20 TWENTY
By most accounts, the avant-garde is over, and good riddance. No more pseudo-military heroics, no more manly forward scouts bravely leading the troops onward. But with the salutary rejection of the term, something valuable is lost. It is, in fact, still brave—really brave—to choose to be an artist. And although sticking with it is difficult, too, the initial decision is the hardest part by far. Completing a BFA, and creating the work that is required to graduate, confirms that decision. All who have made it are to be cheered for their courage.

This is not the less true in a society that seems to welcome artists as never before, and in which commercial culture and the fine arts are ever more firmly intertwined. On the contrary. The consolations of a clearly defined community, and role, are no longer available. In their place is a wildly fluid domain in which every art form bleeds into another: painting into video, digital imagery into installation, text into drawing and each of these into their commercial counterparts and back.

I’ve just been reading essayist Chris Kraus’s Where Art Belongs (on the recommendation of an SVA student, as it happens), a slender book that ably maps the byways down which the visual arts now travel: live music, collectively written poetry, personal recollection, eccentric historical research and many activities too loosely configured to name. Much new art seems to be exploring shadowy places that no cultural strategist of the last century would recommend—in place of triumphant ascents, there are long detours into murky netherworlds. “All art now is conceptual,” Kraus writes, “defined by its stance in relation to other art and its place in the market.” But also, “Conceptual art offers viewers a journey along an associative chain.” And, “There is always a bottom.” As it moves away from material substance, and from claims of truth, beauty or political efficacy, art also more perfectly mirrors the character of our time, and of the selves it shapes. The “bottom” to which Kraus refers is that representation of our moment, and us in it.

On the other hand, there is the equally compelling recent testimony of art historian T. J. Clark, who, in Farewell to an Idea, argues with great eloquence and passion for the value of examining key examples of Modernism from David to Pollock, in which he finds evidence of fruitful engagement with political and social conditions. His milieu is
academia, his tone rather mandarin. But in many ways he sounds surprisingly like Kraus. Writing, as he says, amid Modernism’s ruins, and for posterity, Clark claims that its long reign signaled the advent of the culture of capitalism and of contingency, “a social order which has turned from the worship of ancestors and past authorities to the pursuit of a projected future—of goods, pleasures, freedoms, forms of control over nature, or infinities of information.” Any sense of control will be fugitive, illusory. “We know we are living a new form of life, in which all previous notions of belief and sociability have been scrambled,” he writes. “Modernism turns on the impossibility of transcendence.”

Both Clark and Kraus write in the first person, which would have been anathema when they were students. Taking Oscar Wilde at his word, they understand criticism to be a form of art, which is to say, that it is always subjective, and that acknowledging its fallibility is just a simple courtesy. They expect the same from artists. And for all their mutual concern with submission to market forces, they also trace the outlines of unprecedented freedoms for communication and for expression. While wary of its many commercial traps, they describe possibilities for art that are myriad, surprising, sometimes exalted. Nothing is off limits. In all its intelligence, acuity, complexity and contradiction, their forecast looks a great deal like the message presented by the graduating class of 2011.

Nancy Princenthal
This is the new 300G by Chrysler

A car that heats up your blood. The 300-G... the 1961 version of Chrysler’s championship breed of motorcars. A car that can take its well-proportioned self and go record-breaking at Daytona Beach. The rare American that’s turned out one at a time; a few thousand times a year. You’ll find this tiger powered by the latest in Chrysler’s brilliantly engineered ram-injection V-8s. With a full 375 horsepower that you manage with incredible ease. Power brakes and steering help. But the real clue to the “G’s” handling genius is its superbly balanced suspension. Conveniences are complete. Comfort is served in typical 300 style: four leather-lined, foam-padded bucket seats. This is a total machine.

The one that can tour confidently with the best automobiles the world has to offer. The 300-G... a rare kind of car for a rare kind of man.
SLEEPER!

To the old carnival guessing game of "Which shell is the pea under?" you can add another — "Which Galaxie is hiding the new six-barrel?"

You can get a very precise answer, it's true, when one of these sleepers suddenly goes "zzz-z-z-z-"
vanishes. But that leaves you sitting foolishly in the middle of a lot of empty landscape.

Better to know beforehand. But how? You’d think 405 horsepower, 406 cubic inches and 11.4 compression couldn’t be hidden. But Ford’s V-8 magicians have brewed up a real street machine—no wild 2000 r.p.m. idle, no dragster noises, no battle to fire it up. Girls drive these things down to the supermarket and never suspect they are a half-throttle away from escape velocity.

Of course, you do get a clue watching one straighten out a corner. They handle! Because this engine (and the 4-barrel version) come only as a package with Heavy Duty shocks, springs, driveshaft, U-joints, brakes—plus 15-inch wheels and nylon tires. That’s what makes the tab of $379.70* so fantastic—and why there are so many Galaxies sleeping around to embarrass you. But why be dominated? Get your own 406 and you won’t need to guess which Galaxie has the six-barrel.

*Manufacturer’s suggested list price for extra equipment.
This subject is concerned, it has always been this way and we can leave it to continue. The human instinct to watch the passing of their devotion, as far as we take increased devotion in that cause for which they gave the last full measure of their devotion.
The woman didn't
I want me. She left me on a train.
Susana and Brian (Sister and Brother)
Ages 6 and 2

How old is Brian?
- Two.
Why did you come here to live?

The siblings are currently not up for adoption. Child Services is in the process of locating their mother.
SUNHEE (ALICE) YANG
JOE DIMOS

Meat, 2011, mural/installation, enamel, 10x15' (approximate)

A Rare Kind of Car For a Rare Kind Of Man, 2011, wide format xerox on blue print paper, 36x26”

Mercury Cougar Performance, 2011, wide format xerox on blue print paper, 26x40”

Escape Velocity, 2011, wide format xerox on blue print paper, 40x26”

CAROLYN BEDNAR

Studio installation view, digital photographs, dimensions variable, 2011

Julia, digital photographs, 24x32", 2010

Drain, digital photographs, 24x32", 2010

Adobe, digital photograph, 24x32", 2011

Left, digital photographs, 24x32", 2011

CHRISTINA SIMÕES-GAFFNEY

Departure (detail), mixed medium, 60x80x24", 2011

Sans (2 of 9), print, 8½x11", 2011

Sans (1 of 9), print, 8½x11", 2011

DAVID FOARDE

(L) Untitled, photo and oil paint, 3x3', 2011

(R) Untitled, photo and oil paint, 3x3', 2011

Untitled, studio installation view, photo and oil paint dimensions variable, 2011

Bury, chicken wire, polyurethane, silk, steel chain, silicone rubber, 12x6', 2011

DEBORA DELMAR

Role Exchange (day shift/night shift), video installation dimensions variable, 2010-11

DD Corp. (open studios installation), DD Corp. T-shirts, plant, vinyl cutout, photograph, butterscotch candy, table, dimensions variable, 2010

SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMERS, switch-operated, altered novelty toy, 2x5” dimensions vary, 2010

photo 4, digital c-print, plastic sheeting, gold binder clip, mirrored plexi, dimensions variable, 2011

Installation view from (left to right), mixed media dimensions variable, 2011, (left) Should of Called Me, hot glue sticks, artificial grass, found materials, 9x6x4”, 2010, (center left) Didn’t See It, digital c-print, 40x34” each, 2010 (center right) Synchronized Swimmers, switch-operated, altered novelty toy, 2x5” dimensions vary, 2010 (right) Looking at me looking at you II, athletic tape, mirrored plexi, c-print, mounted on foam core, mounted on an AC motor, dimensions variable, 2010

photo 3, digital c-print, plexi rod, varied plexi sheeting dimensions variable, 2011

photo 2, digital c-print, plastic sheeting, gold binder clip, mirrored plexi, dimensions variable, 2011

Installation view from (left to right): mixed media dimensions variable, 2011, (left) Should of Called Me, hot glue sticks, artificial grass, found materials, 9x6x4”, 2010, (center left) Didn’t See It, digital c-print, 40x34” each, 2010 (center right) Synchronized Swimmers, switch-operated, altered novelty toy, 2x5” dimensions vary, 2010 (right) Looking at me looking at you II, athletic tape, mirrored plexi, c-print, mounted on foam core, mounted on an AC motor, dimensions variable, 2010

(1) Untitled, oil/ mixed media, 6x8", 2011

(1) Untitled, oil/ mixed media, 6x8", 2011

ERICK LASSITER

Freak, deerskin, feathers, fuel hose, bone, rubber, wire and melted plastic, 7x36", 2009

FOARDE ÓÍES-GAFFNEY

Studio installation view from (left to right), mixed media dimensions variable, 2011

photo 4, digital c-print, plastic sheeting, gold binder clip, mirrored plexi, dimensions variable, 2011

Installation view from (left to right): mixed media dimensions variable, 2011, (left) photo 1, digital c-print, plastic sheet, vinyl, 3x9x.125”, 2011 (center) photo 2, digital c-print, gold binder clip, mirrored plexi, dimensions variable, 2011 (right) photo 4, digital c-print, plastic sheeting, gold binder clip, mirrored plexi, dimensions variable, 2011

GREGORY LOTHOUSE

Whose Afraid of Radiation? (3), acrylic and enamel on canvas, 71x59", 2011

(1) Whose Afraid of Radiation? (2), acrylic and enamel on canvas, 71x59", 2011

Studio Installation view, acrylic and enamel on canvas 71x59", 2011

KATIE RICKAMAN

Little Big Head 3, 16x 20”, digital video still prints, 4, 18x24”, acrylic on canvas; close up pt.1 and pt.2, 2 min 30 sec, looping dvd videos, 2 Sony monitors; Navajo rug, and faux fur, dimensions variable, 2010

Delete Return (installation detail), 50 paintings, acrylic on canvas, various sizes from 4x5”, 8½x11”, 11x14”, 16x20” and 18x24”, 2011

Delete Return (installation detail), garbage bag, inkjet print, 8½x11", 2011
KAYLA GIBBONS

The Monument to Objectivity is Still Yet Hollow (installation detail), hand-bound laser cut book, birch plywood, steel, glass, silicone caulking, dimensions variable, 2011

Burial Rites at Livermore Falls, digital inkjet prints on paper, steel, pop-rivets, silicone caulking, handmade paper, water-soluble silkscreen ink, rust, New York bluestone ossuaries, dimensions variable, 2010

LENKA CURTIN

Metamorphosis I (L) and Metamorphosis II (R), plexiglass, ceramic, 32x32x61" 2010

Lichen, plexiglass, ceramic, 44x40x22", 2011

Yellow and Green in Black Setting, plexiglass, ceramic, painted wood, 41x75x25", 2011, (in background) Anemone, plexiglass, ceramic, 29x5x23", 2011

LINDSAY ABKEN

Center wall: Roe, oil on canvas, 18x24", 2010
Top left: Twice, oil on panel, 18x24", 2010
Bottom left: Study of a Man, oil on panel, 18x24", 2010
Center: Female Portrait, oil on panel, 8x10", 2010
Right: Laura, oil on canvas, 36x48", 2010

(L) From a Young Age, oil on canvas, 30x30", 2008
(R) My First Love, oil on canvas, 36x36", 2009

(L) What am I supposed to be?, oil on canvas, 24x30", 2010
(R) Morality, oil on canvas, 30x32", 2008

LUCIA DONNER

108 Calle Hidalgo, dvd video stills, dimensions variable, 2011

MICHAEL SEVERANCE

(R) Fibroblast: Scan 15, 2011, 2D digital scan, framed photographic print, 20x16"

(L) Fibroblast: Scan 12, 2005, 2D digital scan, framed photographic print, 20x16" (R) Fibroblast: Scan 13, 2005, 2D digital scan, framed photographic print, 20x16"

CRIB, platinum silicone rubber, site-specific installation, dimensions variable, 2011

MORGAN PEARSE

Wound Object, installation documentation, 8-channel video, audio, dimensions variable, 2010

Crush, grout, sand, faux fur, headphones, sound 36x42x42", 2010

SUNHEE (ALICE) YANG

Travel of a Yellow Head, acrylic on canvas, 48x48", 2011

Sunset Sledding, acrylic on canvas, 36x36", 2011

Travel of a Purple Head, acrylic on canvas, 36x36", 2011

Feet Under Water, acrylic on canvas, 50x70", 2011

SOO JIN HONG

A Basketball Service (detail), watercolor on paper, tape, tracing paper, and acrylic paint on wall, 2011

(L) Magic Harmonica, oil and acrylic on canvas, 60x72", 2011, (R) untitled, oil and acrylic on canvas, 60x72", 2011

A Basketball Service (detail), watercolor on paper, tape, tracing paper, and acrylic paint on wall, 2011

SONA LEE

Bodhisattva, fiberglass, aqua resin, resin, magnets, foam, electrical wires, plaster, ABS plastic, 6x7x5", 2010-2011

I Don't Know vs You Know, wood, wire, tubes, brain model, eye-ball model, etc, 70x55x104", 2011

Seonangdang, wire, PVC pipe, tube, rope, twine, wood, etc, 117x105x100", 2010
20 TWENTY