

Chris Bullard

## Outlook

The Weather Channel shows a green sickle moving across the US. Things will clear up soon, I'm informed. The TV screen puts up the image of a cold front passing over towns and cities to illustrate the fact that the clouds are retreating eastward toward NJ which I confirm by looking out the window. Everything is being watched over by satellites, several of them, not one, so this is polytheism, not monotheism. When there's a severe disturbance, the satellites disclose the names of the places in danger, little towns I've never heard of, but the satellites know them and identify them under red blobs. Concerned weather anchors warn people in these hamlets to be careful, perhaps, to seek shelter, or evacuate. I wave from my window at the satellites, selflessly keeping watch, though I wonder whether they can identify me by name and whether they see me as under some color warning, threatened by crimson high winds or blue ice storms. Yes, I shout to the satellites, I am being threatened, more and more each day, as the millibars fall and the winds demonstrate their cyclonic character and the sky turns more obscure. I fear that the forecasting angels are directing their pointers in my direction and advising me in kindly tones that the atmosphere is changing, so it's time for the inhabitants of my particular time/space on earth to get out, now. Soon, it will be too late. Even the satellites will forget me.

## How to Take Care of Art

- 1) Paint and paper are sensitive to chance.
- 2) Materials can be preserved in a way that concepts cannot.
- 3) Frame what you own to foreclose the possibility of escape.
- 4) Use museum quality glass, designed, like museums, to keep out light.
- 5) Draw white boxes of exclusion on the floor in front of your art to prevent contamination.
- 6) Meaning can be vaporous.
- 7) Use environmental controls to ensure that it doesn't drift away.
- 8) You show love to an object by isolating it.
- 9) Restrict viewing, as the desire to come close to beauty is inherently suspicious.
- 10) Make sure your art lasts long enough to become unwanted.
- 11) What is outside is hostile to what is inside.
- 12) Bringing together the real world and works of the imagination may invite an accident in which both are destroyed.
- 13) If you choose to display copies and lock away the originals, no one will know.
- 14) Consider mummies: without their guts, they exist almost forever.

## Ode to Goofiness

- 1) The burp/the fart/the scrunched-up face
- 2) Gestures opening convention like a sliding glass door
- 3) The pretend fall/the pretend spill
- 4) Entertaining/not listening
- 5) That dance the body makes being silly
- 6) You shake your friends into giggles
- 7) Though you risk a motherly slap to the top of your head
- 8) The joy of not being in conformity
- 9) The tongue out/lips pulled back
- 10) Not the logic of irony/not the joke at the expense of
- 11) Not the social passing of slurs and slights
- 12) The pig grunt/the ape crouch
- 13) You as you/a pure animal/disruptor of acceptability
- 14) A small breath propelling a straw's cover in an arc like time's arrow