



Jerry Saltz: An Open Letter to (starving, idle, hungry, ambitious, etc.) Art-Critics about their own on-line Art Magazines.

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An Open Letter to (starving, idle, hungry, ambitious, etc.) Art-Critics about Starting their own on-line Art Magazines.

Share

Yesterday at 3:16pm

Dear Anneliis Beadnell,

You commented in the thread on my Facebook Page today (2-5-'10), about young critics starting their own on-line art magazines. I'd like to answer some your points. I'm going to really disagree with a few of them, agree with one, and maybe offer you a job. So bear with me.

You write: "How about some solutions that actually make money for all the hard work and passion some of us instill in the Art community?"

Excuse me????!!!! "..."solutions that actually make money????!!!!@#@!?" Ah Anneliis, I work FOUR JOBS to pay my bills. Three REGULAR teaching jobs. Also a pretty FULL-TIME WEEKLY writing gig. I also lecture REGULARLY. I do all of this mostly to ah, MAKE MONEY!!!!!!

Next you write: "Some of us are after-all not born into wealth, unlike most of the NY art world."

I am sorry Anneliis, but GET over yourself and you self-loathing. Get over you misguided WRONG-HEADED CYNICAL ENVY (Note: Envy WILL 100% DESTROY YOUR INTERIOR world; believe me; I know; I spent part of my 30s eaten alive by envy of other people's better circumstances, thinking skills, career opportunities, financial conditions, education, trust funds, looks, hair, height, etc. etc.)

Sorry: Life isn't fair. I was a f-ing long-distance TRUCK DRIVER into my f-ing 40s!!!!!! My kidneys are still DESTROYED. My lower back was destroyed by a lead Carl Andre sculpture. I probably have SKIN CANCER because of the dozens of consecutive hours over endless days I spent exposed to the South Florida or Texas SUN! Unprotected! No hat. My psyche was ravaged by being alone for WEEKS at a time - not saying anything except, "Fell 'er up, please. With diesel." I am NOT complaining. I am just telling you what I did for MANY YEARS in order to earn \$125.00 an f-ing DAY!

Wait, sorry. Where was I?

Right. You write, "The way I see it, blogs and online magazines are the same."

I think you are wrong! WRONG! WRONG! WRONG! (Or at least I think are. I'm not as positive as I sound.) I LOVE BLOGS. A lot. They are smart, fun, informative, important, irreverent, gossipy, and everything in between and MORE. I read blogs everyday (even the ones that drive me nuts or that just seem snippy and sicko). However, Blogs are GENERALLY (NOT ALWAYS!!!! you irked bloggers) about ONE VOICE! Blogs (GENERALLY NOT ALWAYS!!!) are NOT EDITED BY AN EDITOR. My writing would be MUCH WORSE THAN IT ALREADY IS WITHOUT HAVING AN EDITOR!

MUCH WORSE! MUCH MUCH WORSE!

For me there is NO SUCH THING as writing. There is ONLY ONLY ONLY Re-Writing. (Can you imagine ANY editor on earth who would allow me to rant like this; allow me to use capital letters; mis-spell; repeat myself; use the word "only" three times in a row in ALL CAPS!?) Hah! Blogs are often (NOT ALWAYS!!!!!! for God's SAKE!) written anonymously. OR: The comments are ANONYMOUS. (To me this is where things sometimes turn dark.) I am NOT against people writing anonymously.

In this note No one.

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I will say it again: I am not against people writing anonymously.

Okay?

Some things get said when they are said anonymously.

Fine.

For me, however, real credibility comes PARTLY from being vulnerable, using YOUR OWN NAME; I have called this Radical Vulnerability.

– When you write anonymously it means the following things are common, possible, or even the rule:

1. The same person writes under many separate names.
2. A person writes under many names who ...
3. Has received a NEGATIVE review from me (and is getting even).
4. Has been ignored in print by me.
5. Is someone I once gave a bad crit to in art school.
6. Is someone I accidentally insulted at an opening.
7. Is an art dealer, critic, artist, etc. who feels ignored or dissed by me.
8. An art dealer, critic, artist, etc. who feels angry or ignored by my wife.
9. Someone who just doesn't like anything about me.
10. Is a close personal friend. Hah!

All of this is fine.

It just isn't about CREDILITY to me.

(I am not saying I have any more credibility than anyone else.)

After almost every review I write: The same ANNONOMOUS six people write TERRIBLE things about whatever I've said. It doesn't matter if I'm writing about Bronzino, Urs Fischer, Art Fairs, WHATEVER. EVERYTHING I WRITE strikes them as ridiculous, awful, terrible, ect.

Honestly, sometimes I feel the same way about what I write after I read it in print too.

But again: Often these are the SAME PEOPLE writing under different anonymous names. Over and over and ...

John Yao, an art writer in New York, just spent like 2000 words trashing me for writing about a work of art he says he NEVER SAW! Hah! (I love it when people hate art they've never seen and hate the people who dared to like it.)

The idea of 3 or 4 or whatever young art critics doing their own on-line art magazines, I think, would start to change the landscape.

Change art criticism.

Change readers.

Change everything.

Or change nothing at all.

Either way, what is there to LOSE????!!!!

Really?!

Writers are sick people: We actually WANT TO WRITE!

Hah!

Starting an on-line EDITED 'art magazine' would let these writers do what they say they want to do.

Eventually, people will figure out ways to make a little money doing this on-line. If nothing else these young critics will get their names out, maybe be invited to write more gallery catalogs, museum catalogs, do speaking gigs, teach; whatever!

For me, writing under your own name and being edited counts for a lot.

I am NOT saying all of the on-line art magazines have to be done this one way.

I am just saying that since art critics make NO MONEY off writing art criticism. Wait, are you aware of just how little art-critics earn?

Most art magazines are starved for money.

Most art magazine can only pay art critics around \$125.00 for a review!

They pay around \$600 – \$800 for an article!

Ever try to write a 500 word review? Or a longer article?

OMG! It kills one.

Also, I don't have to tell you that this comes with no insurance, benefits, etc..

Moreover, many art magazines are FORCED to ask writers NOT TO WRITE for OTHER art magazines.

You try living on under \$1000.00 a month in NYC!

Moreover, the advertising model for print media is obviously AT AN END.

Advertisers will soon figure out that they DON'T MAKE MONEY by paying \$5000.00 or much more for an ad in a magazine!

Anyway, all I'm saying – the ONLY thing – is since young art critics are almost starving writing for monthly art magazines: Why not almost starve ALSO writing with other critics for their own on-line art magazines. They'd all get MORE readers, have more fun, etc.

Okay. Those are the parts of your FB comment that I disagree with.

That wasn't too bad, was it?

Anneliis Beadnell: I really agree with you when you write, "A singular vs. plural voice of critics causes the criticism to be more thought through, rather a blog can be insular and slanted towards one mind set."

I agree.

You listen young art critics?

If you build it they will come.

In great numbers.

With fun, too.

And again, why the f not do it?

Anneliis Beadnell: Thank you so much for giving me the chance to spout-off like this. You write, "P.S. Anyone need a hard worker? I'm available!"

I have NEVER had an assistant of any kind but if I ever do get one, I owe you for this:

I'll call you first.

Thank you,

Jerry

Updated 19 hours ago · [Report Note](#)

Bryan LeBoeuf, Jeffrey Allen Price, Lyra Kilston and 47 others like this.



Damien Crisp <http://unknownjournal.wordpress.com/>

Yesterday at 3:39pm



Man Bartlett Oh, and Unknown. ;)

Yesterday at 3:44pm



John Haber It's definitely hard. The next print article of mine that will appear, at 800 words, is likely to pay \$80. It's one reason I don't try harder to appear in print.

Yesterday at 3:47pm



Caroline J. Nye I'm still not sure it's viable- I myself like dialogue, and closer to the source, in real-time, or earlier- but then, sorry Jerry & co., I tend to view criticism as a surrogate for attendance, not opinion, & that is a gap which Twitter etc fills beautifully.

Yesterday at 3:48pm



Amos Satterlee PLEASE, FORMAT IS IMPORTANT. If it's in a blog format, then it's a blog, even if it's a group blog.

Yesterday at 3:51pm



Caroline J. Nye Shhh!

Yesterday at 3:52pm



Carla Della Beffa is the young critics situation much worse than being a start-up artist (as my very new and much younger gallerist defines me) at sixty? i don't know, but i know that complaining doesn't usually get anyone anywhere

Yesterday at 4:05pm



Katy Alonza Hamer All hail the caps and typos!! Thank you for sharing Jerry.

Art bloggers unite!

<http://eyes-towards-the-dove.blogspot.com/>

Yesterday at 4:16pm



Ryan Sullivan It makes sense that people could be paid for their writing efforts when they touch others, it's marketable. It also makes sense that people wouldn't be paid when the things they write are merely opinion pieces that aren't provocative. The art world is too full with individuals who feel a sense of entitlement. We are a minority. THERE'S NO ACCOUNTING FOR TASTE.

Yesterday at 4:25pm



Barry N. Neuman "Boiler" started out as an online magazine. IMO it turned out rather brilliantly in both its online and hard copy editions.

Yesterday at 4:53pm



John Xero wanna make your voice heard? join unknown

<http://unknownjournal.wordpress.com/>

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=222997856461&ref=search&sid=593488874.2904991687..1...> See More

Yesterday at 5:35pm



Michele Pred Love this, thanks for sharing/venting! This of course could also be said for artists, there are many an artist that fantasize about "making a living" off their art. When in reality most of us have day jobs. I'm a prof at an Art School and work as an art career coach OH_ and I show at a respectable NY gallery and have had museum shows. I wouldn't be able to "make it" without a bread and butter job.

Yesterday at 5:46pm



Gwyneth Leech Agree with Michael. Paintings are selling but we are still juggling the multiple jobs to make ends meet. I am always shocked when I hear how little writers get for art reviews. Artists and critics are pretty much in the same boat it seems.

Jerry, I was delighted to be crowned a queen of Thebes on Wednesday night and sent on my way with your

benediction. Should it change in the future, I promise not to write anonymously on your wall.

Yesterday at 6:07pm



Bruce Lieberman great rant ! but I can see how you need an editor.... stopped reading half way and then started again...glad I did... ANONYMOUS

Yesterday at 6:14pm



John Xero jerry is so much better without an editor. we just need to give him a bunch of coke and have him bug out like philip k. dick style

Yesterday at 6:18pm



Campbell Laird Man beautiful Love letter! Your smitten! Lets say koons gave you the change from his back pocket lets say a coupla mill. What would you do with it! There you go...

Yesterday at 6:22pm



Mia Fineman You tell em Jerry. I've (hardly) ever written for art mags because of the lousy pay – mainstream press is better but still peanuts as you know. Why don't YOU start up on online art mag? Teach by example! Also have you ever written at length about the why and how of your years as a trucker?

Yesterday at 6:26pm



John Xero mia: jerry's probably saving that for his autobiography
jerry saltz: the man, the myth, the motherfucker

Yesterday at 6:29pm



Doug Anson Right-on! Jerry Saltz is a real MOTHER TRUCKER!!!!
Real SALTZ-OF-THE-EARTH kind of guy. Tell that fool! Blogs rule, the internet is awesome, and most arts pros struggle and juggle for life. Wait, who's the fool?

Yesterday at 6:50pm



Joseph Nechvatal I can imagine – with the right amount of soft pressure – that the art schools where we work could sponsor art crit web magazines of merit. In the mid-90s I wrote a bit for TalkBack! A Forum for Critical Discourse that was sponsored by the Center for Long Distance Art & Culture, located at Lehman College Art Gallery and co-directed by Susan Hoeltzel and Douglas Davis. It was conceived and edited by Robert Atkins. We only made three issues – but the model seemed sound to me.

Yesterday at 7:06pm



Ellen Yustas K. Gottlieb I 100% agree that an online New York Artists and Writers could make an impact for entire art community, as New York is the art capital. For instance artist from other states would be able to submit their work to get a review from NYC art critic. It could unite the artworld, create an art utopia IMHO. I say this having 10 years of experience interacting with people, artists writers.
Jerry thanks! you're da man!

Yesterday at 8:24pm



Mark Dutcher i am glad you wrote this jerry. i am always surprized that people dont know how little art critics/writers make. i also think/know that a good editor makes all the difference. a good model for a blog/magazine is Andrew Sullivan even though it is a singular voice, he has an editor and guest writers and publishes daily online. yes band together fledgling art critics! unite in the spirit of community and discourse!

Yesterday at 8:26pm

Suzanne Fredericq You make it very clear, Jerry and John, that being an art critic, come what may, is above all a labor of love.

Yesterday at 8:43pm



Ellen Yustas K. Gottlieb the million \$? is who will band together art critics?

Yesterday at 8:48pm



Edward Shott Ana writes at innumerable venues on art and fashion, I don't think she uses an editor--her personal touch attracts readership--I am not that interested in fashion since Tara's hiatus but I look forward to whatever Ana writes about--I miss "Janet Preston" for the naughty gossip-- and I am glad that jerry's FB writing is not edited---I am not a writer--I need an editor to leave a note on the refrigerator door--

but some writers should not have editors.

Yesterday at 9:13pm



Jerry Saltz Ellen: Art critics have to band themselves together!!!!

The art world is an ALL VOLUNTEER ARMY!

Yesterday at 9:27pm

Scott Cousins We have your back Jerry. Say whatever you feel. – Even if I disagree sometimes.

Yesterday at 9:54pm

Scott Cousins Or maybe – Especially if I disagree.

Yesterday at 9:57pm

William Powhida Jerry,

I hope you bring just part of this energy to #class. Seriously. I was just in the shared office of Hyperallergic and Artfagcity today and they are indeed banding together. Now Paddy and Hrag have to create new ways of funding their desire to write. They certainly share a passion for criticizing art and engaging the art world. Really proud to know them.

After experiencing the (non-existent) pay scale as a would be art critic for about four years, I got to work in the studio. As for the possibility of making a living goes, it's probably artists, poets, and really sorry about this, art critics. I could be wrong, but I heard Art in America pays \$25 bucks per review. Clearly writing about art is motivated by everything but money. In fact, my main question for you is, unlike artists, critics don't even really have the possibility of the big pay day, so what's the return? Power? Engagement? The audience? The platform to think publicly? I know what motivated me when I gave my time to other artists and the readers. ...

[See More](#)

Yesterday at 10:05pm

Bobby Goldman Jerry– The correct spelling is John "Yau." I was wondering if you would respond to that piece in the Feb. Brooklyn Rail. Is there more to say other than you "love people who hate art they're never seen and hate people who dare to like it"? Off topic, I know, but just curious.

Yesterday at 10:22pm

Bobby Goldman sorry for the misspelling in the quote.

Yesterday at 10:26pm



Jerry Saltz Bobby: I wrote this yesterday and posted it. I'll post it again.

How very dickish of John Yau. He's a terrible art-writer. His writing is SO incoherent, rambling, self-satisfied, priggish, and irrelevant; it's SUCH deranged garbage that I have NEVER been able to read one of his things. Someone told me he even mentions something about Tom Cruise and connects it to me or Koons or something. Deranged; jumping the shark. But obviously based on this wastepaper basket of a piece he is very obsessed with my me and my writing. Which is nice.... [See More](#)

Yesterday at 10:51pm

Camilla Fallon <http://wpbnyc.wordpress.com/?s=camilla+fallon>

11 hours ago



Edward Shott everybody's a critic--inky dinda dee, inka dinka doo

11 hours ago

Camilla Fallon So what's wrong with that Ed??

11 hours ago

Dana Burns I think online art crits are bound to be successful. Even in art class today, the teacher mentions something and says "Google it". The internet is our library, it's international, it's at our fingertips (& free). Lots of people only get their news online. Online communities are flourishing. If there was an online magazine that was really well done, I would pay for a monthly subscription.

Writing online is also realistic and practical for most with day jobs. You come home and your computer is there (well, or at work if you have a boring desk job haha).

What I really love about vulnerability is it's sincerity. If you really love what you're pursuing (art, art criticism)

and want to makret yourself, you eventually have to put yourself out there and try to look confident even if you're scared inside. But, it's always worth it bc you learn and make friends.... [See More](#)

11 hours ago

Camilla Fallon It's great that people are writing

11 hours ago



Edward Shott Camilla,I'm not a critic, I'm a curmudgeon. :^)

11 hours ago

Zachary Adam Cohen Jerry you are right that 5 or 6 of the most talented young bloggers should band together and build the community one step at a time. In fact, they should look for donation funding, because online ads just ain't going to do it. There are some doing this but it really only works when you get the top 3 or 4 bloggers working together. The sum of their ... [See More](#)

10 hours ago



Michael Workman Jerry: who are the best young writers out there you know? Naming a few might inspire some go-get 'em attitude, and maybe some people's attention to their work, which would in turn spur on and instill the courage they'll most definitely need. As Peter Schjeldahl once advised me as an aimless young writer when I started publishing just as the New Art Examiner was going under, "You've got to be able to make 3 enemies a day and 4 friends."

10 hours ago



Michael Workman I think I've way over thought this, but it was fun, so I'll put it out there anyway.

I think maybe you're just venting wishful thoughts but I hope you're wishing for the chance to be an architect even at some basic, hopeful level of a reflowerishment of the need for art critical work and I'd like to see a little more clearly an elaboration of the ... [See More](#)

7 hours ago



Jim Meyer All access criticism , decentralized . I think its great! take away the control, I have loved using pandora music station and I have been trying to think how this model can be used in art,this is the perfect use,the critics can write reviews and type in a kind of art and reviews can show up.
music is the model

4 hours ago



Edward Shott Every once in a while , I stumble upon some body that has an art blog, some of which are very interesting , often it is artists who are wandering around Chelsea and the point out show that they like--maybe somebody could create a wevsite that is just a growing list of links to these sites--I would also like too see links or lists of old Masters exhibits in museums and gallery's. Art writers seem to focus too much on the shows of living artists.

3 hours ago



Henry Samelson Jerry, thanks for this letter.

It's sort of off topic, and tired, and nitpicky, but I have to say it. What's up with everyone constantly having to qualify everything with "young"? Young writer, young blogger, young artist. (I wish I was younger than Jesus so I wouldn't be vulnerable to the counter-argument, "Oh, you're just middle-aged and bitter.")

Surely there are some old/middle-aged/retired persons out there as well who have it in them to change the art world internet blah blah blah landscape one virtual brick at a time. ... [See More](#)

3 hours ago

Roberta Fallon Fun is the operative word. Blogs are fun--can be...but also hard work. but fun, yes! And multiple voices are important--turns the whole thing into a discussion, like this here. A community gab fest can be contentious but it's useful. I love this rant, Jerry!

2 hours ago

Brian Curtin You sound like me after a bottle of whiskey.

about an hour ago

Judith Braun whoa! good ranting Jerry! and not anonymously!
But I kind of like not-editing...isn't it more vulnerable?

about an hour ago



Jerry Saltz Henry: Thank you for the comment. The title of the letter is: "An Open Letter to (starving, idle, hungry, ambitious, etc.) Art-Critics." I did not use the word "young." However, I imagine that I did use it in the body of the letter so I won't nit-pick. My real meaning is that it is the newer or emerging or younger art critics who have NO WHERE TO PUBLISH; of course this could apply to middle-aged and older critics, as well.... [See More](#)
28 minutes ago



Jerry Saltz Michael Workman writes, "Jerry: who are the best young writers out there you know? Naming a few might inspire some." A few things Michael, I have done a few long threads on this FB Page about who people think "the best writers" are. If you scroll back it should be there somewhere. Unless FB automatically deletes older threads. Who knows? FB is like GOD: Totally unavailable, seemingly indifferent, quasi-dictatorial, and uncannily NOT THERE! Hah! Anyway, if any writer needs me to list their name to light a fire under her/his ass, I no longer like this writer.... [See More](#)
19 minutes ago

Jonathan Vaughan I enjoy how when you speak about what you do or write about it, you are straight forward about your own down falls. That carries a lot of validity in my opinion.
15 minutes ago