

The Arts

January-February, 1994



New York, NY – The Whitney Museum presented a vulgar display entitles “Catholic Tastes,” featuring the work of “lapsed Catholic” Mike Kelley. “Catholic Tastes” was a scatological exhibit designed to offend Catholics. The book of the same name which was included as part of the exhibit was even more revealing of Kelley’s bigotry. The exhibit also ran at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art from June to August, 1994.

4/11/94

Wyomissing, PA – The Community Players of Wyoming, a suburb of Reading, PA, announced plans to stage a performance of “Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All To You,” by Christopher Durang. The play has been cited for its virulent anti-Catholicism.

6/18 – 7/17

New York, NY – The posters advertising “Stonewall: Night Variations,” a musical theater version of the 1969 Stonewall uprising presented by En Garde Arts, depicted a man wearing a crown, holding the body of another male across his draped lap in the direct imitation of Michaelangelo’s *Pieta* in which the Virgin Mary cradles the body of Christ crucified.

6/19/94

Houston, TX – Everett Evans, in a theater review of a local production of “Nunsense,” published in the *Houston Chronicle*, described the play as a “one joke show, stretched way past the breaking point.” The play’s “format is ‘Ted Mack’s Original Amateur Hour’ in convent attire.” Evans decided that “much of the humor...is cheap shot.”

9/10/94 – 10/21/94

St. Paul, MN – The College of St. Catherine sponsored a display by Croatian artist, writer and poet Neda Miranda Blazeovic in St. Catherine's G. Murphy Gallery. The exhibit included the painting "Virgin Mary and Zeus Play Chess," in which an abstract topless woman in a pleated mini-skirt and sunglasses floated in the sky opposite Zeus and a chess board.

October

Kansas City, MO – The Missouri Repertory Theatre presented a revival of Rolf Hochhuth's "the Deputy," a play largely credited with creating the myth that Pope Pius XII was silent during the Holocaust. In panel discussions and "educational presentations" set up by the theater both before and after the run of the play, anti-Catholic venom was spewed where discussion and clarification were intended, and the theater representatives did nothing to clarify the misconceptions.

10/16/94

Pennsylvania – WYIEP FM, a community public radio station in Pennsylvania, sponsored the play "Loot," a benefit performance by Joe Orton. Local papers described it as a farce filled with "a scathing attack on the Catholic Church...a satire on priests and elements of the Catholic religion." It was scheduled as the season-opening play for the radio station.

10/27/94

New York, NY – Ron Athey, a homosexual performance artist with AIDS, began four performances of his "Four Scenes in a Harsh Life," at P.S. 122 in Greenwich Village today. Athey is perhaps most remembered for a 1993 performance in Minneapolis, MN, in which he cut into the back of another performer, blotted the blood with towels, attached them to a clothesline and spun the towels out over the audience. His current show is no less bloody, though audience members are not quite so intimately involved. Athey draws heavily on religious, and particularly Catholic, symbolism in crafting his shows. He

recreates images of the martyrdom of St. Sebastian, the crown of thorns and Michaelangelo's Pieta, and reporters have made note of the proliferation of images of bloody Catholic martyrs found in Athey's home.

11/3-23/94

Lancaster, PA – The Art department of Franklin and Marshall College sponsored an extremely anti-Catholic art exhibit in the student center. The exhibit consists of large panels, many of which were derogatory of Pope John Paul II. One panel depicted the Holy Father with Mickey Mouse ears, another with condom balloons, still another driving through desert wasteland in a Nazi jeep. In the center of the exhibit was a book where visitors could write personal notes to the Pope, the majority of which were blasphemous or obscene. When protests were registered with the President, he responded by saying that the exhibit was chosen because of its dimensions and that he did not believe the exhibit was anti-Catholic.

11/11/94

College Park, PA – The University of Pennsylvania sponsored an Andres Serrano exhibit at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) which included his "Piss Christ." Wendy Steinberg, PR coordinator for the ICA, commented, "I think it's very, very beautiful...actually kind of reverent." The exhibit ran through January 1995.