

Natural Art

Gentleman (?):

I've been informed by a mutual acquaintance that your gallery is looking for an otherwise healthy two-headed calf for exhibition. I think I may be able to assist, although I would need your prior guarantee that the animal(s) was/were not shown for the amusement of your patrons and that it/they would not be baited or humiliated or stared at for any amount of time extending beyond two minutes (as this seems sufficient for viewing and protecting the animal(s)' dignity. Coincidentally, I had placed a want notice in a few local newspapers out west for just such an item animal and received two replies, one from Wyoming and one from Nebraska. The farmers are awaiting my response. I suggest you place the animals(s) in a pen surrounded by mirrors, as this will give viewers ample exposure as well as amplify the polycephaly. Perhaps, a billboard with a brief history of the condition might recommend itself. You may want to discuss the mythology of the ancient Greeks' Typhon & Cerberus, the Hindus' Ravana, the Romans' Janus (needless to say), and such creatures beings as Orochi, Zmey Gorynych, & Svetovid. These are merely suggestions, as I am not a curator by trade, but a barber.

The musical score *Ocean of Sounds* by John Cage would be an admirable accompaniment to the visual experience. It climbs and tenderly touches and repeats notes much as the calf's polycephaly does if viewed properly. It will soften the viewers/voyeurs to reach a state of holy regard facing the accidents of our natural world. Speaking of which, just how do you plan to prepare for the unnatural surroundings of your studio space. Will you be willing to lay sod, perhaps that diamond shape sod they lay in Yankee Stadium, as this would comfort the calf? Have you listened to John Cage's *Suite for Toy Piano*? You can play this once *Ocean of Sounds* completes its running. I strongly recommend that you have instructors, licensed pet trainers, teach your visitors how to stroke an animal's head(s). Some don't like to be touched on the head, as it terrifies them. Please bear this in mind in promoting your show.

As I understand it, you will simultaneously be exhibiting on loan Building VI designed by Antony Gormley, as well as representative pieces from the show *against Nature: The hybrid forms of modern sculpture*, which was recently at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds. I think believe *The Rock Drill* by Jacob Epstein & *Morgan Le Fay* by Pierre Roche will nicely balance the calf's presence, as it places the living being against within questions of Darwinian evolution and modernist sculptural imagination.

Please convey your anticipated response to this inquiry ASAP, as I will have to make arrange for purchase and transfer. I want to minimize the trauma, assuming you are steadfast in your intentions, and much planning will go into this. I am in a wheelchair, which further complicates the matter(s). I presume your gallery is in accordance with access law for the disabled. In January, 2008, the New York State Division of Human Rights incorporated a section of the federal A.D.A. covering businesses or places of public accommodation. That allows state enforcement of the part of the A.D.A. requiring "places of public accommodation to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices and procedures when providing access for a person with a disability," said John P. Herrion,

director of disability rights for the State Division of Human Rights.

As far as what decisions are made regarding the calf after the exhibition runs its course, that will have to be discussed. I believe barnyard animals are not permitted in residential areas, so I will not be able to give the calf a home. Perhaps, you can find a suitable place in the back of your gallery, well-sheltered and comfortable for the calf. I suggest you contact your lawyers regarding this.

Sincerely yours,

Jack P. Galmitz