

Jerry Saltz hits new Lows



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Two days ago *New York Magazine* [published an article](#) by art critic Jerry Saltz in its Vulture subsection. This is apropos, given that the magazine is owned and run by the usual Culture Vultures. My readers are already aware that Modern art critics are the scum that scum scrapes off its shoes, and that Jerry Saltz is among the worst. [I have written about him before](#), you know. He has been unwinding in public his entire life, but he is getting old now and unwinding in the gruesome fashion that only these people can. We are reminded of Christopher Hitchens—culture critic if not art critic—and the way he unwound at *Vanity Fair* near the end, posting nude pictures of himself smoking in the shower, his fat belly glistening like Jabba the Hut. Saltz hasn't quite got there yet, but it isn't over. Who knows what will be published next week. He is already dressing as Frida Kahlo, so we may be just moments away from his nude shower scene, twerking with Miley Cyrus or french-kissing Madonna.

Supposing we make it through the current cultural nadir without going extinct from pure vileness, someday the writing of today will be taught in schools as an example of all to avoid. We now laugh at 19th c. writers like Bulwer-Lytton, but his purple prose (“it was a dark and stormy night”) was just cliché. It was never reprehensible. Art criticism began hitting lows never before imagined by writers of any stripe by the early 1900s, and it has continued to devolve and deconstruct decade by decade since then. Every year I think we have hit the abyss, but somehow these semi-lettered fellows find a way to go deeper. They find new ways to combine crashing insincerity with technical clumsiness and an ignorance of every field they address.

But as we have discovered in the past five years, it is even worse than that. Art criticism isn't where it is by sheer accident or incompetence. We see that immediately in this article by Saltz, which is titled “How to be an Artist” and subtitled “**33** rules to take you from clueless amateur to generational talent (or at least help you live life a little more creatively)”. Note that number, which is our first marker that this article will be upside down to all truth. . . on purpose. No, Saltz isn't just fortuitously hanging by his heels this whole article, and trying to hang you by yours. That is his assignment. That is why he is here.

Another bit of numerology is hiding nearby, next to Saltz posing as Dali. Notice it says, “Spend **47** days in the artworld with Seen.” What is Seen? Hard to tell, but by clicking there it appears to be another sublevel in this mindscrew at *New York Magazine*. Regardless, the number 47 is again your clue: year one of the CIA, indicating we are in the house of the spooks. Everything here is propaganda, down to the wallpaper and throw pillows.

Saltz begins this article by telling us he is a would-be artist who burned out. Which is not exactly true. He is a *wannabe* artist who sucked so bad he couldn't even qualify as a Modern. Which is pretty hard to imagine, given that all you have to do to be famous as a Modern is frame a white canvas, throw some rocks on the floor, or collect your own feces. But apparently Saltz's levels of creativity didn't even hit those highs. Being from the Families nonetheless, he demanded his due, so they had to find some way to make him semi-famous. So they inserted him into art criticism, which even they know is the bottom of the barrel. Here he can thrash about all he wants. It is hoped that any self-destructing he does as an art critic will likewise further besmirch art history. When Saltz inevitably takes the shotgun to his mouth and pulls the trigger, the blood and brainbits will splatter on the backdrop of art, keeping any and all sensible people far far away from the scene.

That is one of the goals, you know. They have to drive off all real artists and all real art connoisseurs and all people with intelligence, because if they happen to spend too much time in the room, they will see through the smoke and mirrors. [They will see what I finally saw](#): Modern art is a magnificent and long-running con, a fake of monstrous proportions, used mainly for money laundering, but also as an important part of Operation Chaos. It allows the bankers to launder astonishing amounts of money with no oversight, while helping tear society apart at the seams. A ruptured society is far more profitable, for any number of reasons I don't need to repeat here. I will however link you to this week's prime admission of that by the mainstream: *Atlantic Magazine's* [article on the Sexual Recession](#). As I have told you, the sexual recession—like the death of art—is no accident. This splitting of the sexes has been planned and manufactured over many decades, all to increase profits. Sexually repressed people spend far more money to compensate, and this has been known for almost a century.

Anyway, Saltz says that because [he wrote about being a failed artist](#) last year (take that link to see Saltz' early art, or see the picture above of him with his little triangles), people now ask him for advice everywhere he goes. For some reason he translates that as “advice on how to succeed in the art world”, hence the current article, but of course that begs the question: why would anyone ask a failed artist for advice on how to be a successful artist? If Saltz really knew, he would be one, right? So he must not know. Which means you might as well ask a plumber for advice on how to be an artist.

Except that, again, I remind you we are upside down here. Saltz is pretending to give you advice on how to be an artist, but he is actually making sure you never do become one. He only wants to increase your levels of confusion and self-loathing, so that you go out and buy more anti-depressants from his wealthy cousins. Most intelligent people will see Saltz's ugly mug and the title of this article and run screaming, so he knows he is only talking to morons here. Only morons would actually read this article hoping to get some good advice. So everything Saltz says here is said with that in mind.

Here is rule number 1 of 33:

But art doesn't have to make sense. It doesn't even need to be good. So don't worry about being smart and let go of being “good.”

That is exactly the opposite of what they would have taught you in the 19th century. Or . . . actually no:

if you had taken an art class, they wouldn't even have had to teach that. It would have been understood before going in by all that any possible thing you might try to do—not just art—should be good, make sense, and not be stupid. But here Saltz is encouraging you to be bad, senseless, and stupid as his first rule. In fact, Saltz failed as a Modern because he wasn't bad, senseless, and stupid *enough*. The little triangles over and over were senseless and pointless, but they weren't aggressively stupid. They didn't do any harm to art that hadn't already been done decades earlier, by fake artists far more vicious than Saltz could ever be (see Duchamp, etc.). You will say that Saltz's advice is good in that case: if you want to be a *Modern* artist, you should strive to be as viciously bad, senseless and stupid as humanly possible. Yes, but even that won't help you, because Saltz holds back the even deeper truth: he failed not mainly because he wasn't viciously stupid enough, but because his rank in the Families was too low. If he had been the son of a duke or a Cohen, he could have become successful no matter what. They might have even allowed him to paint flowers or figures (see Georgia O'Keeffe or Balthus).

Rule number 2 of 33 is a quote of Louise Bourgeois: “Tell your own story and you will be interesting”. Unfortunately, all Saltz does there is prove my point, since Bourgeois was a wealthy Parisian Jew who married Jewish art historian Robert Goldwater, who got her into the Jewish Bertha Schaefer Gallery in New York almost immediately. So Bourgeois was successful not because of talent—which she had none of—and not because of interesting storytelling—which she did none of—but because she was an insider, guaranteed to advance due to her connections. She was promoted heavily her entire life, despite never creating any art.



She “told her own story”, but was never the least bit interesting, except to herself. In fact, her art was not promoted because it was good, but because it was bad. By promoting her, those in control of the art world kept real artists out of the field, which kept real art connoisseurs and all other intelligent people out of the field, which allowed it to continue to be coopted by the bankers and propagandists. When Bourgeois wasn't creating the stupidest and ugliest art possible, she was promoting the Families' propaganda projects like the Holocaust, destructo-feminism, and societal dissolution in general. She was an awful, awful person, the opposite of an artist. She wasn't called the queen of the spiders for no reason.* Like the rest of these nasty people, she was not creative, she was destructive, and reveled in it. So again, we are hanging by our heels here. Saltz is selling black as white, and Bourgeois is the perfect person to quote in that regard.

Lesson 6: “If you know how to write you already know how to draw.” No, if you know how to write,

you know how to write, that's it. And if you are like most modern people, you probably don't even know how to write. You know how to text, but probably have a hard time signing your name. And odds are there is nothing artistic about your writing, and that is because you have never *practiced* making it artistic. In the time of my grandparents, they had entire classes devoted to penmanship. I have my grandfather's high school yearbook, and almost everyone's cursive is beautiful. Now, yearbook notes are just scribbles, mostly illegible. So Saltz is speaking to his moronic audience's insecurities, making them think drawing is a lot easier than it is. He tells them just to mark up a piece of paper however they like, noticing the natural curves of their chicken scratches. Is that useful advice? Not in context. People already do that, but it has nothing to do with drawing or art. It is called doodling, and is only a cure for too much coffee. It will never make an artist out of you. Sorry. But if you have any sense, you already knew that.

In Lesson 7, Saltz tells you to prune a tree and sew a couple of things together. “You are now in possession of secret knowledge”. OK.

In Lesson 8, he tells you that after pruning a tree and sewing a couple of things together, you are ready to “redefine skill”. In other words, *define* yourself as creative and you are. You don't have to be able to actually do anything, “your skill will be whatever it is you are doing differently”. Stated more bluntly, whatever piece of crap you come up with is the result of “skill”. So your creative act has been to destroy the meaning of the word “skill”. Skill no longer means skill, it just means “action”.

In truth, this will actually work for you, provided again that you are from a family of dukes or Cohens. In that case, absolutely anything you do, no matter how paltry, stunted, or malformed can be called skilled art. See Louise Bourgeois' art, above. And if you are *not* from those families, nothing you do, no matter how skilled, creative, or artistic, will ever be called art or ever be promoted. See my triptych, for perhaps the ultimate example.

In Lesson 9, Saltz quotes his wife and in so doing contradicts himself. She says that you should “embed thought in material”. Again, not good advice for an artist, but we have to remind ourselves the advice is coming from an art critic—the least artistic people that have ever existed. Their misunderstanding of art is so complete it is surprising they can remember how to spell it. Saltz restates that misunderstanding thusly:

An object should express ideas; art should contain emotions. And these ideas and feelings should be easy to understand – complex or not.

But wait, didn't he tell us in Lesson 1 that art should be senseless? How can it be senseless but express ideas that are easy to understand?

He is actually right that art should express emotions. That is what it does best. But whether they are easy to understand is beside the point. Understanding is done by the viewer, not the artist. The artist has no control over the sensitiveness or intelligence of a viewer. Some viewers will understand more than others, but the artist is not responsible for misunderstanding or lack of understanding. For example, Saltz's complete blindness to art is not my fault, is it? The fact that he cannot see or feel is his own problem, and is not up to me to correct. I can't make him a better artist, a better critic, or a better viewer. That is all up to him.

In Lesson 14, Saltz shows he knows as little about cats as he does about artists. This is not surprising, since there *is* a link between the two—though he gets the link wrong. He tells us that when he calls his

cat, the cat doesn't come. Unlike the dog, his cat ignores him. He tells us this has something to do with indirect communication. Cats are abstract artists because they rub on the couch instead of on him, he thinks. But that isn't right. His cat rubs on the couch because cats are more picky about people. They are a finer judge of character than dogs. His cat apparently knows he is a fink, and prefers to rub on the couch. I don't blame him. I would rather rub on the couch as well. As for my cats, they come when I call them. They go on walks with me. They run to be picked up and then purr and rub on my beard. They hate to be put down. They sleep next to me or on top of me at night, the three of them often trapping me to where I can hardly move. This is because they know I am a fellow artist. We all have good taste. We all know what beauty is, and we know it is important.

Next, in Lesson 20, Saltz lies right to your moronic little face. He tells you that you will have to get used to being poor. That may be true for you, but it has nothing to do with success in the world of Modern art, since all the famous Modern artists were from rich families. Yes, some of them are sold as coming from the lower middle class, just as they sell you many movie stars that way. But it isn't true. They are lying and I have proved it over and over. These people are all from the same families, and those families are very wealthy. Do you think Louise Bourgeois was ever poor? No. She was born rich, married rich, and was always rich. It is the same for the rest of them, and if they tell you otherwise they are just making up stories. That is one story they are very good at telling. See my paper [on the Lost Generation](#) for more on this grand lie.

In Lesson 22, he tells you it only takes a few people to make a career in art. The first true thing he has said. It only takes mommy or daddy, or them knowing someone. If you are from the right families, you don't have to find a gallery. Daddy will find it for you, or buy it for you. If you do your research, you will find that all famous Modern artists had an inside track. They were to the gallery born in some way. Most of them can be traced in a very short line to the major banks and investment companies. Don't believe me? Research Saltz's own examples: Jasper Johns and Elizabeth Peyton. All they had to do is ask to be famous and they immediately were. Why? Because they were from the top families. Saltz kind of admits it in the very next paragraph, though he doesn't admit he is talking about Johns and Peyton. He tells you the art world is full of privileged people, who made it because they were connected. What he doesn't tell you is that the art world is made up of them and *only* them. There are no exceptions. No one got in strictly on talent, *since none of them are talented*. No one got in strictly on skill, *since none of them are skilled*. None of them got in on hard work, *since none of the "art" displays any degree of hard work*. So we know without further research that *all* of them got in on a bye. That is the way it works.

Saltz says he hates them for this, implying it is OK to be jealous. I hate them, too, but not because I am jealous. I would not change places with them for anything, and it is because I hate *what they are*. I hate them as liars and cheats and frauds. I hate them for destroying real art and replacing it with their own garbage. That has nothing to do with envy. Envy is felt toward those who are better than us, and these people are better than no one. What I feel toward them is not envy, but revulsion. I literally thank the Muses every night that I am not part of the Modern art scene. I thank them for sparing me the company and kinship of such people.

But Saltz saves the worst for last. Lesson 33 is on being delusional:

At three a.m., demons speak to all of us. I am old, and they still speak to me every night. And every day. They tell you you're not good enough, didn't go to the right schools, are stupid, don't know how to draw, don't have enough money, aren't original; that what you do doesn't matter, and who cares, and you don't even know art history, and can't schmooze, and have a bad neck. They tell you that you're faking it, that other people see

through you, that you're lazy, that you don't know what you're doing, and that you're just doing this to get attention or money. I have one solution to turn away these demons: After beating yourself up for half an hour or so, stop and say out loud, "Yeah, but I'm a fucking genius." You are now.

I said we would see him unwinding in full view, and there it is. Letting it all hang out. Almost as bad as a nude from the shower. Or maybe worse. Because those voices in your head aren't Demons, Jerry. They are Furies, hounding you with the truth for your crimes against the natural order. You *are* faking it and *aren't* a genius. You and your cousins have inverted the natural order so that you can see yourselves in the media. You have stolen art for yourselves, driving real art underground. You have stolen literature for yourselves, driving real literature underground. You have stolen science for yourselves, driving real science underground. You have stolen, squashed, perverted, killed, or redefined everything to suit your own pathetic sense of self, but it hasn't worked, as we knew it wouldn't. You know the truth despite everything and it haunts you. This is also the way the world works, on a deeper level. It is what the Families are in deepest denial about. It is what they cannot buy themselves out of, talk themselves out of, or con themselves out of.

You may think everyone is haunted by these doubts, Jerry, but you would be wrong. I am not haunted by any such doubts. Just as my cats like me, my nights aren't haunted by Demons or Furies. My days and nights are watched over by Muses, who comfort me constantly. They guide me and protect me. They give me things to do and assure me my job is well done. No, they don't provide me with piles of money or fame, but it is because they know the true value of those things. They provide me with what I need, and in return I defend art to the best of my ability. I defend science to the best of my ability. I defend truth to the best of my ability. You might try it, Jerry. I cannot make you a better person, but maybe they can. It is never too late.

*See Nietzsche's section on "the tarantulas" in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.