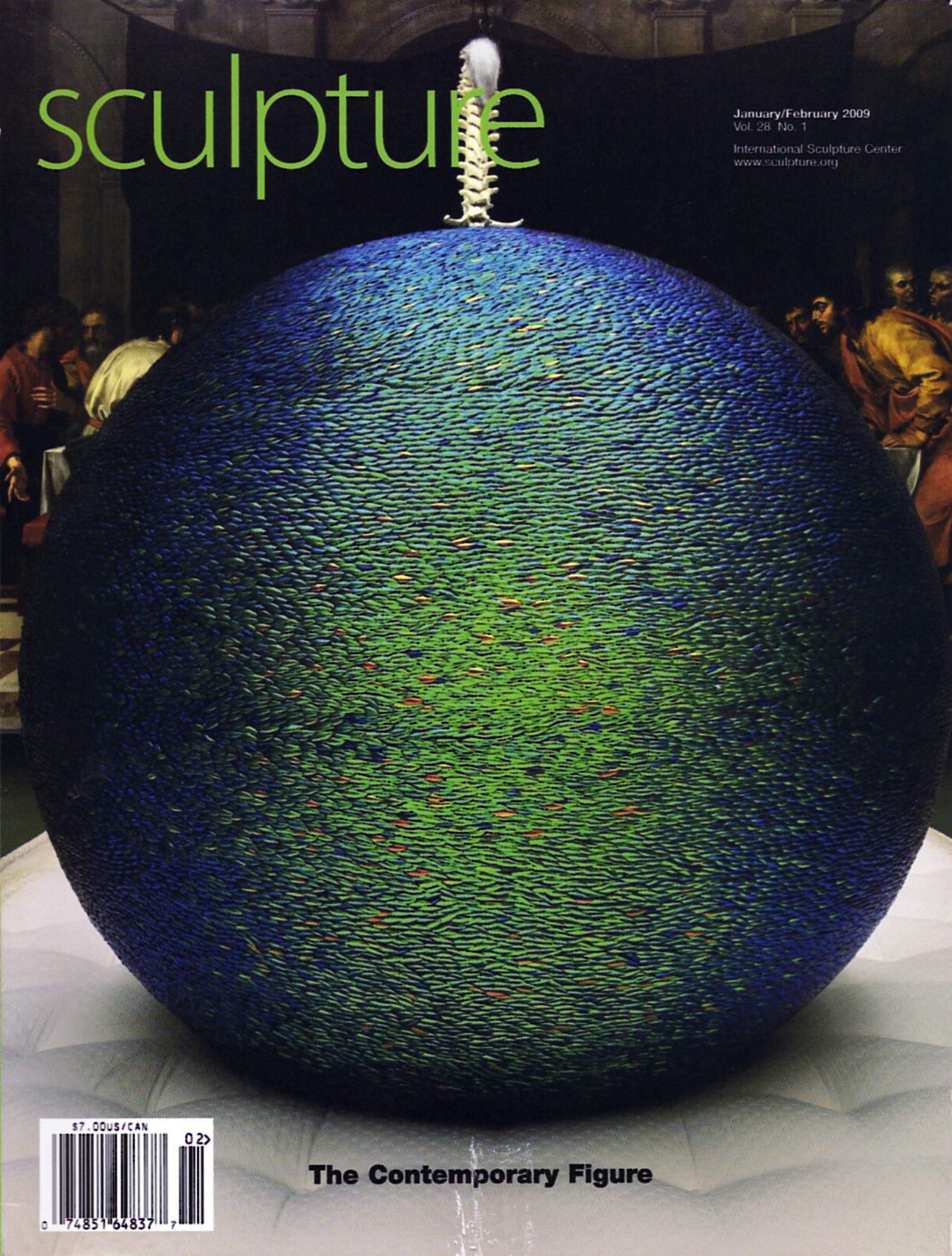


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The Contemporary Figure

slabs like medical instruments and placed on a table strewn with bones, a magnifying glass, books about animals, large cans of paint, sketches of bones, a tripod, glass tubes, and the artist's large eyeglasses.

Lee's approach to anatomical display references historical artists such as Thomas Eakins as well as contemporary artists such as Gunther von Hagen. While genetic manipulation features in many works by contemporary artists, including Shawn Brixey, Richard Rinehart, Eduardo Kac, and Critical Art Ensemble, Ji's "Mutants" and Lee's "Animatus" restore an interest in the body via a conventional Western approach to sculpture. Basing their work on a realistic anatomical ideal, they move to subvert it by using the theatricality of mass culture and the psychological space of identity, thereby redefining sculpture not simply as aesthetic object, but also as cultural language.

—Denise Carvalho

CINCINNATI "Projections"

Manifest Gallery

"Projections" demonstrated that the "what if" factor, essential in the making of art, also adds zip to the showing of art. The gallery invited artists to submit "clearly sculptural [works], [with] three-dimensional space a key element, not in any way floor or pedestal based" and received responses from 130 artists in 33 states and eight countries. From that group, nine entrants, each from a different U.S. state, were chosen.

The sculptures went to the wall, with the exception of Eric Troffkin's *Lens Flare Cluster* (2007), which hung from the ceiling and took two days to install. Composed of variations on six-sided figures in roto-cast plastic, each with a pointed end, in pale shades of blue/lavender/pink moving to pink/yellow/green, the piece invited viewing from different

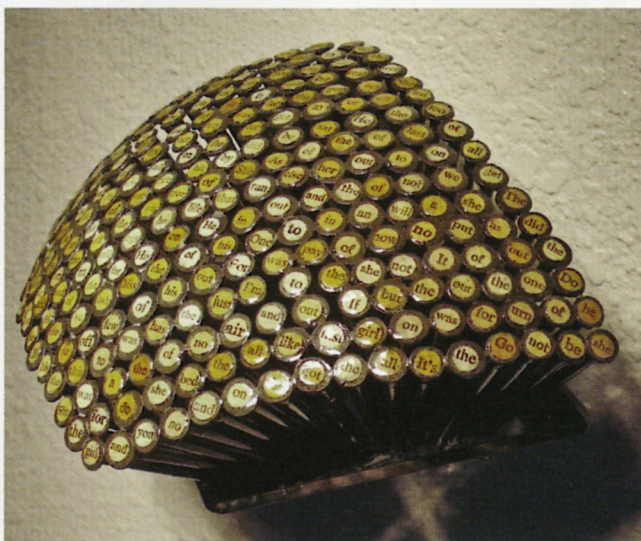


Above: Kristina Arnold, *Drip*, 2005. Glass, vinyl, string, and pins, detail of installation. Below: Jonathan Whitfill, *Rowd*, 2005. Welded nails, printed paper, and plastic coating, 6 x 9 x 4 in. Both from "Projections."

angles and suggested not only light, but also something seen under a microscope—that is to say, a magnification that throws off perception.

The 50 to 60 individual elements of Kristina Arnold's *Drip* (2005) looked to me like a marvelous spatter on the wall, liquid miraculously caught in the act of falling. Arnold

accomplished this sleight of hand with glass, vinyl, string, and pins. Jonathan Whitfill is a sly fellow, producing a set of nails welded together, their heads reminiscent of old typewriter keys but each imprinted with a brief word rather than a letter. *Rowd* (2007) has a pun for a name and a mischievous near-narrative that never quite takes off. Read up,



down, or sideways, it doesn't exactly make sense—unless I missed the key to it all.

Brass, steel, and nylon are listed as components of Trish Ramsay's *Thought of a Thought* (2007), but the unlisted element, shadow, is also a telling contributor. The shapes, formed by slender colored wires and accented by their shadows like lines in a drawing, might suggest a bird, maybe a cloud, almost a kite—like the thought that skims past and is gone. Adrienne Outlaw's *Fecund Series* is prodigal, as its name suggests, with 11 individual pieces created from 2002 to 2008. All deal with living, with birth, with life succored or death averted, and most require the viewer to put eye to peephole to see what is going on. What is seen, sometimes, is the reflection of one's own eye, but the intense inventiveness of nature appears to be the subject, conjured up by a most inventive artist.

Kevin Ewing gives the finger, in an affectionate way, to the car industry in *American Muscle* (2006), with metal car emblems embedded in huge, rectangular, wall-mounted vinyl cushions, while Shane Harris puts his series of three compositions into what look like soap dishes, jutting from the wall. Richard Herzog's *Simple As A Flower* (2005) is, of course, not simple at all. Twenty projections made of vinyl, acrylic mirrors, copper, and steel emerged from a five-foot-square section of wall, the metals imparting a deliberately non-flowery color to the piece and the whole both light and airy. For *Spitting Knowledge* (2006), Glenn Williams seems to have started with a shape like a coat hook and made it into a pair of bronze lips with a drip of steel spit, all superbly crafted. Created by resourceful, technically assured artists, the works in "Projections" provided the viewer with both visual and intellectual pleasure.

—Jane Durrell