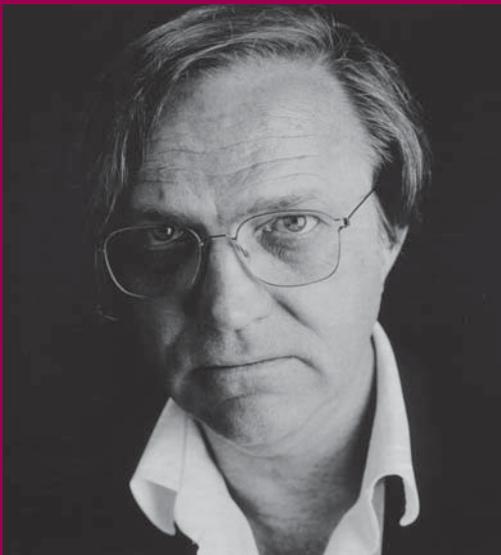


ROBERT STORR

Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney Award for Outstanding Patronage of the Arts



When I entered the art world in the early fifties, there were 16 galleries worth visiting, eight commercial venues uptown that barely got by, and eight artist cooperatives on and around Tenth Street; some 200 artists in the New York School; a dozen or so sympathetic critics, curators, and collectors; two mediums—painting and sculpture—and no need to look at anything outside of New York. Today, in New York alone, there are six hundred galleries, not to mention auction houses, which service a mushrooming art market. Moreover, there

are countless artists who show in these venues, not only painters and sculptors but photographers, video and film makers, conceptual artists, and installation and performance artists, all of whom are encompassed in a global art world of extraordinary complexity. It is impossible to follow it all. When information overload overwhelms me I turn to Rob Storr.

Tributes such as this are meant to boost the subject. In Rob's case, it's not necessary. The facts of his contribution to art, art criticism, art history, curatorship, and art education speak for themselves. He is a dedicated painter, a Professor of Painting and Dean of the Yale Art School, an editor of *Art in America* and contributor to *Artforum*, *Parkett*, and many other publications, a consulting curator at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and an advisor for not-for-profit art organizations, such as the Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation. His contribution to the Sharpe Foundation, on whose Advisory Committee he and I serve, has been invaluable.

Rob has been a curator of the Department of Painting and Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art, overall Director of the 2007 Venice Biennale, and the Rosalie Solow Professor of Art History at New York University's Institute of Fine Art. He has also received an award for Distinguished Contribution to the Field

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of Art Criticism from the American Section of the International Association of Art Critics, the iCI Agnes Gund Curatorial Award, the Lawrence A. Fleischman Award for Scholarly Excellence in the Field of Art History from the Archives of American Art, and has been made an Officier des Arts et des Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture. In sum, Rob is among the savviest and most knowledgeable persons in the art world.

Rob is categorically anti-categorical, generously open to every tendency in contemporary art. He has curated major museum shows and written articles and catalogue introductions on artists ranging from Alex Katz to Louise Bourgeois to Adrian Piper, and from Chuck Close to Elizabeth Murray to Gerhard Richter to Bruce Nauman as well as Leon Golub, Ilya Kabakov, Philip Pearlstein, Martin Puryear, Robert Ryman, Nancy Spero, and literally dozens of other artists. The shows that he has organized have all been must-see and his essays on art have been models of elucidation, insight, and elegant prose.

But there is more. Rob's approach to art is enlightened and empathetic. His motto for the Venice Biennale, namely *Think with the Senses, Feel with the Mind*, sums up his aesthetic. He tellingly juggles polarities—mind and body, thought and feeling, the conceptual and the perceptual. He believes that if these polarities

are treated as irreconcilable, as they commonly are, it is impossible to grasp the full complexity of human experience and art. In his criticism, Rob also responds to the traumatized mood of the world afflicted by wars, terrorism, racism, genocide, and ecological devastation, among other social disasters.

I am convinced that Rob Storr has been cloned into multiple Rob Storrs. They all merit the Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney Award for Outstanding Patronage of the Arts.

Irving Sandler
Writer and Critic