbursement of funds for cultural institutions based on the diversity of those institutions’ staffs and boards of directors. Notably missing in the plan is any concrete definition of “diversity” or clarifications for other key orders. Swaim argues that this lack of clarity gives arbitrary power to the city’s bureaucracy to pick and choose the institutions it funds based on political allegiance. This development is but another reminder that governmental funding of the arts has never been about supporting culture, but rather about funding an ideological program.

“‘Mystical Symbolism: The Salon de la Rose+Croix in Paris, 1892–1897’ Review: Discovering Modernism’s Neglected Spur”

James Panero, *The Wall Street Journal*

This week *The New Criterion*’s executive editor James Panero penned a review of the symbolist exhibition currently running at the Guggenheim for *The Wall Street Journal*. In his review, Panero tracks the historical trajectory of Modernism, noting that the symbolism of the 1890s has lately found itself outside the mainstream narrative. The mystical symbolism promoted by the salon organizer Joséphin Péladan (1858–1918) tended to use older modes of representation for their spiritually idealistic canvases, which has led some to consider it irrelevant to the abstraction that dominated the twentieth century. Nevertheless, as Panero notes, the symbolists were significant as a product of their time, “encapsulating the anxious mood of the fin-de-siècle and influencing the art of the 20th century” through their art-as-religion sensibilities.

“Twelve Ways of Looking at Frank Lloyd Wright”

Martin Filler, *The New York Review of Books*

In *The New York Review of Books*, Martin Filler reviews the Met’s current exhibition on Frank Lloyd Wright, as well as the exhibition’s catalogue and a number of other studies of Wright’s work and life. Splitting the lengthy article into twelve sections, Filler sheds light on the inner workings of the exhibition itself, the state of Wright studies today, and more.

From our pages:

“Art without reservation”

Daniel Grant

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