

MAY 16, 2016

KER



ART

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Caleb Charland

The title of one work here, “Camera Placed on My Solar Plexus While Laying on the Ground at Night for Several Hours,” says a lot about the artist’s dedication to his process. The image merits the effort: stars skitter across a midnight-blue expanse high above a broken red line, evidence of an airplane’s tail-lights. Other pictures record more discrete phenomena, including what look to be science experiments with pendulums and a horseshoe magnet. A series of intricately plotted photograms—geometric abstractions that range across a shaded spectrum from black to white—suggest a lost Op-art period of M. C. Escher. *Through June 4. (Wolf, 70 Orchard St. 212-925-0025.)*

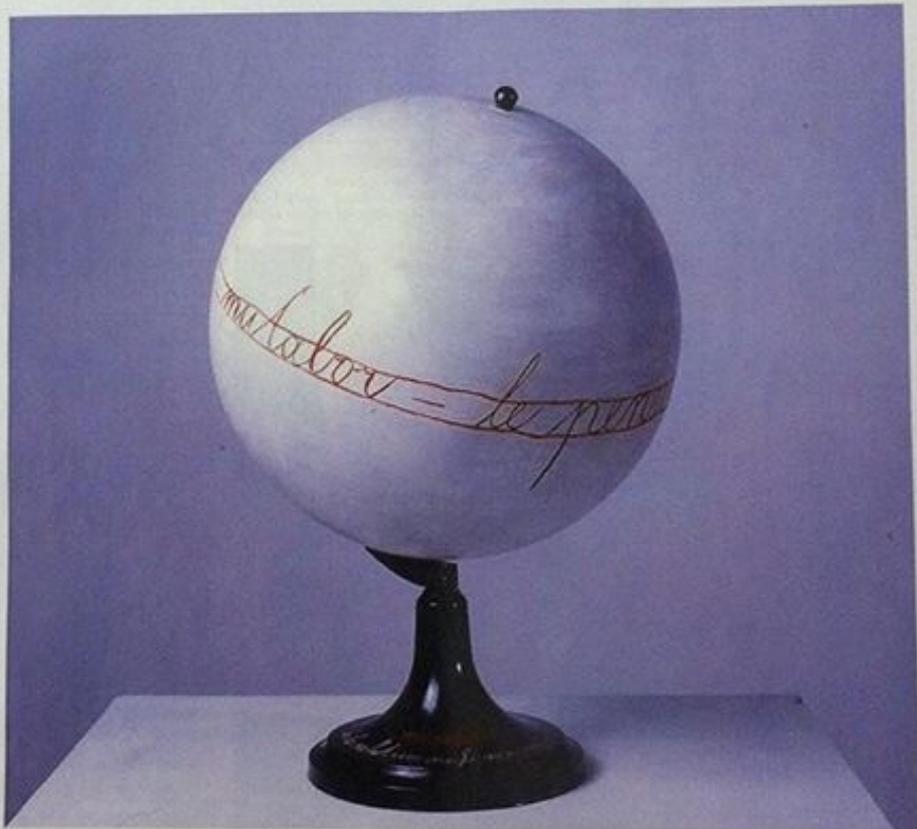
Mangelos

This vital showcase of one of the most important figures of the Yugoslav avant-garde re-creates five witty, metaphysical, and sometimes clandestine shows mounted in Zagreb between 1972 and 1981. Dimitrije Bašičević, who died in 1987, was an art historian who worked in state institutions by day but on his own time, under the alias Mangelos, he produced a wide-ranging oeuvre, including globes (in which the world map is obscured by philosophical inscriptions and black, white, and red paint) and collages (packed with references to Heidegger, Dostoyevsky, and Gertrude Stein). One piece here reproduces Picasso’s declaration of allegiance to the French Communist Party—a biting irony coming, as it did, from the other side of the Iron Curtain. *Through May 27. (Freeman, 140 Grand St. 212-966-5154.)*

Jon Pilkington

The young British painter makes an intriguing New York debut with soft-toned abstractions that at first appear intuitively gestural but turn out to be more calculated. Hazy backgrounds of brown, pink, and malachite green subtend proficiently executed cross-outs, zigzags, and curlicues—markings so tight and agglutinated that the action of their making seems im-

Transmissions Art in Eastern Europe and Latin America 1960-1980



Now on view

Support for the exhibition is provided by the MOMA Annual Exhibition Fund.

Mangels (Dmitry Balbovic).
Marbled de la relation, 1976. Synthetic
polymer print on globe made of plastic
and metal. © 2013 Estate of Mangels
(Dmitry Balbovic)

The Museum of
Modern Art
11 West 53 Street
Manhattan
momoma.org

show only occasionally respires in quiet
disengagement. (Theatre at St. Chri-
stia's, 421 W. 46th St., 845-786-2071.)

Our Last Game
Ed Schmidt is a playwright who
presses the home-front advantage.
He set "The Last Supper" in his own
Windsor Terrace kitchen, "My Last
Play" in his living room. In "Our
Last Game," he again returns to familiar
territory: the high-school locker room
(Schmidt coaches the boys' basket-
ball team at Trinity.) Only select
audience members can attend each
performance, crowding onto narrow
benches and gulping bottled water as
Schmidt's nameless coach yells at
frustrated and occasionally throws a chair.
The spectators become actors, non-
typically underperforming when the
coach scolds, prods, and peps. The
jargon is semi-incomprehensible,
though the arc of the speeches is
familiar. But Schmidt effectively
involves the audience in the coach's
drum. "Do you feel guilty?" I was
asked his wife during intermission
at a recent show. "We should have
tried harder," she said. (New York
International School, 44 E. 2nd St.,
ourlastgame.com.)

Whirl Inside a Loop
The co-writers Sherie Row Sean
and Dick Scanlan were on the inside
looking out. Having spent several
months leading theatre workshops
in a medium-security prison, they
transformed the experience into this
play about a self-absorbed chairman
(Scott) who runs a similar class for
convicted murderers. As co-directed
by Scanlan and Michael Mayer, the
staging is appropriately minimal and
the camaraderie among the actors rich
and unforced. The show incorporates
monologues written by men in the
real-life workshop, and a few of these
speeches, particularly one delivered
with a deliberate lack of polish by
Chris Myers, are standouts. But the
play repeats the tired, uncomfortable
trope of reappropriating the suffering of
minorities to help a white protagonist
reflect on her life. "Only when I honestly
tell my story can I honestly change my
story" is the avowed theme. But whose
story is really being told? (Second
Stage, 308 W. 43rd St., 212-246-4422.)

OUT OF TOWN
Red Velvet
Lolita Chakrabarti's play, which had a
successful production last spring at St.
Ann's Warehouse, follows the boundary-
breaking career of Iva Aldridge, the
black actor who confounded London
audiences when he went on as Othello
at Covent Garden, in 1833. Darius
Vanzo's production, in the Berkshires,
stars John Douglas Thompson, who
won an Obie for his own portrayal
of Othello in 2009. (Shakespeare
& Company, 70 Kenble St., Lenox,
Mass. 413-637-3353. Through Sept. 15.)

Drop Dead Perfect
In this tongue-spiked pastiche, back
for a racy engagement, a wealthy
matron and her stable ward live in
tropical splendor somewhere in the
Florida Keys. Sam, the high-strung
Mimi (Kermit Quinlan) pops too
many pills, and young Vince (Joan
Edward Cook) dreams of escaping to
the Village, but they muddle along
compromisingly until the arrival of a
strangely well-endowed stranger (Jason
Cruz). This raucous spoof by Kenneth
Frazier (who strongly suspects a parody-
zistic) takes "The Glass Menagerie," "I
Love Lucy" the late weeks of Betty
Davis, and several musical records. The
cast-dressing and bad puns ("Would
you like a cork in the tail?") are much
in the Pollockian Theatrical Company,
which was founded by Quinlan's late
partner, Charles Ludlum. Through the
director, Joe Brancato, encourages his
cast to take the audience seriously, the

Agony Awakening
That Best Theatre returns the 2006
 indie rock musical by Duncan Sheik
and Steven Sotloff, based on the Frank
Wheeler drama of two men around
divorce. Directed by Michael Arden
and performed in sign language and
spoken English, in person. (Brooks
Atkins, 26 W. 4th St., 87-26-8026.)

Ugly Lies the Bone
Marian Goodman stars in Lindsey
Forsyth's drama, directed by Pe-
trina McGrogan, about a young woman
returning home from a military tour
in Afghanistan. Provisions Sept. 16.
(Kowalewski Underground, 111
W. 46th St., 212-719-1000.)

NOW PLAYING
A Delicate Ship
A signed-for-rough Anna Decker's
drama, produced by the Playwrights
Workshop, opens the night-laden Christ-
mas with Scott (Marian Silverman),
a young writer, and Sam (Matt
Delapina), a musician—two lovers
drunk on wine, sex, and philosophy.
Knocking at the door is the ghost of
relationships past: Sarah's pal Nate
(Nick Weinstein), a disengaged third-
grade teacher and whiz kid, and
Chris (Douglas), a wealthy eagerly
disgusted in a relationship plot. "A
Delicate Ship" explores loneliness,
necessity, and the pull of the past,
with the characters often stepping
outside the actor to comment on it.
The director Margot Kandel and
her designers manage shifts in
time locally, though the sometimes
allows the stepping out to connect.
Frazier is a director and compassionate
writer, but the play feels more me-
taphysical and less contemporary than
it should, as though there's a wilder,
darker work taking place in its smooth
surface. (First by Sharp, 418 W. 43rd
St., 212-279-4266. Through Sept. 12.)