

THE TEXAS OBSERVER

SEPTEMBER 24, 1971

THE DELUXE SHOW

by Jan Butterfield

Cheap handbills have been distributed in virtually every section of Houston which read "COME AND SEE THE DELUXE SHOW - Art and Movies, 3303 Lyons Avenue, Admission Free." In Houston's "bloody" Fifth Ward the DeLuxe Theater is teeming with life. The de Menil Foundation, whose curious and intricately tangled web of involvement, both personal and financial, seems to weave itself about much of the more interesting art activity in the Houston area, has done it again.

This time they have invited visiting curator Peter Bradley, associate curator of the prestigious Perls gallery in New York, to organize a special art exhibition. They also invited Mickey Leland, TSU teacher and Fifth Ward Community organizer, to help keep things cool. Kenneth Noland flew in to aid in installation of the exhibition, and New York poet Steve Cannon came down to write a documentary kind of catalog.

The end result is a big gun show of more than little import which includes such art world luminaries as Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Sam Gilliam, Larry Poons, Richard Hunt, Craig Kauffman, Darby Bannard, Dan Christensen, Michael Steiner and others.

The old DeLuxe Theater is located in one of the seediest and most rundown areas of Houston if not in the Fifth Ward itself. Outside, the marquee is cracked and broken and faded plastic letters still hang tenaciously to its grid. Located between WILKE FURNITURE COMPANY - Credit Terms - and Jeff's Tuxedo Rentals, it is a tattered remnant of another era.

"The Old DeLuxe Theater is a point of historical significance for people who were raised in the Fifth Ward Community. It is a museum of everything, social and economic and life styles that depicted the era during and after World War II...In April of 1941 the DeLuxe Theater became the 'family show' for Fifth Warders...white movie houses were still segregated and prior to the DeLuxe's opening, community residents were faced with only two alternatives for entertainment - the Roxy or the Lyons Theaters...where rats the size of kittens shared the seats of the people watching the movie."

– DeLuxe Show press release

The exterior of the building is cracked and broken and the sidewalk sprouts weeds. Inside the theater the foyer is dank and dark and peeling posters from old Frankenstein movies lie curled in the corners. (The "flicks" will be revived – "King Kong," "Frankenstein," "Step n' Fetchet" and "Amos and Andy" run daily in the balcony – a "leader" which draws in 4,500 people daily.) The outside of the has deliberately not been restored in order to preserve its historical significance.

Inside the theater proper nothing short of a miracle has been achieved. The stained walls, torn and faded seats and rolls of dust are gone, and in their place is a pristine white exhibition gallery. New walls of sheetrock have been put up, painted white and the newly-constructed gallery hung with special exhibition track lights. The show is a knockout. It is clean, relatively cohesive and beautifully installed. The exhibition is open seven days a week for the neighborhood and for anyone else who can find the Fifth Ward. Relative serenity reigns.

It wasn't always thus. Neighborhood Fifth Warders, conscious of territorial invasion, attempted small scale disruption during the installation and tempers flared dangerously. Oil was eventually poured on troubled waters but they stood glaring, fearful of the intrusion. By the Sunday afternoon opening crowds from the neighborhood had begun to quietly drift in and the exhibition had become a fact.

According to a press release the exhibition includes "New talent and more established artists": What is implicit but not stated is that this is a very unique exhibition. Not only has it been organized "To enable those who would not attend a museum to see new and good works in familiar surroundings" but it has much more far-reaching and important purpose. The exhibition includes some of the most important artists around who use color as structure, and some solid sculptors, but even more importantly it happens that roughly half of the artists included in the exhibition are black. The point of all of this is that a point is not made of it – except through the Fifth Ward grapevine, where for many it is the only factor that gives the show credence.

This curious and complex exhibition may be like a quiet underwater explosion, the shock waves of which have not yet hit. Following hard on the heels of a series of exhibitions held at the Whitney Museum, in Boston and most recently in Geneva, this too is an exhibition which includes black artists – but with a monumentally important difference. This is neither a "Black Exhibition" (usually of social protest art or art with black subject matter) nor an exhibition of "Black Artist" (many of whom are exhibited because they are black not because of the quality of their art). This is instead a "mainstream" exhibition which happens to have some black artists in it. It is relatively easy to choose up sides and argue the relative merits of "Black Art," "Black Artists" and the influence of African Ancestry – it is a convoluted dialectic. The critical literature of the past three years is full of pros and cons and heated disagreements. Suffice it to say my personal interest lies primarily in the quality of the art. The rest is politics and sociology. That point having been made, I choose not to discuss the blackness or whiteness of any given artist from here on out.

The exhibition was, I suspect, chosen particularly for the strength of its visual impact. Its inclusions read like a portion of the "Who's Who" of color painting. Color painters – those who depend primarily or solely upon color as structure – have been either much enshrined or much berated depending upon which side of the critical fence one is on. It is a difficult area in which to work. Freed almost entirely of Cubist concerns for space and from pictorial elements, the color painter must say what he has to say pretty much with color alone and, of course, the shape in which he contains it. The bad ones slide off the edge into prettiness and decorativeness and sometimes the line is very thin. There are no bad painters in this show. It does however have some weaknesses.

For the ultimate refinement of the colorist statement, Kenneth Noland wins hands down. The thin, sheer delicacy of his whispered colors is belied by the force and tension of his rushing lines and the tautness of his canvases. Two of his works in the exhibition are not more than ten inches in height and run some six feet in length. These, "Trail Marks," and "Natural Way," are both from 1969. They utilize yellow, clay, green, ochre and pink for their primary strength. For all of their delicacy they are taut and finely-tuned as an instrument. A third work, "Rustle" from 1967 is a more standardized size and utilizes narrow bands of blued purple and baby blue to separate flat areas of ochre, beige, yellow and rust in an interwoven orchestration of bands.

Sam Gilliam's "Rather" from 1970 is probably the most spectacular work in the exhibition in terms of bravado and dramatic impact. It is a stained, suspended canvas onto which brilliant vermilion, purple, and red have been poured, rubbed, scrubbed, dripped and stained. It is hung draped, suspended from four nails in the wall, in a violent Baroque gesture. Looseness and accidental forces are part of both the painting vocabulary and the final hanging. The work is allowed to hang essentially where it will with some urging from the creator. Oddly, I preferred an early hanging rather than the final one which tacked up one end in banner fashion, grounding it and interfering with the fluidity.

There is a Jules Olitski in the show from Kenneth Noland's personal collection entitled "Loosha One, 1970" which has a radiating and sumptuous beauty. The painting is pink-orange with the kind of halation of color at which Olitski is so good. It is exquisitely controlled and bounded by slashes of gradually fading color in pink, ochre or green along its borders. Larry Poons, whose reputation was made with his "dot" paintings of tightly-controlled shapes against contrasting color fields, was tough enough to realize the corner into which he could have (did?) paint himself and to begin anew. The painting in this exhibition is one of the new group, only one of which I had seen previously. It is proof that he is as strong as ever. The work in this exhibition "Untitled, 1971" has a cratered surface of yellow mustard-orange. It has only vestigial remains of ovaloid shapes in one corner in faintest purple and pink in a kind of echo or homage. Instead of the tight, clean surface of yesteryear, his surface now is thick, cracked, scabby, with rich, almost still wet color which bubbles open to form deep craters of green.

The one Darby Bannard in the show, "Perishing Lands" is fairly representative, but not one of my favorites. I admit unashamedly to strong color weaknesses and am sometimes easily seduced, and also conversely to a certain perversity and propensity for Funky color. But some of Bannard's works are neither (this is flat, pale yellow-orange and greyed purple) and I just can't make work. This is sometimes due to the density of the surface, but more often than not to the specific coloration.

Peter Bradley's works, "Till Now" and "Hemming," both from 1971, are soft, rich, velvety, lyrical paintings with deep pools of color in lavender and rust out of which rise glimmers of blue, green and salmon color. They are sensuous paintings which appeal immediately. Maybe too much so. I had the strong feeling that one needed to see a larger body of work. Bradley, who organized the show (should his own work have been included?) has not exhibited extensively (except for early prints) and I had not previously seen his work. At any rate, it is rich and luscious stuff.

Al Loving's huge work from 1971, which was just recently included in the Whitney Annual, is a multi-faceted irregular geometric form which ranges in coloration from Day-glo to muted pastel and is broken by occasional marbled units. It must span over eighteen feet of wall. It is competent, but its audacious attempts at scale and uniqueness fail to cover some innate weaknesses in conception.

Dan Christensen has two works in the show, "Scissor Tail" and "Montauk Malkles," both from 1970. In these lyrical works, rich, dank greens, salmons, browns and purples pull his space in and out, achieving a finely-honed balance between interior space and edge relationships.

Richard Hunt, who has just had a massive retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, is represented by only one work "Extending Horizontal Form" from 1958. A strong sculptor, Hunt's work leaves Cubist concerns behind and his open welded steel sculptures make a strong if erratic personal statement in their attenuated linear forms. His recent work is heavier and more solid. I regret that a more recent example was not included in the show also.

The only West coast artist included in the show was Craig Kauffman whose exquisite, iridescent lozenge of silver soap bubble grey hangs on the wall like a rare opal. The most obvious West coast inclusion would have been, to my mind, Fred Eversly, who works in highly colored plastic forms. Regrettably, he was not included.

Michael Steiner's small floor pieces are sculptures of rusted cor-ten steel with sliding and intersecting planes. They are very strong as individual pieces but got short shrift in this show because of space competition – the paintings are too demanding and the floor too vast. None of which is meant as hard core criticism...that the exhibition hung together as tightly as it did in improvised gallery conditions is nothing short of remarkable. William T. Williams, who does extremely handsome, small, watercolors, also got short shrift because his works are far too intimate both in feeling and scale to have been forced to compete with massive

color paintings. They are very good small works, however, which would hold their own in a drawing exhibitions. The one aberration inclusion in the show is Bob Gorden whose "surreal" work "Drapes" is from William Copley's collection and consists of drapes of plastic shower curtain material, sequin and silk tassel trimmed and hung on large golden rods. It looks like a fabricated "avant garde" work submitted to a juried annual.

Ed Clark's oval paintings of heavy pastel stripes are competent, but too easy and the oval shape is too tricky. Virginia Jaramillo whose work I do not know, defines shallow space by laying down on solid ground of bright green a curved line of bright yellow which lies upon the ground like a tight wet thread. I liked the works which have a Lorser Feitelson edge to them. Anthony Caro's one work is strong and representative but was lost in space and Jim Wolfe's piece too derivative and unsure.

No matter how you cut it that's a lot of important stuff to see in a rickety theater on the other side of town, and Papa critic Clement Greenberg wasn't there just for kicks. What happens now remains to be seen. Information has it that the DeLuxe Theater is to be "Put to the Service of the Community" at the close of the show. Thereby may hang the crux of another article. Be that as it may, both as an opportunity for the Fifth Ward community and as a kind of "off Broadway" exhibition, the show was certainly a success. It may in point of fact really be possible to take art out of institutions and put it in the community where it might just make a real difference.

A Journal of Free Voices

A Window to the South

Sept. 24, 1971

25¢

The Observer goes to a YAF convention

Houston
The national convention of the Young Americans for Freedom held at the Shamrock Hilton Hotel Sept. 2-5 was actually a plot, a nefarious conspiracy conceived, arranged and executed by Allard Lowenstein.

In this parlous era, when one comes across one thousand young people standing on their chairs, giving the double thumbs down signal and screaming in unison, "Dump Nixon! Dump Nixon! DUMP NIXON!" what else is one to conclude? No one knows how Lowenstein managed to infiltrate and subvert the right's foremost under-30 bastion of ideological purity, but we trust Bill Buckley will do something about it ere long.

Those of you who have not previously encountered the YAF phenom should know that this is not the right wing's SDS. I suppose I should confess at the beginning that I am soft on YAF. In its own way, it's

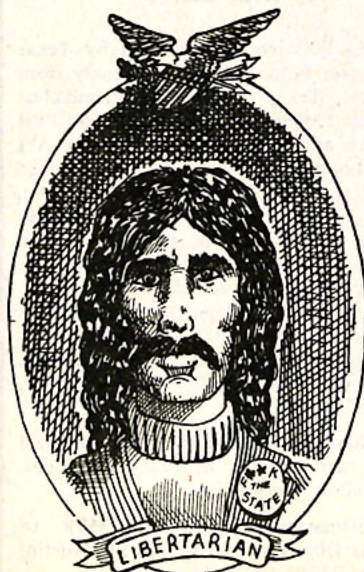
a jolly group. YAFers have no more use for George Wallace that does Mark Rudd. YAFers consider the John Birch Society a collection of dingalings. As for the KKK, the Minutemen, the White Citizens Council, the Young Mazis, *et al*, YAFers view them as the impedimenta and excreta of cerebral pygmies (YAFers talk like that, a lot). In sum, YAFers are not rightwingers; they are conservative. What is more, they consider themselves the intellectual elite of American conservatism.

In general, YAFers are distinguished both by extraordinary seriousness and extraordinary certitude. YAFers KNOW, which is comforting to those of us who are eternally waffling around in existential sloughs, muttering that the answer is not the question.

YAFers have it All Worked Out. Their comprehensive socio-politico-economic systems embrace everything from the nature of God and man to the price of

baloney. They are against big business, big labor unions, foreign aid, communism, taxes, the draft, welfare, East-West trade, the minimum wage, urban renewal, student power, Social Security, Medicare, the war on poverty, recognizing Red China, discriminating against South Africa, the federal government in general and the State Department in particular, price supports, wage-price freezes, Mack trucks, disarmament talks, the proposed Family Assistance Plan and much, much more. And as of their 1971 convention, they're agin' Richard Nixon.

YAF is not an ideologically monolithic group. One finds therein three distinct strains: libertarian, traditionalist and objectivist. To oversimplify, libertarians place liberty above all other values, which occasionally leads them to conclude that anarchy is the ideal social structure. Traditionalists are your basic, garden
(Continued on Page 3)



The coming fortnight . . .

By Suzanne Shelton

SEPTEMBER GRAB BAG

TRIBAL ART - Forty nine tribal groupings are represented in "Tribal Arts of West Africa," an exhibit of art objects such as spoons, ceremonial masks, and door latches; also selections from the B. Gerald Cantor Collection, including works by Dufy, Kandinsky, Rodin; through Oct. 10, Fort Worth Art Center Museum, Fort Worth.

TEXANA - "Texas Painting & Sculpture: 20th Century" presents 87 works by Texas artists; Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, Fort Worth.

JUST DUCKY - "The Art of the Decoy" is what they call it, and it includes "138 Carved Decoy Treasures," meaning ducks and shore birds; also, if you can believe it, a special exhibition of "Shot Guns From the Golden Era of Duck Hunting, 1880-1971," meaning, perhaps, that the era is ended; Witte Memorial Museum, 3801 Broadway, San Antonio.

LITHOGRAPHS - Bruce Conner, a San Francisco filmmaker-sculptor-printmaker, exhibits his lithographs, etchings, and drawings; through Sept., Contract Graphics, Houston.

ISRAELI ART - In cooperation with Lim Gallery of Tel Aviv, Jewish Community Center exhibits Israeli watercolors, etchings, oils, lithographs, and sculptures; through Oct. 1, Jewish Community Center, Houston.

SEPTEMBER 17

CHUCK BERRY - Oh, Maybelline! The man's still around, singing for the Cultural Entertainment Committee crowd; 8 p.m., Municipal Auditorium, Austin.

SEPTEMBER 19

JANE FONDA - This isn't really "kulcha," but I couldn't resist; Jane Fonda appears at public Oleo Strut benefit; surely talking with Jane can be classified "entertainment"; 6 to 8:30 p.m., 2101 Woodmont, Austin.

SEPTEMBER 20

ROMANTIC MUSIC - One in the series of "SMU Romantic Music Festival," harpsichordist Larry Palmer and violist Mitta Hybel perform with SMU Chamber Orchestra and Dallas Arts String Quartet; Caruth Auditorium, Dallas.

SEPTEMBER 21

TENNESSEE TIME - That old standby, Tennessee Williams, opens the Alley Theatre silver anniversary season with "Camino Real," drama in which almost 50 characters inhabit hell-like border town, peopled by the likes of Don Quixote, Lord Byron, Kilroy, and Camille; Alley Theatre, Houston, Texas.

SEPTEMBER 23

TEACHERS' TURN - Faculty members from School of Music tune up for fall recital; 8 p.m., Agnes Arnold Hall, University of Houston, Houston.

SEPTEMBER 24

COMEDY - "Slightly Married" (sounds like a knee-slapper) is billed as a "family comedy," by Guy Palmerton, performed by Little Theatre, Corpus Christi; also Sept. 25, 30; 5523 South Alameda, Corpus Christi.

CONCERT - "El Chicano" concert presents Mexican-American music; 8 p.m., University Center, University of Houston, Houston.

SEPTEMBER 25

ARTSY CRAFTSY - It's fun every year, the

Austin Arts and Crafts Show; go browse and buy; also Sept. 26, Oct. 2 and 3, Zilker Park, Austin.

SEPTEMBER 26

DRAMA OF CRIME - Jean Anouilh's "The Rehearsal" deals with the idealism of perfect love which is destroyed by the forces of sophistication; a good one; through Sept. 29, Theatre Room, Drama Building, University of Texas, Austin.

OPRY TIME - The Grand Ole Opry visits Corpus Christi, brought by none other than the Corpus Christi Police Officers' Association; 2 p.m., 5 and 8 p.m., Memorial Coliseum, Corpus Christi.

FREEBIE - University of Houston Symphony Orchestra presents free concert; 4 p.m., Houston Room, University Center, University of Houston, Houston.

SEPTEMBER 27

MORE MUSIC - SMU continues its romantic music festival with pianist Harris Crohn; Caruth Auditorium, SMU, Dallas.

SEPTEMBER 28

ROCKEROO - For rock fans only: Black Sabbath joins Edgar Winter and Black Trash in concert; 8 p.m., Municipal Auditorium, San Antonio.

SEPTEMBER 29

MORE ROCKEROO - This time it's "Chicago," the rock blues band; Memorial Coliseum, Corpus Christi.

Paper napkins contribute to the volume of needless American waste; So stop being a pig and add a touch of elegance to your dining table with cloth napkins. They're even sold in Sta Press now.

THE TEXAS OBSERVER

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Ronnie Dugger, Publisher
A window to the South
A journal of free voices

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We will serve no group or party but will hew hard to the truth as we find it and the right as we see it. We are dedicated to the whole truth, to human values above all interests, to the rights of man as the foundation of democracy; we will take orders from none but our own conscience, and never will we overlook or misrepresent the truth to serve the interests of the powerful or cater to the ignoble in the human spirit.

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The Observer goes . . .

(Continued from Page 1)

variety YAFers, taking as their models William F. Buckley, Jr., Sen. Barry Goldwater, R.-Ariz., and Gov. Ronald Reagan, R.-Calif. Objectivists all read Ayn Rand, which you will have to do too if you want to know more about them.

The founding father of this collection of *wunderkind* is Bill Buckley, editor of the conservative *National Review*, syndicated columnist, television personality, gadfly, wit and motorcyclist. Buckley is a whilom witch-hunter and was associated with some of the most vicious excesses of the McCarthy era. Those who know him personally say that Bill Buckley is a gentle and a courteous man. In his public appearances here, and elsewhere when I have seen him, he has struck me as a foppish, supercilious, condescending snot with a third-rate mind disguised by a first-rate vocabulary.

"Ralph Nader is a Luddite," Buckley drawled during his press conference wagging his eyebrows like a Texas legislator suffering from a gas attack.

Nick von Hoffman of *The Washington Post* later explained to a bewildered press corps, "A Lud is a small creature that attaches itself to the sides of swimming pools and a Luddite is one who has unnatural relations with a Lud."

BILL BUCKLEY'S keynote address to the assembled delegates sounded quite elegant, but I have no idea what he said. He called *The Houston Chronicle* a vestal virgin. Honest. He said ping-pong diplomacy was in the nature of a wild, libertine dispensation. And that Jean-Paul Sartre takes for granted that all intellectual history flows in a direct line from Aristotle to himself. And that Nixon was not elected to preside over the liquidation of human nature. The delegates liked it very much.

He did say one droll thing that I understood: "In 1999, Al Lowenstein will be running around the country fomenting a 'Dump John-John' movement."

The convention's next major speaker was Sen. James Buckley of New York, brother of the above. Although James Buckley has precisely the same speech patterns as his brother, he manages to discourse without leaving the impression that his auditors are all giving off an offensive odor. He has a nice grin and used it while telling a pleasant fable about one young John V. Lochinvar of New York City, which the delegates much enjoyed. James Buckley also said that the Goldwater campaign measured the depth and the extent of the conservative sentiment in this country, at which point, to my confusion, the delegates cheered. He said that the majority of Americans now take a conservative view on most of the major issues and that the liberal creed has proven its complete and utter bankruptcy, its complete and utter inability to deal with

the afflictions which beset the body politic. In closing, Sen. Buckley urged those there present not to let their understanding of the good life be contaminated either by dreamy visions of Utopia or by the ignoble appeal of sensuality.

The next fellow on the agenda was Sen. Robert Byrd, D-West Va., Senate majority whip. Byrd is a grim-visaged fellow, and was apparently in some pain from a recent operation. He has a remarkable background: he was orphaned when quite young and it is insufficient to say that he hauled himself up by the bootstraps; more like by his raw, bleeding fingernails. His experiences seem to have left him with all the humor and compassion of a piece of flint. He spoke against busing. He says it's unconstitutional.

The workshops and panels during the four-day convention provided most of the interest for those of us doing the conservative bird-watching bit. I wandered into one panel entitled "How to Have Influence" and found therein a fellow smacking his right fist into his left palm with frustration while discussing the fact that the left has co-opted the ecology issue.

"The liberals have taken green!" he said, heatedly puffing his pipe. "First they took love, then they took peace and now they're taking green!"

M. Stanton Evans and Kevin Phillips, of new majority fame, analyzed "Conservatism and 1972" for everyone's edification. Dr. Fred Schwarz, head of the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade, spoke. He's against communists. So is Herbert Philbrick, who used to lead three lives. So is Dean Clarence Manion. And Commander Lloyd Bucher. There was a groovy-o film festival where you could catch "High Noon" and "The Green Berets." But I spent more time in the Exhibit Hall, where you could get Teddy Kennedy waterproof watches and buttons that say "Nuke the Chinks" and "Down with Hot Pants" and John Wayne posters and copies of H. L. Hunt's "Lifeline" wrapped in fliers advertising HLH cosmetics. Ronnie Reagan talked to the crew via telephone from California. They liked that. One night they had a barbecue and dance by the Shamrock pool. They did the foxtrot.

The slogan for the convention was: "We Are the New Politics!" And I am here to tell you that they cribbed that from the SDS.

FRIDAY night the YAFers elected their own national officers. It wasn't much of a contest: Ron Docksai was re-elected national chairman. A fellow named Mike Carr, who led a long-haired libertarian delegation from Florida, got smeared.

Serious business started Saturday afternoon with consideration of resolutions. The first and most newsworthy

of the resolutions was that disavowing Nixon.

As written by the Resolutions Committee, the thing contained the following final paragraphs: "We do not plan at the moment to encourage formal political opposition to President Nixon in the forthcoming primaries, but we propose to keep all options open in the light of political developments in the next months.

"We reaffirm our personal admiration and — in the case of those of us who are his friends or who have been befriended by him — our affection for Richard Nixon and our wholehearted identification with the purposes he has over the years espoused as his own and the Republic's. We consider that our defection is an act of loyalty to the Nixon we supported in 1968."

The delegates voted to chop off those two paragraphs, leaving themselves flatly resolved to suspend support for the administration and to seek others of like mind and consult on ways to most effectively register their protests. Pretty heavy.

Randal Cornell Teague, YAF's executive director, said later, "I'm a little shocked by it. What YAF has done is to say that maybe there should be a conservative candidate in New Hampshire. This shows that the anti-Nixon feeling is stronger than I thought it was."

Throughout the convention the mere mention of Nixon's name was enough to call forth a hail of boos from the delegates.

In another of the several resolutions passed Saturday afternoon, the delegates declared: "We view the SALT talks with the U.S.S.R. as counterproductive to the national [rearmament] effort required, holding forth as they do the chimera of hopefulness, and we urge that they be indefinitely postponed."

The last eight words of that resolution were approved by a vote of 160 to 130, the closest of the day. The debate over their approval centered not on how the delegates actually felt but on how the resolution would look to "outsiders." All the delegates seemed to agree that more weapons are preferable to disarmament, but some of them worry about their image.

During interviews, a score or more YAF delegates explained why they had soured on Nixon. One of the most articulate was Mike Connelly of Louisiana, a newly-elected member of the national board. Connelly was the president of the Young Republicans at LSU in 1968 and worked hard for Nixon.

"I heard him make all those promises to the South and to conservatives," said Connelly, "and I saw him begin to break them almost as soon as he was elected. I became more and more disenchanted with his Vietnam policy and I am very wary of any government interference in the economy. But the final breaking point was the visit to Red China. Nixon specifically promised in the 1968 campaign that he

to a YAF convention . . .

would do the opposite. I think it was even part of the Republican platform, [It was: the 1968 Republican platform is against recognition of Red China and its admission to the United Nations.] He said we would not recognize Red China. And now look."

Connelly's sentiments were echoed by others: a number of smaller disenchantments culminating in the proposed visit to Peking.

In the face of the overwhelming anti-Nixon displays, the pro-Nixon folk — Carr and some libertarians plus a few odd-lot pragmatists, kept caucusing nervously. Should they nominate the President at the YAF mock convention? Would it be worse for him to go down to ignominious defeat or not be nominated at all? In a typically YAFian solution (principle is big with YAFers) it was decided that although the result of nominating Nixon would be a Bad Thing, if one believes in a man, one must publicly support him.

One might feel that what happens at a YAF convention has little or no relation to Real World politics, but it is well to remember the scorn with which the first "Dump Johnson" efforts were dismissed in 1967. It is the opinion of David Broder, *Washington Post* political analyst that Nixon cannot be re-elected without conservative support: he must have a conservative-moderate coalition to win. The conservatives cannot elect Nixon by themselves, but, as they proved in 1964, they swing a lot of weight within the Republican Party. YAFers and their like-minded seniors are extremely active politically — the kind who go out and ring doorbells or stay in and stuff envelopes. Nixon needs them. There are indications that he knows he needs them.

IN THE late afternoon before the night of the mock convention, another reporter and I went loping up to visit our libertarian chums in the Nixon caucus. We walked in on a meeting on which we had the effect of water on sugar. "Don't mind us," we said cheerfully. "We'll just sit here and listen. It's all off the record." The meeters literally fled at our approach. Among the meeters were Tom Huston and David Keene, both past chairmen of YAF. Keene is on Spiro Agnew's staff and Huston only recently left the White House staff.

The catch-22 for the conservatives in rejecting Nixon is that they have nowhere else to go. Huston and Keene were united in their opinion that the YAFers who rejected Nixon in Houston would all be out working for him after the '72 conventions. They further believe that it really isn't the function of YAF, as a group, to operate on realistic considerations; they believe YAF functions as the keeper of the conservative faith, more concerned with purity than

pragmatism. Having said all these valiant thing, Huston and Keene marched off to watch Nixon's nose get rubbed in it.

Even before the mock convention started, word was out that the fix was on. The advance text of a speech to be made by Docksai on Sunday contained the words, "The action we took last evening by nominating Spiro Agnew for President and Jim Buckley for Vice President . . ."

The evening got off to a rocking start with a speech by Robert Bauman, a state senator from Maryland. By that time, some members of the press had invented a game, giving speakers a point for every cliché and every redundancy. Bauman was high-point man for the convention with a total score of 65 in a 13 minute speech. I spare you the quotes.

The nominations were a lot more fun. There were more than 20 nominees including Sam C. Gass (we never figured out who he was either); the late Sen. Joseph McCarthy (who truly believes 'Better Dead Than Red'); Mary Jo Kopechne, who gave her life in the cause against liberalism; Al Capp (for whom the press invented the campaign slogan, "Show yourself, Al! Expose your true colors!"); Strom Thurmond, "You know he's not too old for anything!" and H. R. Gross, "In your heart, you know he's cheap!"

The finest nomination of the evening was made by a fellow in a yellow hardhat wearing a "Darwin is a Fairy!" sweatshirt. In finest hardhatese, the delegate from Illinois nominated the state's favorite son — RICHARD J. DALEY: "The mayor will go through those reformers like crap through a goose. . . . He knows the biggest problem we face today — commie pinkos! . . . He's seen his opportunities and he's took 'em. . . . Where he stands on military surveillance: if you ain't got nothin' to fear you should be for it. . . . Daley's a man who believes God give the right for every man to vote, living or dead."

EVERY TIME someone was nominated, no matter how absurd, a splendid floor demonstration took place. Even the libertarian-anarchist who nominated. Nobody got a hand from the Cajun contingent out of Louisiana, whose members impartially cheered for all comers: "Hot boudin, cold coosh coosh; come on Whoever, poosh, poosh, poosh."

According to members of the Nixon caucus, the fellow who nominated Nixon was a ringer from the national committee (Fix! Fix!). However, he did a creditable job, noting that his nominee was the only candidate endorsed by Reagan, James Buckley, Agnew, Goldwater and Tower. Nevertheless, Nixon ran behind all of them on the first ballot. Reagan led with 258; Buckley was next with 210 and Agnew third with 206. Nixon got 26 votes. Agnew was put over the top by Puerto Rico on the second ballot (after New Mexico

announced its votes with the sobriquet "Birthplace of the atomic bomb.") Whoop! Whoop! Is there a move to make it unanimous? NO! NO! The ayes have it. Is there a move to make Buckley unanimous for veep? NO! NO! NO! The ayes have it. Whoop! Whoop! Wave that Confederate flag. Teague announced that YAF would use its 27 staff members and a sum not to exceed \$750,000 to "put our money where our mouth is." None of the delegates thought YAF had \$750,000 (dues are a dollar a year for the 60,000 members). Apparently, the national committee plans to raise the sum on a special solicitation.

The Nixon caucus promptly held a post convention press conference and announced that they had tried to withdraw Nixon's name from nomination but were not permitted to do so. Carr condemned the "juvenile, underhanded tactics of the national board that have no place in this country or anywhere."

"Is the purpose of this caucus to embarrass YAF?" demanded some fink in the background. Carr calmed at once. No, no, great organization and all that. We're not about to rake down YAF in front of the press.

The attitudes of YAFers toward the press were enchanting throughout. *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Newsweek* and the radio and television networks staffed the thing. At one point, a delegate came up to the press table and started needling reporters. At least we're here, responded one of the effete, Eastern elite, I notice none of your conservative papers or magazines have sent representatives.

"Oh, they don't need to come," said the delegate. "They know what to write."

According to the disgruntled Nixon caucusers and some Texas delegates, the real inside skinny is that YAF's true fave is not Agnew but Reagan. According to these sources, Docksai and other national board members went to Reagan and told him they wanted to nominate him but he begged them to stave it off as he "couldn't surface yet" and it would be "embarrassing to him." Agnew was supposedly settled on as a consensus, compromise candidate because it would be so embarrassing to Nixon to have his veep preferred by "real" conservatives. M.I.

Mountain climbing

On the highest peak in Kansas
Vertigo-burdened climbers
Race claustrophobic spelunkers.
Ascending separate sides
They probe Hollows and Caves and
Hidden Caverns for
Birchercommieleftistklanners
And other known perverts and subversives,
Much to their mutual rage
Finding only each other.

DONLEY E. WATT, JR.

Cuernavaca

Klansman konvicted

By Karen Northcott
and Victoria Smith

Houston

A cow pasture on the outskirts of Houston was the scene in the early 1900's of the revival of the Ku Klux Klan in the Southwest. Some 57 years later Houston is the sight of a long-awaited crackdown on a Klan that has become best known for its terrorist activities against the left and liberal communities. Never before in Texas history, to our knowledge, has a Klansman been brought to trial, let alone convicted.

A jury in federal district court last week convicted Jimmy Dale Hutto, Pasadena member of the United Klans of America, of conspiracy to destroy the transmitters of two Pacifica radio stations in California. The jury in U.S. District Judge James Noel's court also found Hutto guilty on two charges of violation of the Federal Firearms Act. Hutto had purchased illegally a gun: the law states in part that no one who has been "adjudicated mentally defective" can buy a gun. (Hutto has twice been committed to mental institutions.) Hutto also made a false statement in order to buy the weapon.

Hutto was arrested by federal agents Jan. 15, 1971, while en route to California to blow up the Pacifica transmitters in Los Angeles and Berkeley. Arrested with him were Russell A. Rector, Jr., 18, and Ronford L. Styron, 20. These young men served as the government's star witnesses in the case. Although both were considered co-conspirators with Hutto, neither will be prosecuted by the government.

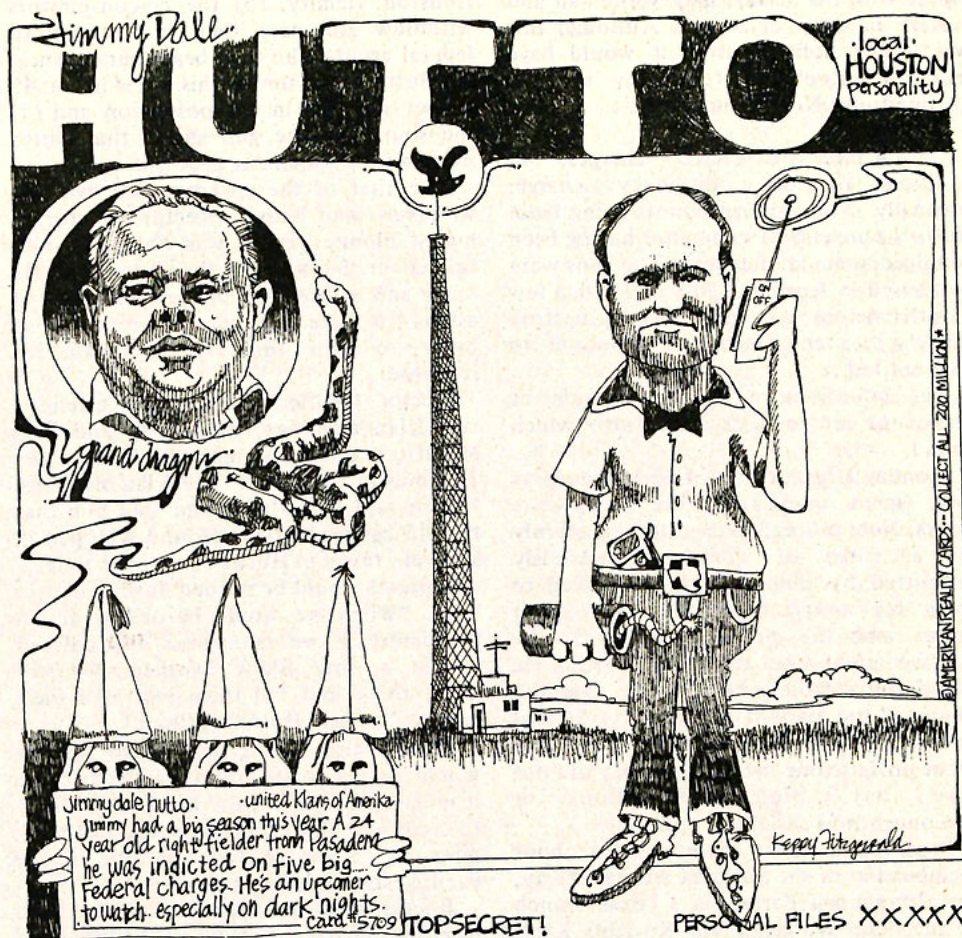
It took the jury some three and a half hours to bring back the guilty verdict following two hours of often fiery and emotional summations.

In his closing statement, chief defense lawyer J. B. Stoner of Savannah, Ga., charged that the government had tried to destroy the Klan. He said the government was trying to appeal to the jury's prejudices and biases by dragging the Klan into the case and the indictment.

Stoner said that the government would have the jury believe that Hutto would "use bloody violence against the Communist revolutionary organizations that are carrying on a revolution against us today."

"It seems to me," Stoner thundered, "that when you have a revolution going on like we do today, the Justice Department should have the revolutionaries on trial rather than Jimmy Dale Hutto. The

Karen Northcott and Victoria Smith are members of the Space City! collective. Space City! is a Houston "underground communist newspaper." Victoria is not the sister of the Observer editor.



government has been placed in the position of protecting revolutionaries."

Stoner, 47, has long been associated with white supremacist and anti-Jewish causes. He has been affiliated with the Ku Klux Klan since he was a teenager. At 16, he organized the Chattanooga, Tenn., Klan. In 1952 Stoner organized the Christian Anti-Jewish Party. He is now associated with the National States Rights Party, a white supremacist, anti-Semitic organization with offices in Savannah. He has been its vice-chairman and was its 1964 vice-presidential candidate.

In 1969 Stoner took over the defense of James Earl Ray, convicted of murdering Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., after Ray fired Houston's Percy Foreman.

Assistant U.S. Atty. Ellis McCullough, chief counsel for the government, alternately roared and mimicked when he ripped through Hutto's testimony in his closing argument. He said that Hutto and fellow Klansman Louis Beam "reminded me of a couple of witch doctors trying to drive the devils out of the land with loud noises and blinding flashes of light."

McCullough passionately exclaimed with flailing arms, "the most dangerous animal in the urban guerilla war is not the junkie, but the terrorist. Fortunately there are not too many of them yet. But it's you and me

that are going to be in the middle," if the victims start fighting back, he warned the jury.

As the jury filed out, a Klans member whispered, "If they find ole Jimmy innocent we are going to burn a 40-foot cross on the top of the Pacifica building to show the whole world that we [the Klan] are innocent."

The week-long trial had been a confusing one, with contradictory testimony coming from all directions, embroidered with provocative tales from members of that mysterious organization, the United Klans of America.

Our confusion was compounded as we sat and listened to hour after hour of entertaining but seemingly irrelevant questioning mostly by the defense. By the end of the trial we were beginning to wonder exactly what it was the defense was attempting to prove or disprove.

Amidst the daily parade to the witness stand of Klansmen, former Klansmen and FBI agents, sat Jimmy Dale, with his baby bulldog face, vacant stare and balding head. He had just spent eight months in federal and county penal institutions. A small man, Hutto looked even smaller in the churchlike atmosphere of U.S. District

Judge James Noel's huge courtroom. The judge himself, seated high above us all against a backdrop of marble, looked like a pastor with his black robes, white hair and austere paternal demeanor. Although this was a hot political trial, it would have taken a brave and fool-hardy soul to disrupt Judge Noel's courtroom.

THE FEDERAL charges, in addition to the conspiracy charge, originally included five counts rising from Hutto's purchase of guns after having been adjudged a mental defective. The guns were purchased in April and July of 1970, a few months before the conspiracy to destroy the Pacifica transmitters is supposed to have started.

The defense moved that the judge sever two of the gun counts against Hutto, which he did.

Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning were spent questioning the prospective jurors. Noel proceeded to grill them sternly on a range of questions previously submitted by their lawyers. He talked to them for several hours, describing their duties and the proper conduct to be followed in and out of the courtroom. He noted the volatile nature of the case and discussed the amount of publicity the trial had received in the media. He then had them promise one by one that they did not have any prior information or preconceptions about the case.

Prospective jurors were quizzed about membership in the Socialist Workers Party, the Communist Party, the "Texas branch of the Peoples Party," the Ku Klux Klan, the White Citizens Council of America, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the National States Rights Party, the Minutemen, the Minutewomen, the American Nazi Party, the National Rifle Association or the White Citizens Council.

Six men and six women were finally chosen to determine the fate of Jimmy Dale Hutto.

THE COURTROOM was moderately full Tuesday — with reporters, Klansmen, relatives and supporters. Frank Converse, the Grand Dragon of the Texas United Klans of America, Klansmen Paul Moratto and Louis Beam, and ex-Klansman Jerry Pierce were there to lend their support, for as Moratto later told us, "We could all be up for the same rap sometime. With such flimsy evidence we all might be charged with conspiracy someday."

Tuesday afternoon the government presented its opening statement. The prosecuting attorneys vowed to produce evidence to show that: (1) Hutto entered a conspiracy to destroy the transmitters of Pacifica stations in California; (2) Hutto recruited two others to help him; (3) Hutto made statements to the co-conspirators to induce them to help him destroy the

transmitters; (4) Hutto admitted to the co-conspirators that he had participated in the bombing of at least one building in the Houston vicinity; (5) the co-conspirators withdrew and gave their information to federal agents who then began surveillance; (6) Hutto at the time of his arrest had a .45 caliber revolver in his possession and (7) the source of the gun shows that Hutto made a false statement in acquiring it.

The first of the government's two star witnesses was Russell Rector. Rector, a husky blonde youth, was obviously well briefed in the ways of the courtroom. He knew and utilized the old lawyer's trick of asking to have the question repeated in order to gain time to formulate his response.

Rector testified that he had attended two Klan meetings with Hutto and Paul Moratto and had also met with Hutto some 30 times in addition to the Klan meetings. Rector said that Hutto had told him that the .45 caliber revolver (found wrapped in a purple towel in Hutto's car at the time of the arrest) would be needed during the trip West. "When we would be driving across the desert, if we ran across any colored people or any Black Panthers, we will shoot them and kill them and take their money," he said Hutto told him.

Rector also stated that Hutto said he would prefer not to use dynamite because it makes too much noise and that "it liked to have got him caught the second time," referring to the second bombing of the Pacifica station here on Oct. 6.

Rector went on to say that the Klan meetings he attended were "opened and closed" by Tommy N. Harrison. He said that shortly before their arrest, after a high speed chase on Katy Freeway just outside Houston, Harrison told Hutto that "he didn't want a slip-up like we had on the second job, and if he (Hutto) did, he would get eat up."

THE DEFENSE recalled Rector to the stand Wednesday to have him go over his testimony concerning his visit to Harrison's house. Stoner asked him to remember what he had told the court the day before and then to remember what he had told the FBI minutes after his arrest.

Stoner, reading from what he led everyone to believe was a transcript of an FBI interview taken on Jan. 15, accused Rector of contradictory testimony. He questioned whether Rector had indeed heard Harrison say that "he didn't want any slip-ups like the second time . . ." or whether he had heard merely one word, "beam," as he had told the FBI immediately after the arrest. Rector later admitted that due to the confusion at the scene of the arrest he might subsequently have given false or misleading information to the FBI.

Upon government questioning, Rector said that he had gone with Hutto to buy a gun from Robert A. Schamber, owner of Discount Guns, but that he was too young

to buy it himself. He said he gave Hutto \$20 which Hutto then gave to the dealer. He added that Schamber jokingly asked Hutto if he could purchase a gun legally. Schamber supposedly asked Hutto if he had ever been institutionalized or declared mentally incompetent. Hutto allegedly replied jokingly that he had never been declared mentally defective. Rector added that he had gone target shooting twice but the gun wasn't any good for that purpose so he sold the gun back to Hutto. (Schamber himself later testified that he properly asked Hutto all the necessary questions before selling him the weapon.)

Rector said that he had decided not to go along with Hutto and he and Styron called the FBI on Jan. 12, three days before they were to leave. He said that at no time did the FBI or anyone promise them immunity from prosecution.

A chilling insight to the minds of the two young men was provided when Styron asked Rector, "You say Hutto was talking about killing blacks or Black Panthers along the way. Did you like that idea?" "I didn't give it much thought," replied Rector. "What did you think about blowing up the transmitters?" "I didn't like that idea," he answered.

Wednesday afternoon the government introduced its second star witness, Ronford Styron. Styron, a childhood friend of Rector's, appeared more ill at ease and less sure of his courtroom demeanor.

Under questioning by the prosecution, Styron outlined how Hutto unsuccessfully tried to recruit him as an "open or silent member" of the Klan. He quoted Hutto as saying that silent members were guerillas who "wouldn't hesitate to do anything from shooting a Black Panther or blowing up something." Both the government witnesses made repeated references to the shooting of Black Panthers in the desert.

Styron concurred with Rector's testimony concerning Tommy Harrison and the overheard conversation with the reference to the second Pacifica bombing. He also said that he had the impression that they were being charged with conspiracy in order to protect them from Klan harassment and that the charges would be dropped later. He said he had gained this impression shortly before the arrest.

ON THURSDAY, the prosecution called Dr. H. Wayne Glatfely to the stand. Glatfely is a U.S. Public Health Service psychiatrist at the federal hospital in Springfield, Mo., where Hutto was sent by the court shortly before his arrest to determine whether he was mentally competent to stand trial. At the time of his commitment, which lasted for 90 days, Hutto's lawyer, at that time ACLU attorney David Berg, fought the motion and vigorously protested what he called excessively high bail — \$100,000.

(Berg, who is often found defending longhaired rebels with leftist inclinations,

removed himself from the Hutto case after Stoner was hired. Although Stoner and Hutto both said they wanted Berg to stay on as the local attorney, Berg stated that he could not sit at the defense table with Stoner, whose politics, he said, "are slightly to the right of Hitler's.")

Cross examination of Glotfelty seemed purposely staged for comic relief. Stoner's questions ranged from "Do psychiatrists ever lose their temper?" to "Doctor, have you ever heard of the ink blot test?" (After this last question, to which Glotfelty naturally replied "yes," Stoner picked up a piece of paper, dabbed some ink on it and began asking the doctor questions about his "ink blot test.") Stoner's line of questioning afforded Glotfelty the opportunity to deliver a layman's lesson in basic psychiatry, and we all picked up interesting bits of information such as the news that psychiatrists have the highest rate of suicide among all categories of doctors.

Glotfelty did manage to wedge in a few bits of pertinent testimony. He told the court that reports showed Hutto was not insane, either at the time of his arrest or several weeks earlier when he was alleged to have made his illegal gun purchase, but he did exhibit "personality disturbances with schizoid tendencies." When asked to clarify this diagnosis, Glotfelty patiently explained it meant that Hutto was "shy."

The last witness called by the government was Edward B. Stork, an agent for the FBI and one of Hutto's arresting officers. Stork cut a quietly impressive figure on the witness stand. After 20 years with the FBI, he was definitely together. His thin, gray face sparsely splotched with areas of red, looked a trifle weary, but his cool was unshakeable, and he answered questions with absolute precision.

Stork's testimony was almost as intriguing as his appearance. He told the court that there had been no prior agreement between himself and Rector and Styron granting them immunity if they aided in Hutto's arrest.

Stork said that Rector (and he emphasized *Rector*, not Styron) had called the FBI office on Jan. 12 and sketchily outlined the plans. He said that he had not known of Styron's involvement until Jan. 14, the day before the arrest, when he went to Rector's house to interview the youth. He said that Styron was there but that he was not considered "part of the group" at that time.

Stork also said Rector had told him that all he could hear Hutto and Harrison say, in that controversial conversation at the Harrison home, was the word "beam." (All concerned appeared to assume that this word referred not to a sun beam or a roof beam, but to a *Louis Beam*, currently under indictment with Hutto for allegedly bombing the local Pacifica transmitter last October.)

Stork said neither Rector nor Styron mentioned to him hearing the longer, more

incriminating snatch of conversation which both youths testified they had overheard.

In cross examination, the defense questioned Stork as to whether he could have possibly forgotten about making some prior deal with Styron and Rector. The

"Federal violence!"

Houston

The atmosphere in and out of the courtroom was quite cordial at the beginning of the trial. But as the proceedings dragged on and the testimony became inflammatory, tempers flared.

The first day, long-haired members of the Pacifica staff stood in the corridors rapping with Klansmen. They agreed that the federal government persecutes right and left-wing extremists alike. At one point the young men were jokingly considering a right-left coalition "to end federal tyranny."

However, by the second day, the mood of the spectators — all Klan supporters — turned nasty.

A woman friend of Hutto's belligerently refused to get on an elevator with me. She screeched that she would not ride in the same elevator with someone from a "Communist radio station." (I had previously identified myself as a reporter from *Space City!* and Pacifica.)

Klansmen followed reporters around the building and stood outside the pressroom, making all concerned somewhat nervous and paranoid.

As I was walking through the lobby after the verdict had been read, a young woman, later identified as the Grand Dragon's daughter, began yelling and screaming at me. "I am going to beat you up, I am going to smash you," she cried.

I was genuinely frightened; I am a skinny five-foo-two and she was, by my standards, an amazon. Rather startled, I ducked behind my tape recorder for protection as she lunged at me.

A tall young man attempted to restrain the woman, warning, "Don't hit her. That's just what they want. It would just give them more publicity." (The Klan always insists that Pacifica, *Space City!* and the Socialist Workers Party bomb themselves in order to garner publicity.)

At this point, Ms. Converse began screaming, "Federal violence, federal violence!" — Whatever that means — I didn't stop for clarification.

Meanwhile the federal marshals, the guards and the television cameramen merely watched, apparently enjoying the spectacle.

I managed to walk out of the building unscathed, only to be followed closely by the threat, "I wouldn't walk home alone in the dark from *Space City!*" They knew my address.

Later that night before I drifted off to sleep dreaming of burning crosses, I received a phone call from a heavy breather: no words, just breathing. K.N.

object here, it seems, was to discredit the two youths by showing that they had betrayed their friend (surely even a jury dislikes a fink) or by showing that they had lied.

But Stork was adamant. There had been no prior agreement. He said he wouldn't have forgotten such an agreement, because he, as a mere agent, couldn't have made it in the first place. There was just no way to impeach the testimony of special agent Stork.

As Stork left the stand, the government rested its case.

DURING A RECESS Thursday afternoon, one of us [Victoria] attempted to talk with Jimmy Dale. He was the only person in the courtroom, except for a few spectators, so I walked up to the defense table and asked him (not anticipating an answer) what he thought about the trial. He said, of course, that he wasn't permitted to make any statements, "although I'd like to say something," he added. For lack of anything better to say, I asked Hutto how he'd been for the last eight months. He smiled, a feeble, spacy smile and stared intently at a far wall. He seemed so forlorn at that moment I was just about to say that I thought he was being framed, when I heard a woman's voice tearfully saying, "Why can she talk to him when I can't? I've been a friend of his for years." I looked across the railing and saw a red haired, heavy set woman with short furry arms and huge sunglasses which she wore over her regular spectacles. She was clearly distraught, and the deputy marshal, who was standing way over on the other side of the courtroom, mumbled something about "news media."

Hutto turned to me and said, "Are you a reporter?" I nodded. "Where are you from?" he asked. "*Space City!*" I said. An inscrutable look came over his face and he said abruptly, with a broad grin, "Well, I can't make any statements, but as long as you ask, I've been *fine* for the last eight months." Then the deputy marshal politely said, "Miss, would you please step on the other side of the railing?" I politely complied. Everyone is terribly polite in federal court, even deputy marshals and *Space City!* reporters.

I tried to tell the woman who was so upset that I had made a mistake, that apparently no one was allowed to talk to the defendant. "Are you from Pacifica?" she sniffled. "No, *Space City!*" "Oh, I thought so," she said. "They'll let you people do anything you want to in the courtroom. The commies are taking over everything," she cried, her voice rising in despair, and she fled the courtroom in tears.

Thursday's session ended and Friday's opened with defense witness Tommy Harrison, who identified himself as the former Exalted Cyclops of the Texas UKA and former president of Unit #3, the local

Klan chapter. Harrison said that while he was a member of the Klan at the time of Hutto's arrest, he had since been kicked out, although he didn't elaborate on the reasons for his expulsion.

He said that Hutto had indeed visited his home the day of the arrest but that he had known nothing of the alleged bomb plot.

Several witnesses later, Hutto took the stand in his own defense. He denied that he had taken part in any plans to bomb Pacifica transmitters either here or in California.

Hutto's testimony, particularly in regard to his political activities, was cautious. But Beam rushed in where Hutto feared to tread.

BEAM TOO stated that he had no prior knowledge of the supposed bomb plot, although he had been Hutto's roommate at the time of the arrest. He also stated that the Klan was a law-abiding organization.

He was then questioned about an incident that took place Oct. 29, 1970, in which Houston police arrested both him and Hutto near the offices of a local AM radio station. They were stopped for driving at night without headlights, but it was reported that police uncovered a number of weapons and other suspicious materials in the car, including a can of gasoline, which Hutto was carrying on the floor of the car between his legs, guns, flares, copies of *Space City!* and *The Texas Observer* and Klan literature.

Beam said that the two were in that particular neighborhood that night for the purpose of watching the *Space City!* office, located a few blocks from the site of their arrest. Beam said that he had been keeping an eye on *Space City!* (which he described as "a local underground communist newspaper published here") for some time, and had frequently turned over information on that organization to the Houston Police Department. He mentioned the Socialist Workers Party and the Students for a Democratic Society as two other organizations that had piqued his patriotic curiosity.

When asked whether he considered the local Pacifica radio station to be a communist organization, he paused and then said, "I think they are attempting to influence young people like me in the direction of communism."

In addition to his indictment for the second Pacifica bombing, Beam, along with Pete Lout, is under indictment for last year's bombing of the Socialist Worker's Party headquarters here.

Hutto's trial is the first, but not the last of Klan cases on court dockets. In addition to Beam, who will be tried in State court on two separate bombing charges, three more avowed Klan members will face felony counts and possible prison sentences in the near future. □

Redistricting rumbles

Political Intelligence

• The Legislative Redistricting Board still hasn't made any hard decisions, but the rumbles therefrom are taking on ominous properties. You will recall that the state Senate did not get around to redistricting itself during the last session, thus throwing the vexatious question to the five-man board: Lt. Gov. Ben Barnes, Speaker Gus Mutscher, Atty. Gen. Crawford Martin, Land Commissioner Bob Armstrong and Comptroller Robert Calvert.

Politicians are not apt to just overlook a matter as critical as redistricting and the conspiracy theory has it that Barnes plain didn't want the Senate to redistrict itself. He reportedly dominates the board effortlessly and wanted the matter settled where he has absolute control. Bob Spellings, Barnes' executive assistant, thinks the conspiracy theory is a bunch of hooey. "Good grief," he said (or words to that effect), "we worked like the devil to get a plan out during the session and just ran out of time. Of course Barnes didn't want it this way. Think of all the enemies he's going to make."

Observer sources report that Sen. Joe Bernal's head is still on the block and it doesn't look good for Sen. Chet Brooks either. But a source close to Barnes thinks Barnes will come up with something for Bernal and that Brooks can't lose no matter what he's given. Our sources believe the real push to get senatorial districts changed stems from the vote on the corporate profits tax: that 16-15 miss seems to have scared the bejeezus out of the state's corporate establishment. The axing of Joe Bernal could put Barnes between the rock and the hard place. According to more than one source, the San Antonio establishment is leaning on Barnes to get rid of Bernal and is threatening to withhold campaign contributions if Barnes doesn't do the job. Said same is emphatically denied by a Barnes source. However, unless Barnes plays very carefully, he's going to come out wearing the black hat as far as the state's *chicanos* are concerned and they are likely to cost him South Texas, particularly if Dolph Briscoe runs.

The problem is further vexed by the fact that if Bernal gets what he wants, it will most likely be at the expense of Glen Kothmann, who is a labor man.

Babe Schwartz reportedly wants Harris County; he's been saying that he's represented it for years anyway and now wants it in fact, but it's difficult to make the lines fall right for him.

• Still another man with a problem is Rep. Tom Moore of Waco. It seems that Barnes is not at all keen on the idea of having the fiercely independent Moore in the senate. Nor is he thrilled at the prospect of having Rep. John Hannah replace Charlie Wilson, when Wilson runs

for Congress. Curtis Graves has asked for a heavily black district. At least one Redistricting Board member thinks that's a lousy idea. "Why not a district with 50 to 60% blacks and still leave some Houston blacks with a big chunk of another senator — a big enough chunk so they'll be listened to?" he inquires.

• Meanwhile, Sen. Oscar Mauzy of Dallas announced his intention to ask the state Supreme Court to settle the question of who will redistrict the House — the Legislative Redistricting Board or the House. The court ruled on Sept. 9 that the redistricting job done during the session by Mutscher and his henchman Rep. Delwin Jones of Lubbock was indeed unconstitutional. Sam Kinch, Jr., of *The Dallas Morning News* summed up the situation neatly: "If the Supreme Court decision took away Speaker Mutscher's hammer, it appears to have left redistricting board member Mutscher with at least a screwdriver."

Decisions, decisions

• It gets very dull to keep reporting that Ralph Yarborough is still torn, as it were, 50-50 between running for senator and running for governor, but that's the way it stands. A slew of Yarborough's friends want him to run for senate, mostly because they think John Tower is beatable and they're not sure Ben Barnes is, but Yarborough is keen to make the race for governor, according to some sources. Yarborough himself just smiles and says he's thinkin'.

• Meanwhile, Yarborough is beginning to pull together a staff for whatever: Bob Mann is handling his press relations; Jim Dunne, director of the Christian Alliance of the Baptist General Convention (the good works-liberal arm of the Baptists) is with him and they're looking for a campaign manager. Rep. Lane Denton, the young, Bobby Kennedyesque (Kennedy in his post-ruthless phase, that is) Dirty Thirtian from Waco hopes to be in a position to put in a lot of time on a Yarborough campaign by next spring.

• State politicians are running flags up poles at a rate fit to bust the band. Barefoot Sanders is standing by to see who salutes when he mentions senate; Sen. Joe Christie didn't get much reaction when he mentioned the lieutenant governorship and is reportedly now considering senate; Land Commissioner Bob Armstrong is a possible-ossible in the same race and Rep. Frances Farenthold of Corpus is being mentioned (presumably by Art Buchwald's

Great Mentioner) for A. Congress, B. Senate, C. attorney general.

Appointments

● Preston Smith's appointment of his assistant Bob Bullock to Secretary of State has already had some interesting ramifications and will doubtlessly have more. Everyone, Bullock included, had expected the gov to name Bullock permanent executive director of the new Vending Machine Commission.

Bullock is not universally popular: he is a gruff fellow and, according to those who work with him, can be overbearing if one lets oneself be overborne. He is also a confirmed non-admirer of Ben Barnes. In fact, some of Barnes staffers think Bullock hates Barnes.

● The gov was full of surprises: after having reportedly threatened to oust Durwood Manford, perpetual member of the Insurance Board, Smith instead put board member Charles Mathews in the new Travis County district judgeship, replaced him with his own assistant Larry Teaver and reappointed Manford. Teaver is a former Lubbock insurance agent, which does not inspire Sen. Mike McKool of Dallas with much confidence. In the face of McKool's criticism of the appointment, Teaver said he would be a "consumer-oriented" commissioner. McKool said that was ridiculous.

● UT's Legal Research Project has hooked another regents' chairman. The law students have revealed that Chairman John Peace of San Antonio filed the incorporation papers and acted as an initial director for La Ventura Corporation. The corporation (Charles Kuper, president; Treasury Secretary John Bowden Connally, vice-president; Alfred Negley, secretary) proceeded in March of 1970 to purchase more than 1,100 acres in 12 separate tracts surrounding the "Delevan Property," which three months later was selected as the site for the University of Texas at San Antonio. According to the law students, the value of La Ventura's investment skyrocketed from an initial cost of about \$2 million to between \$5.5 and \$20 million.

● The research group claims that Peace, who was on the Board of Regents but not chairman at the time, was on the subcommittee that chose the UTSA site. Peace denies having anything to do with the selection. He says Vice Chancellor Graves Landrum asked him if he had any recommendations and he said he didn't.

● The law students have asked Peace to step down as chairman because of a conflict of interest involving the land speculation.

Darts and laurels

● A laurel to KERA's Newsroom (*Obs.*, Sept. 18, 1970) for devoting its

hour-long news show one night recently to a film documentary on Dallas' homosexuals. Newsroom anchorman Jim Leher introduced the film with a caveat to viewers that some might not think the subject matter proper for children.

Reporter Greg Roberson interviewed gay men and women, a psychiatrist, the owner of a gays-only bar and the minister of a church for homosexuals. The most powerful visual portions of the documentary were drag queen acts shot inside a Dallas bar and a homosexual pickup outside the downtown bus station.

Reaction to the program was overwhelming. The station usually gets 50 to 70 telephone calls during the feedback portion of its 6:30 to 7:30 program. That night the switchboard handled 284 calls during the film, significantly more than half of them commending the station for dealing with the subject. Thirty callers said in various terminology that the documentary was disgusting and that it had no place on the air. The calls were still coming in two days later.

Donna Yarbrough and Sam Newbury worked on the film along with Roberson. A KERA spokesman said the education station plans to re-run the show.

● In apparent reaction to the success of the Newsroom format, KDFW, the CBS outlet in Dallas, is instituting this fall a news program called "Information Central." News Director Eddie Barker says that reporters will give first hand accounts of their stories, and, like Newsroom, the show will have live studio guests from time to time.

The news program will cost considerably more to produce than the average automobile accidents-sports-and-weather telecasts that pass for news shows in Texas. The newsroom format requires more — and more knowledgeable — reporters. The fact that KDFW, which has had the studio facilities to produce such a news program for years, had decided to take the plunge is the first glimmer of media improvement since the *Los Angeles Times* syndicate bought KDFW and *The Dallas Times Herald* last year.

● A dart to the *Austin American-Statesman* for firing a pregnant reporter, a 68-year-old desk man with no retirement benefits, a mildly freaky newsman with an expectant wife, two sports writers, a photographer and a secretary — and blaming it on President Nixon. The *Austin* daily's management somberly explained that they had no alternative but to cut the editorial staff by more than 10%, because Nixon's wage-price freeze made it impossible to raise advertising rates as planned.

That increase in advertising rates would have been the second this year, and it seems highly unlikely that the *American-Statesman* really needs additional advertising revenue. A source that ought to know insists that the paper's

display advertising department is geared to bring in ten times as much in advertising as it costs to put out the newspaper. The month of the editorial layoffs, in addition to its regular bonanza of advertising profits, the *American-Statesman* got a little extra revenue from the opening of a new shopping center — 40,000 column inches of advertising at \$3.50 an inch.

● Another first for the Lone Star State: A nationwide study of utility companies reveals Texas electric and telephone companies, which go about their lucrative business free of state regulation, reap the highest rates of return on their investments. For the period 1965-1969, Texas electric companies showed an average return of 10.15% on their investments, and Ma Bell pulled in a healthy 8.72%.

● It looks like it will be business as usual for *The Daily Texan*, the UT-Austin student newspaper. The regents and the *Texan's* lawyers reached an out-of-court agreement that leaves ultimate control of the paper where it always has been — with the regents — while eliciting a "no censorship" pledge from the regents.

Texan editor Lori Rodriguez summed up the detente succinctly when she said, "There is no rejoicing in my camp. We haven't won anything, but we haven't lost anything either."

Unconstitutional

● College students will get to vote where they go to school after all. Texas Atty. Gen. Crawford Martin has conceded the unconstitutionality of the provision the Legislature slipped into the election code requiring unmarried persons under the age of 21 to vote in the county of their parents' residence. A number of political youth groups were challenging the law in federal court.

● "Gordon McLendon, He's the Man," at least he is according to Gordon McLendon who has plastered the word in red, white and blue on scores of billboards across the state. The media baron also has slipped the same message onto trailers at the 42 McLendon movie theaters across the state. And it even appeared on the Astrodome scoreboard recently.

Exactly what McLendon is the man for, nobody knows but McLendon and he points out that "A secret is best kept by one person." The conservative millionaire ran an unsuccessful campaign against Ralph Yarbrough in the 1965 Democratic senatorial runoff. Speculation is that he thinks he's the man for U.S. senator or for governor in 1972.

September 24, 1971

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The deluxe show

By Jan Butterfield

Houston

Cheap handbills have been distributed in virtually every section of Houston which read "COME AND SEE THE DELUXE SHOW - Art and Movies, 3303 Lyons Avenue, Admission Free." In Houston's "bloody" Fifth Ward the DeLuxe Theater is teeming with life. The de Menil Foundation, whose curious and intricately tangled web of involvement, both personal and financial, seems to weave itself about much of the more interesting art activity in the Houston area, has done it again.

This time they have invited visiting curator Peter Bradley, associate curator of the prestigious Perls gallery in New York, to organize a special art exhibition. They also invited Mickey Leland, TSU teacher and Fifth Ward Community organizer, to help keep things cool. Kenneth Noland flew in to aid in installation of the exhibition, and New York poet Steve Cannon came down to write a documentary kind of catalog.

The end result is a big gun show of more than little import which includes such art world luminaries as Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Sam Gilliam, Larry Poons, Richard Hunt, Craig Kauffman, Darby Bannard, Dan Christensen, Michael Steiner and others.

The old DeLuxe Theater is located in one of the seediest and most rundown areas of Houston if not in the Fifth Ward itself. Outside, the marquee is cracked and broken and faded plastic letters still hang tenaciously to its grid. Located between WILKE FURNITURE COMPANY - Credit Terms - and Jeff's Tuxedo Rentals, it is a tattered remnant of another era.

"The Old DeLuxe Theater is a point of historical significance for people who were raised in the Fifth Ward Community. It is a museum of everything, social and economic and life styles that depicted the era during and after World War II. . . . In April of 1941 the DeLuxe Theater became the 'family show' for Fifth Warders . . . white movie houses were still segregated and prior to the DeLuxe's opening, community residents were faced with only two alternatives for entertainment - the Roxy or the Lyons Theaters . . . where rats the size of kittens sometimes shared the seats of the people watching the movie."

-DeLuxe Show press release

The exterior of the building is cracked and broken and the sidewalk sprouts weeds. Inside the theater the foyer is dank and dark and peeling posters from old Frankenstein movies lie curled in the corners. (The "flicks" will be revived - "King Kong," "Frankenstein," "Step 'n' Fetchit" and "Amos and Andy" run daily in the balcony - a "leader" which draws in 4,500 people daily.) The outside of the

theater has deliberately not been restored in order to preserve its historical significance.

Inside the theater proper nothing short of a miracle has been achieved. The stained walls, torn and faded seats and rolls of dust are gone, and in their place is a pristine white exhibition gallery. New walls of sheet rock have been put up, painted white and the newly-constructed gallery hung with special exhibition track lights. The show is a knockout. It is clean, relatively cohesive and beautifully installed. The exhibition is open seven days a week for the neighborhood and for anyone else who can find the Fifth Ward. Relative serenity reigns.

It wasn't always thus. Neighborhood Fifth Warders, conscious of territorial invasion, attempted a small scale disruption during the installation and tempers flared dangerously. Oil was eventually poured on troubled waters but they stood glaring, fearful of the intrusion. By the Sunday afternoon opening crowds from the

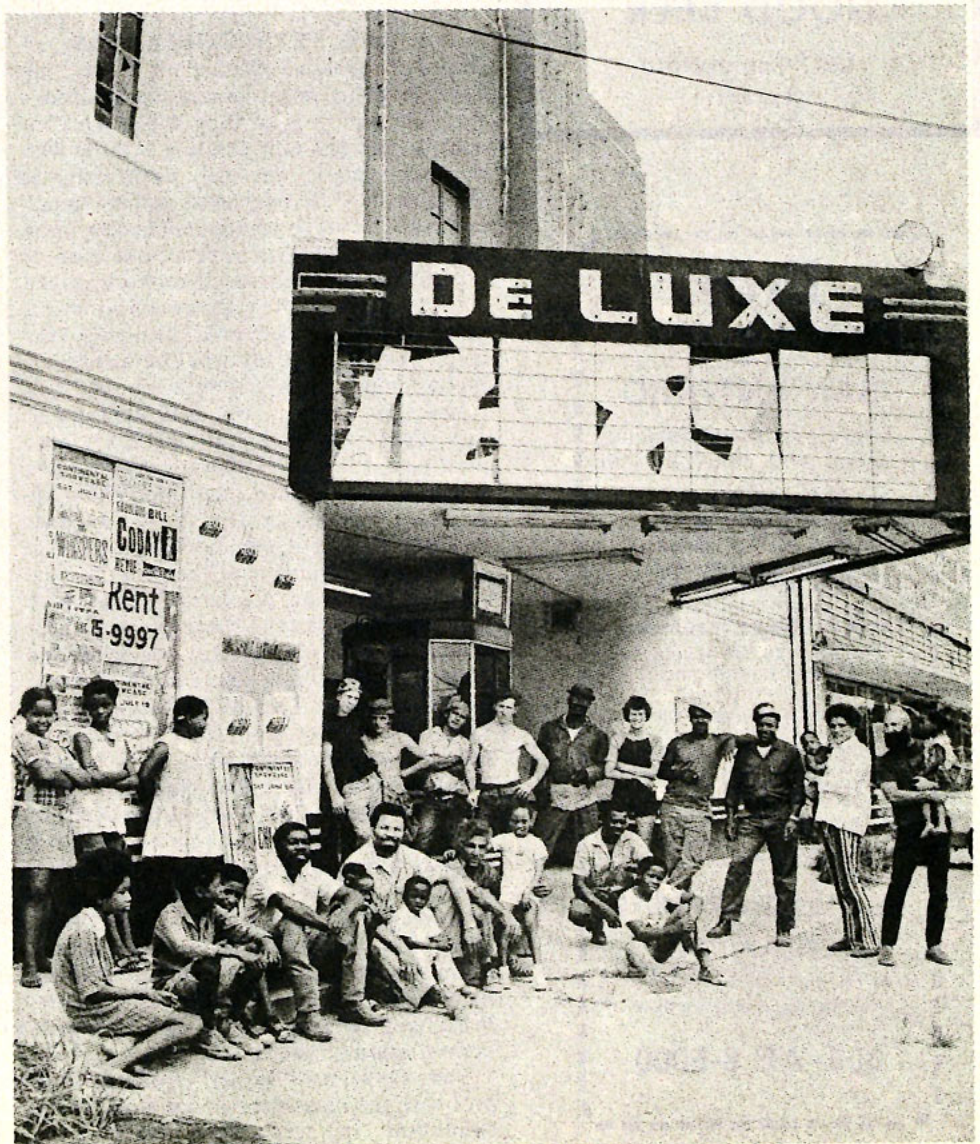
neighborhood had begun to quietly drift in and the exhibition had become a fact.


ACCORDING TO a press release the exhibition includes "New talent and more established artists": What is implicit but not stated is that this is a very unique exhibition. Not only has it been organized "To enable those who would not attend a museum to see new and good works in familiar surroundings" but it has a much more far-reaching and important purpose. The exhibition includes some of the most important artists around who use color as structure, and some solid sculptors, but even more importantly it happens that roughly half of the artists included in the exhibition are black. The point of all of this is that a point is not made of it - except through the Fifth Ward grapevine, where for many it is the only factor that gives the show credence.

This curious and complex exhibition may be like a quiet underwater explosion,

September 24, 1971

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the shock waves of which have not yet hit. Following hard on the heels of a series of exhibitions held at the Whitney Museum, in Boston and most recently in Geneva, this too is an exhibition which includes black artists — but with a monumentally important difference. This is neither a “Black Exhibition” (usually of social protest art or art with black subject matter) nor an exhibition of “Black Artists” (many of whom are exhibited because they are black not because of the quality of their art). This is instead a “mainstream” exhibition which happens to have some black artists in it. It is relatively easy to choose up sides and argue the relative merits of “Black Art,” “Black Artists” and the influence of African Ancestry — it is a convoluted dialectic. The critical literature of the past three years is full of pros and cons and heated disagreements. Suffice it to say my personal interest lies primarily in the quality of the art. The rest is politics and sociology. That point having been made, I choose not to discuss the blackness or whiteness of any given artist from here on out.

THE EXHIBITION WAS, I suspect, chosen particularly for the strength of its visual impact. Its inclusions read like a portion of the “Who’s Who” of color painting. Color painters — those who depend primarily or solely upon color as structure — have been either much enshrined or much berated depending upon which side of the critical fence one is on. It is a difficult area in which to work. Freed almost entirely of Cubist concerns for space and from pictorial elements, the color painter must say what he has to say pretty much with color alone and, of course, the shape in which he contains it. The bad ones slide off the edge into prettiness and decorativeness and sometimes the line is very thin. There are no bad painters in this show. It does however have some weaknesses.

For the ultimate refinement of the colorist statement, Kenneth Noland wins hands down. The thin, sheer delicacy of his whispered colors is belied by the force and tension of his rushing lines and the tautness of his canvases. Two of his works in the exhibition are not more than ten inches in height and run some six feet in length. These, “Trail Mark,” and “Natural Way,” are both from 1969. They utilize yellow, clay, green, ochre and pink for their primary strength. For all of their delicacy they are as taut and finely-tuned as an instrument. A third work “Rustle” from 1967 is a more standardized size and utilizes narrow bands of blued purple and baby blue to separate flat areas of ochre, beige, yellow and rust in an interwoven orchestration of bands.

Sam Gilliam’s “Rather” from 1970 is probably the most spectacular work in the exhibition in terms of bravado and

dramatic impact. It is a stained, suspended canvas onto which brilliant vermilion, purple and red have been poured, rubbed, scrubbed, dripped and stained. It is hung draped, suspended from four nails in the wall, in a violent Baroque gesture. Looseness and accidental forces are part of both the painting vocabulary and the final hanging. The work is allowed to hang essentially where it will with some urging from the creator. Oddly, I preferred an early hanging rather than the final one which tacked up one end in banner fashion, grounding it and interfering with the fluidity.

There is a Jules Olitski in the show from Kenneth Noland’s personal collection entitled “Loosha One, 1970” which has a radiating and sumptuous beauty. The painting is a pink-orange with the kind of halation of color at which Olitski is so good. It is exquisitely controlled and bounded by slashes of gradually fading color in pink, ochre or green along its borders. Larry Poons, whose reputation was made with his “dot” paintings of tightly-controlled shapes against contrasting color fields, was tough enough to realize the corner into which he could have (did?) paint himself and to begin anew. The painting in this exhibition is one of the new group, only one of which I had seen previously. It is proof that he is as strong as ever. The work in this exhibition “Untitled, 1971” has a cratered surface of yellowed mustard-orange. It has only vestigial remains of ovaloid shapes in one corner in faintest purple and pink in a kind of echo or homage. Instead of the tight, clean surface of yesteryear, his surface now is thick, cracked, scabby, with rich, almost still wet color which bubbles open to form deep craters of green.

THE ONE Darby Bannard in the show, “Perishing Lands” is fairly representative, but not one of my favorites. I admit unashamedly to strong color weaknesses and am sometimes easily seduced, and also conversely to a certain perversity and propensity for Funky color. But some of Bannard’s works are neither (this is flat, pale yellow-orange and greyed purple) and I just can’t make work. This is sometimes due to the density of the surface, but more often than not to the specific coloration.

Peter Bradley’s works, “Till Now” and “Hemming,” both from 1971, are soft, rich, velvety, lyrical paintings with deep pools of color in lavender and rust out of which rise glimmers of blue, green and salmon color. They are sensuous paintings which appeal immediately. Maybe too much so. I had the strong feeling that one needed to see a larger body of work. Bradley, who organized the show (should his own work have been included?) has not exhibited extensively (except for early prints) and I had not previously seen his work. At any rate, it is rich and luscious stuff.

Al Loving's huge work from 1971, which was just recently included in the Whitney Annual, is a multi-faceted, irregular geometric form which ranges in coloration from Day-glo to muted pastel and is broken by occasional marbled units. It must span over eighteen feet of wall. It is competent, but its audacious attempts at scale and uniqueness fail to cover some innate weaknesses in conception.

Dan Christensen has two works in the show, "Scissor Tail" and "Montauk Malkles," both from 1970. In these lyrical works, rich, dank greens, salmons, browns and purples pull his spaces in and out, achieving a finely-honed balance between interior space and edge relationships.

Richard Hunt, who has just had a massive retrospective exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, is represented by only one work "Extending Horizontal Form" from 1958. A strong sculptor, Hunt's work leaves Cubist concerns behind and his open welded steel sculptures make a strong if erratic personal statement in their attenuated linear forms. His recent work is heavier and more solid. I regret that a more recent example was not included in the show also.

The only West coast artist included in the show was Craig Kauffman whose exquisite, iridescent lozenge of silver soap bubble grey hangs on the wall like a rare opal. The most obvious West coast inclusion would have been, to my mind, Fred Eversly, who works in highly colored plastic forms. Regrettably, he was not included.

Michael Steiner's small floor pieces are sculptures of rusted cor-ten steel with sliding and intersecting planes. They are very strong as individual pieces but got short shrift in this show because of space competition - the paintings are too demanding and the floor too vast. None of which is meant as hard core criticism... that the exhibition hung together as tightly as it did in improvised gallery conditions is nothing short of remarkable. William T. Williams, who does extremely handsome, small, watercolors, also got short shrift because his works are far too intimate both in feeling and scale to have been forced to compete with massive color paintings. They are very good small works, however, which would hold their own in a drawing exhibition. Danny Johnson does better work than the one piece included in the exhibition. The one aberration inclusion in the show is Bob Gordon whose "surreal" work "Drapes" is from William Copley's collection and consists of drapes of plastic shower curtain material, sequin and silk tassel trimmed and hung on large golden rods. It looks like a fabricated "avant garde" work submitted to a juried annual.

Ed Clark's oval paintings of heavy pastel stripes are competent, but too easy and the oval shape is too tricky. Virginia Jaramillo whose work I do not know, defines shallow space by laying down on solid ground of

bright freen a curved line of bright yellow which lies upon the ground like a tight wet thread. I liked the works which have a Lorser Feitelson edge to them. Anthony Caro's one work is strong and representative but was lost in the space and Jim Wolfe's piece too derivative and unsure.

No matter how you cut it that's a lot of important stuff to see if a rickety theater on the other side of town, and Papa critic Clement Greenberg wasn't there just for kicks. What happens now remains to be seen. Information has it that the DeLuxe Theater is to be "Put to the Service of the Community" at the close of the show. Thereby may hang the crux of another article. Be that as it may, both as an opportunity for the Fifth Ward community and as a kind of "off Broadway" exhibition, the show was certainly a success. It may in point of fact really be

Ms. Butterfield works for the Fort Worth Art Center Museum and also writes for The Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

possible to take art out of institutions and put it in the community where it might just make a real difference.

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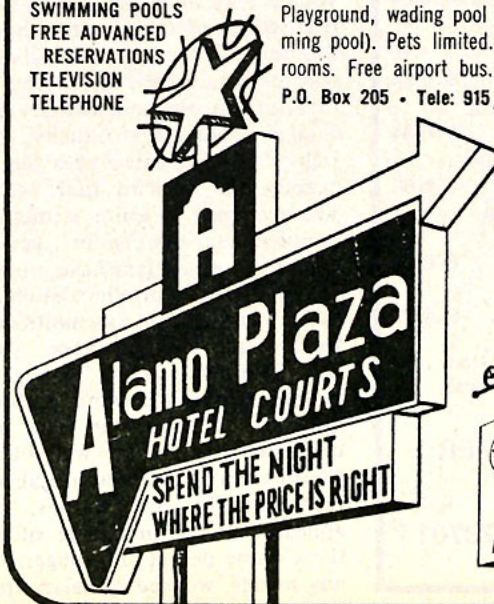
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Equalizing the inequities

Washington, D.C.

Sometimes court decisions break through the miasma and give us that real jolt of hope. The six to one decision of the California Supreme Court striking down as unconstitutional that state's entire system of financing public schools is such a decision. The state's highest court said the financing system, based largely on local property taxes just as the Texas system is, causes "wide disparities" in revenue available for the schooling of children in rich school districts and poor ones. In California, the state's highest court said, "these tax bases vary widely ... ranging from a low of \$103 per child to a peak of \$952,156 - a ratio of nearly one to ten thousand." Also as in Texas, the allocation of state funds "partially alleviated these disparities," but, the court held, did not go far enough. It is the ruling of the California Supreme Court that "such a system ... must fall before the equal protection clause" of the Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees every citizen "the equal protection of the laws."

Sen. Joe Bernal of San Antonio (as previously remarked on here) tried to get the legislature to equalize just such disparities in his county of Bexar but couldn't even get his local school superintendents to agree. The import of the California ruling, if it stands up, is that Texas public interest lawyers and organizations should get cracking to get just such a ruling from the Texas Supreme Court - or, that failing, the one in Washington.

Inside agitators

From full reports I have received from people I rely on, it seems clear to me that the Connally-Barnes group have taken some back-door steps to try to head off the young vote in Texas in 1972. They are frightened of this vote and well they should be. The young people include many voters who are sick of wheeler-dealing and this drag-on war and who are dedicated to change. Johnson, Connally, Barnes, and Democrats associated with them champion exactly the policies that need changing. The evidence is quite strong that young opportunists openly or secretly aligned with these politicians have moved in on the Texas Interscholastic Students' Assn. (TISA) and certain key units of the Young Democrats. For instance, "Countdown '72" had every right to organize young people to vote around a focus against injustice and the war. The people who organized their loud walk-out from the Countdown '72 conference also arranged a reception for Ben Barnes, or at least appeared to be in charge of it. Some of those same people, no longer so young by any means, worked on salary for Waggoner

Observations

Carr for the U.S. Senate as though the welfare of the country depended on that reactionary's election. I was myself quite taken aback to see the *Daily Texan* buying these fake-liberals' line that the Countdown '72 conference was organized by "outside agitators." That was Allan Shivers' line back in the 1950's. Are we Texans - even some of the young - still so damn provincial that we don't realize this is one country and that what affects the country directly affects Texas and what affects Texas directly affects the country? Done we know that yet? Every American has a right to care who carries Texas. The 1,500 or so young people who stayed with Al Lowenstein, Clifton McCleskey, Sissy Farenthold, and John Henry Faulk at the Countdown '72 conference knew it, and they are the future.

Lively, lively!

So far nobody has challenged my aside in a recent column that the *Kountze News* is the best weekly newspaper in Texas. Meanwhile Jean my wife has been reading the copies of it that come to our house and has written to me (here where I am holed up working) about it:

"The Kountze paper with its screaming headlines and heartbreaking message is hysterically funny and occasionally quite good. One columnist seems to be a rather unusual talent. The political writing is a panic. There's a feud going with Carl Parker, and there's Pious Preston, Greedy Gus, Useless John, and Biliious Bentsen. The funniest dumb column was entitled 'What Kind of People go to X Rated Movies' (Ans. - everyone). Huge headline across the top of page 7, 'School Cafeteria Prices Raised a Nickel.' Head (huge) on front page, 'Woman Falls in Well.' 'She suffered sprains, bruises, and scratches, including two busted blisters on her hands caused by holding on to a big rope ...' they pulled her up with."

I guess Archer Fullingim is the closest thing in Texas the law still allows to William Brann. He also has an unerring and totally original responsiveness to the things that are actually the talk among local rural people. Not for him the hot news items that Thus-and-So spent the weekend sitting around visiting at the Those-and-Thems, nor would he be caught dead running the dead editorials from the Texas Press Association, The League for Polluted Poultry, or the Army-Navy War Is Good

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The long & short of it

Like many of the young Gary our son has long hair, and now and again my wife and he have chided me for not growing beard and neck mane. One reason I have given to them is that when I was his age I was thought a long-hair and now the style has changed I am thought a short-hair, but I have gone on more or less the way I feel best with it, although my sideburns, they tell me, are longer. There is another reason I have also given them, more serious, and Celia our daughter has found and sent to me a clipping that has Ralph Nader giving the same reason. I do not know who is writing:

"I arrived in Washington still unsure of my project and was told again that only Nader could tell me. The second evening after we arrived, I got my first chance to talk to him, following some inspirational remarks he delivered to the 150 Raiders working in Washington. Among other things, he inspired everyone to get haircuts. Arguing that while everybody has the right to wear his hair however he pleases, he reminded us that we were in Washington to help protect more important rights; and while none of the people we might be dealing with had the right to object to long hair, many of them would do so. Therefore, why antagonize someone who might give you useful information? He said something like this: 'You can fight for change by wearing long hair or by doing it my way. Both ways are perfectly valid, but they don't work in combination. So if you want to work for me, dress neatly and keep your hair short.'"

I wouldn't go that strong for others, but for myself, it's my second reason. "I think Ralph Nader puts it pretty well," Celia says. I do, too.

South of Utopia

Robert A. Childers, 61, was found dead about five miles south of Utopia in Uvalde County, drowned when his car was washed off the highway by a sudden severe flood. He was one of the first members of the American Civil Liberties Union in Houston. Founder of the Childers Manufacturing Co. in 1946, he was a businessman who cared about the suffering in the world and did all he could to help abate some of it. The station wagon he had been in was found upside down off State Highway 187 between Sabinal and Utopia early one morning. That this happened just south of Utopia in that spectacular valley of lost maples has some kind of meaning. He was always going upstream toward Utopia. Sooner or later the flood had to come, for that valley, wild and beautiful, is also narrow. I for one keep going up it because of people like him. R.D.

Countdown praised

Dialogue

I have just concluded the *Texas Observer* article of August 27, with reference to COUNTDOWN '72. I am rather torn between utter frustration and helplessness. Of course, the article is accurate. As a matter of fact, it's the best condensation of that seven week nightmare I could imagine, and it simplifies my task of trying to recap the story of COUNTDOWN '72, with reference to its flaws.

But I am so deeply saddened by the fact that while you capsulized so well the problems, the obstacles, the difficulties — there was no mention of the great thing that happened at COUNTDOWN '72. The problems in Austin were certainly ever-present — but they were problems of Austin and Austin people.

There was no mention of the very dedicated hard-working people in Houston, in Corpus Christi, San Antonio, El Paso, Dallas, Ft. Worth, and dozens of small towns throughout the state who worked so diligently for several weeks to build delegations of young people for the conference. There was no mention of the fact that we had close to 200 more delegates to the two day conference and three times the number of people in attendance at the evening session than we had ever anticipated.

There was no mention of the young college kid from Midland who drove 50 miles to pick up three black high school delegates he'd never met, who had no other means of transportation to Austin.

There was no mention of the fact that a dozen kids in Austin worked day and night for weeks compiling files which were stolen by a group of people who had contributed nothing to their existence.

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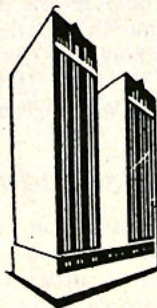
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There was no mention of the fact that there were organizational meetings in Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio the week following the conference — the foundations were laid to begin voter registration drives as soon as the books are reopened ... all in conjunction with COUNTDOWN '72.

There was no mention of the fact that 1,500 people went away from Austin on August 7 armed with renewed inspiration and motivation for young people to organize and change the direction of Texas and the country, believing, possibly for the first time, that they *can* make a difference.

Significant numbers of people across the state contributed their time and effort to making COUNTDOWN '72 a successful conference, and have committed themselves to making it an on-going organization to strengthen the political voice of young people in Texas — which can only result in a change in the politics

and policies of the state and its leaders.

Significant obstacles had to be overcome. Significant problems and battles took place — but in the end, the motivation of people, committed to ending the war, defeating Richard Nixon and bringing honesty and integrity into Texas government—in the end, these things won out. Stolen files and attempts to sabotage conferences cannot — *will not* — dampen the enthusiasm or hinder the determination of people all over Texas to get rid of politicians who employ those very same kinds of deplorable tactics.

I feel encouraged by the strength and will power exhibited by the people who put COUNTDOWN '72 together and who are still working with it. I cannot be discouraged by those who would stand on the sidelines screaming foul and attempting to hinder the efforts of the truly dedicated people of Texas.

The steering committee was *not* a “compromise steering committee” as you reported. It was selected because it was comprised of honest and committed people who are *not* afraid to speak out on the issues before us in the coming election year, and who will lead COUNTDOWN '72 in that direction.

If there are those who are skeptical of COUNTDOWN '72's success and potential effects because the only accounts they have read are those which repeat the problems and mistakes, then I can only say that time will tell the potential political impact of our effort.

But no one can deny that the sentiments expressed at the COUNTDOWN '72 conference by the young people there are those which definitely speak against the war, against Richard Nixon, against the establishment machine politics of Texas. For the older liberals of the state to abandon these young people in their commitments is a tragic mistake — and I trust it will not happen.

The time is NOW for change — and regardless of the roadblocks any group throws in our way, we SHALL overcome.

As a “carpetbagger” and “outsider” from the distant place on earth called Oklahoma City, I consider it a privilege and an honor to have worked south of the Red River doing what I can to get rid of the Johnson-Connally-Nixon politics which are threatening the very base of my country ... and please know that if I felt it necessary, I would return to lion's den of Texas to continue that battle.

Cleta Deatherage, Countdown '72 organizer, 1255 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Apt. 808, Washington, D.C. 20036.

On Texas scandal

The current scandals in Texas mesh with the numerous scandals of the last thirty-five years sufficient to let all open-minded people know that Texas has been governed by a corrupt few during all of this period. The open admissions of

Frank Sharp as to how he dealt with state officials, including Senator Babe Schwartz, reveals the absolute lack of conscientious scruples and honesty in effect during the last thirty-five years. The cynical manner in which our state officials have been paid off during this time is painted in this word picture from Frank Sharp.

The only state-wide publication which has crusaded against this gross, constant and substantial dishonesty among government officials and their rich benefactors has been *The Texas Observer*. Every subscriber and reader should take it upon himself to purchase as a gift or obtain at least ten subscribers each to the *Observer* and as a result of the increased readership, perhaps the public would become aware before these unscrupulous rulers can totally destroy our wonderful state.

The *Observer* has constantly warned in advance the nature of the people that Texas has been electing but because of their limited readership, and only because of this, the *Observer's* advice is not heard and the corrupt few continue in power. Only the increased circulation of the *Observer* will give us a chance of breaking the vicious chain.

David G. Copeland, 530 New Road, Waco, Tex. 76710.

Another university

Hope you abandon your “super liberal honkie I'm a real shit-kicker but I got class” pastime. And there really *is* another university besides that goddamn outhouse in Austin. Look at its graduates, which should tell you something.

Charles Keener, 711 Apollo Drive, Denton, Tex. 76201.

Thicket

I am new here, so I don't know much about your Big Thicket problem, or HR 3618, or who votes for what.

I do know that in California we laid our bodies on the ground in front of dozers, and when they arrested us, others took our place.

It became NEWS, the good guys and the bad guys were easy to identify, and soon congressmen and senators had to answer questions and take positions, and judges, with an eye on the next election and feeling the popular sympathy for people who would risk being crushed to save a tree, found that there already were laws enough to stop the cutting, and so we saved one small ridge.

Letters and legislative support are fine, but I don't know how else you stop them — right now.

Stephen Schmidt, Film Department, SMU, Dallas, Tex. 75222.

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