

The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

May 21st – 23rd, 2010
Company of Ideas

Forum Director's Report

Prepared by

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Introduction to the Forum Directors Report

Introduction

The Company of Ideas is an annual forum through which the works of Jeffrey Rubinoff are made accessible for the education and enjoyment of the general public.

The sculpture of Jeffrey Rubinoff is both challenging and rich. They are works of subtle abstraction, deeply informed by the history they seek to extend. The product of the Company of Ideas Forums are an invitation for the viewer, by becoming more aware of that history, to cross the threshold into the perception of meaning expressed in the abstractions.

In May 2010, the Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park invited a group of scholars and thinkers to make a contribution to the public understanding of the historical context of the sculpture work. Specifically this year, Forum speakers were asked to focus, from the perspective of their field, on the history of the End of the Age of Agriculture. The End of the Age of Agriculture is one of the key insights that Jeffrey Rubinoff describes as having evolved with and from his work. A full listing of the insights, which are essential to understanding his work, are provided on page 4 of this report.

A detailed description of the End of the Age of Agriculture, as well as how the essays relates to the history described by the concept, can be found in the 2010 Forum Description beginning on page 9 of this report.

Forum Speakers

The 2010 Company of Ideas Forum presentations and authors and were:

- Cultivating cognizance at the End of the Age of Agriculture
By Mr. Karun Koernig, United Nations consultant, and JRSP activities director,
- The Artist and the New Humanism: an Evolutionary Model for Art History
By Mrs. Jenni Pace-Presnell, doctoral candidate in Art History at the University of British Columbia
- A New Pan-global Humanism Beyond the Age of Agriculture
By Dr. Jeffrey E. Foss, professor of Philosophy at the University of Victoria
- The Lost Generation of the First World War: The Suicide of the Military Caste
By Dr. Jay Winter, Charles J. Stille Professor of History at Yale University
- Nuclear Winter and the End of the Age of Agriculture
By Dr. Lawrence Badash, professor emeritus of History of Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara
- Art Beyond War: A Discussion About Prehistoric War and the History of Art by Artists
By Mr. Jeffrey Rubinoff, Sculptor

Other Participants in the Forum

In addition, the Forum also invited non-author participants, who were each asked to read the essays and prepare questions for the dialogues.

This year's non-author participants were:

- Leba Haber Rubinoff, filmmaker, and interactive media producer
- Nancy Hofbauer, Vice President, Bank Of America (retired)

The JRSP encourages interested art students and other young people to participate in the Forum dialogues, while acting as rapporteurs.

The rapporteurs for 2010 Forum were:

- Melba Dalsin, MA Art History
- Robert Denning, MA Art History
- Jesse Kennedy, first year university student

We appreciate the presence of the following observers who also participated in the dialogues:

- Susan Cain, Artist
- Carole Chambers
- Richard Goldman, US Agency for International Development (retired)
- Heather Goldman, US Agency for International Development (retired)
- Azmina Kassam
- Betty Kennedy, JRSP Board of Directors
- John Kirk, JRSP Landscape Curator
- Janet LeBlanc, Registered Nurse, Administrator
- Michael McNamera, Architect
- Vaughn Neville, Artist

Ivy Gordon was responsible for managing on-site catering.

The Insights that Evolved With and From the Work of Jeffrey Rubinoff

– 2010 EDITION –

Tribalism

Tribal behavior is an ancient evolutionary trait. By definition, a human tribe recognizes descent from a common ancestor. From this recognition, rules of membership are created. As populations grow and genetic distance evolves, the tribe becomes wholly metaphorical.

At the metaphorical level, tribalism is realized in religion, nationalism, and racism.

Tribal myths of origins are distributive memories of existence that substantiate the rules that separate tribes.

The End Of The Age Of Agriculture

The domestication of animals is believed to have begun 13,000 years ago. However, with crop cultivation 9,000-10,000 years ago, a large majority of the population was required to be bound to the land. Cultivation leads to the first continuously settled villages and to civilization itself.

Security and continuity, rationalized by predictable food production, originated specialized political, civil, religious, and military institutions. Institutionalizing a warrior class was the most dangerous necessity of this social sea change. If the military were not directed outward, it would threaten the stability of the non-military institutions. Thus, a constant state of war became inevitable, and indeed the history of city-states and empires appears to confirm perpetual states of war.

The feasibility of escalating war has become absurd with the advent of strategic bombing and nuclear weapons. No military institutions can claim to guarantee security of territory.

Moreover, at the end of the age of agriculture only a minute fraction of the population is required to produce the current surpluses of food and thus the fundamental assumptions of the age of agriculture, security of territory as the means to secure food production, must be revised to the era of global vulnerability.

Resurgent Tribalism

Agriculture not only failed to supplant tribalism, it extended tribalism through periods of technological development. As agricultural and civil practices advanced, continuously larger populations could be supported and larger armies with more sophisticated weapons deployed.

From the Renaissance through the mid-twentieth century, Europe led the world to modernity, scientifically and technologically, warring endlessly in ancient and re-invented tribal rivalries. Finally, much of Europe lay in smoldering ruins bearing the moral degradation of the Holocaust: mass theft and murder precisely organized and recorded by collaborating modern states.

The culmination of World War II was the profoundly ironic gift of nuclear weapons, given to us by science. With the reality of mutually assured destruction (MAD) becoming the ongoing policy of the nuclear-armed nations, modernity would have to adapt to a balance of terror if the human experiment were to survive.

As nation-states recognize the potential suicide of all-out war, the danger is that extant tribalism can continue to trigger genocide and continue the attempt to draw modernist nations into apocalyptic confrontation.

The Importance Of The History Of Science

The history of the universe is the collective memory of the universe. The science of cosmology probes the limits of what we can know of the collective memory. At the root of science is the simple idea that there can be a methodology by which intelligent people can agree on what they observe and, as a corollary, agree to disagree without murdering each other. Science itself evolved in the West as a necessity for stopping the ongoing murderous tribal wars lodged in separate arguments about divine truth and divine favor. Science is a process that creates conventions of truth. It is the process that itself must be either accepted or denied. Necessarily, to accept science is to accept the process that has led to the scientific concept of evolution. The evolution of life is the collective memory of life on our planet, and it determines what, at any point in history, we are capable of knowing of the collective memory of the universe.

Evolution

Evolution is directional and progresses to ever more complex and adapted orders of organization.

Quite elegantly, the concept is constantly evolving rigorously validated evidence of itself. As rigorously validated evidence expands the idea of evolution, the human mind itself can evolve, thereby contributing to the collective memory of life itself. Arguably, the theory of evolution supports the concept of the potential value of all humanity, as opposed to theistic or other rationalizations for the ascendancy of specific tribes.

Importance Of The History Of Art

Art is the map of the human soul; each original piece is proof of the journey. As the artist navigates the unknown, the art adds to the collective memory.

The artist's journey on the path of art history takes him to the farthest reaches of his predecessor as his point of departure. The artist who follows that history then possesses the chart for evolution, which he in his turn is obliged to extend to his successors.

In its turn, art history is one strand wrapped around the historic cable of Modernism.

Modernism And The New Synthesis

There are important carryovers from modernism to the new synthesis.

Modernism addressed the entire social spectrum implied by the evolving history of science. Modernism was by its nature progressive.

A key concept in the new synthesis is the carryover that life opportunities are not divinely ordained but can be distributed equitably based on merit. And that the corresponding changes in social organization can be implemented. This is the means by which civilization itself can evolve.

Humanism And Integration

In a post-agricultural age, political territories can no longer promise security. Globalization demands a common basis of understanding and action over both geographic and ideational space. Humanism is the conceptual thread with which to weave this common understanding.

Cultivated Ignorance

The easy view that truth is only subjective leads to cultural lethargy. This view of reality does not represent ideas but opinions. These opinions are merely a means to intellectual and moral conformity and to the avoidance of the effort required by independent thought. For some, there is just a cessation of growth, for others a deliberate security of stasis.

Leadership

The highly successful in any field are the masters of convention. In marketing, they are also the masters of the conventional. Learning from original art, true leadership is the quality to navigate beyond the boundaries of convention and to return with the charts of the newly explored. Leaders as navigators continually return to a vision beyond the horizon of convention. Like original art, the highest purpose of leadership is to serve the evolution of human consciousness.

Evolution Of Mind

Evolution of mind results from the dynamic engagement of truth with both analogy and metaphor.

Science has created conventions for truth by using analogies to model material reality. For much of their history, artists have been bound by their innate analogical ability to portray external reality. By science externalizing models of underlying structures of material reality and photography replacing the demand for illustration, art has been liberated to address the internal, intuitive reality of the collective human memory.

Analogies are tools, and as such they are accepted conventions; they are by their nature repeatable, measurable, and predictable. Metaphors exist beyond logic in the realm of intuition; they are the basis for truly original thought and are by their nature unique. Metaphors are self-contained truth, and they cannot be used as analogies.

Science is truth by analogy. Art is truth by metaphor. Resonating together, they are the New Synthesis.

A New Humanism Beyond Prescriptive Narrative

The social relationships necessitated and maintained by the advent of agriculture have been a central component of structuring human society for over 10,000 years. Seriously considered, the concept of the End of the Age of Agriculture is highly consequential and requires a deeply thoughtful and thorough re-examination of the essential assumptions of our institutions and their evolutionary direction.

A philosophy based on our evidentiary knowledge of evolution and our consequential place in nature can provide a basis for the development of the order of consciousness necessary to overcome the virulent metaphorical forms of tribalism such as racism, nationalism and religion. Overcoming this socially atavistic, dangerous reliance is exigent given the advent of nuclear weapons.

Modern humans have evidently demonstrated a deep historical sense of awe manifested in perception of the sublime and the sacred.

Tribalism, metaphorically transformed and self-inflated by myths of monopolized divine favour, thrived through the Age of Agriculture by prescriptive narrative. Prescriptive narrative, so used, perpetuated the rule and continuous reward system of the warrior class. In spite of the Enlightenment in the West, this system remained extant through the terrible resurgence in the 20th century until it was finally and abruptly ended among technologically advanced nations by the deterrence of nuclear war.

Art provides a means to experience the sacred beyond prescriptive narrative.

Prescriptive narrative will continue to yield ethical as well as analogical solutions for specifically identified localized systems.

However, a new philosophy for the end of the age of agriculture cannot overcome tribalism if it attempts to become universal prescriptive narrative.

Judgments made with the weight of individual conscience encourage the evolution of consciousness and reduce our atavistic dependence on ideologies and other dogma.

2010 Company of Ideas Forum Proceedings

The 2010 Company of Ideas Forum tracked the history of the rewards of armed conflict between human social groups from the advent of agriculture through the advent of nuclear weapons. Specifically, the Forum examined effects of the rewards to the ruler-warrior class of ever intensifying warfare, which accompanied agriculture, on the evolution of the structure of human social groups.

Agriculture, which allowed for predictable surpluses of food and thus increased populations, greatly changed the reward calculus for war as a social strategy. Through successful invasion and possession of agriculturally productive territory, enslavement or extermination of competing individuals, and capturing other militarily or economically important resources, war could be rewarding to the successful competitor.

These inter-societal competitive demands supported the rise of a specialized warrior class that in turn made the concentration of power for the purposes of controlling and regulating intra-societal behaviour necessary and possible.

In the age of agriculture, rapidly expandable social groups could no longer be regulated through biologically conscribed direct or extended reproductive relationships. In order to retain social cohesion, larger populations developed tribal myths of shared provenance. Throughout this age, the agricultural ruler-warrior class used these tribal myths to both secure the peaceful obedience of enlarged societies, as well as motivate the self-sacrifices necessary for continuous states of war.

Among the most powerful justifications of tribal rule and ascendancy was a narrative of monopolized divine favour. In transferring to themselves control of the perhaps innate human capacity for the perception of the sublime and need for the sacred, the agricultural ruler-warrior class harnessed a force to motivate and justify perpetual warfare.

The ever intensifying and self-reinforcing cycles of technological and demographic development during the age of agriculture reached a point of absurdity at the military-economic zenith of nuclear technology. War between nuclear-armed societies did not entail a reward to the ruler-warrior class in the same sense as during the previous age of agriculture. The “rewards” of nuclear war can only be measured in terms of the least negative consequences of varying degrees of strategic assured destruction. As such, nuclear weapons have changed the nature of war between culturally dominant societies and thus the structure of the rewards system.

In the age of agriculture, greater military power was a driver of human cultural change, spreading genes and memes to those with less power through force, or by inspiring reactive social emulation or innovation. Nuclear technology changed the ruler-warrior class calculus of the rewards of war, thus initiating a fundamental change in dynamic of cultural evolution.

Jeffrey Rubinoff, in his 2008 statement of the insights that have evolved with and from his work, has called this point in history the “End of the Age of Agriculture”:

“The domestication of animals is believed to have begun 13,000 years ago. However, with crop cultivation 9,000-10,000 years ago, a large majority of the population was required to be

bound to the land. Cultivation leads to the first continuously settled villages and to civilization itself.

Security and continuity, rationalized by predictable food production, originated specialized political, civil, religious, and military institutions. Institutionalizing a warrior class was the most dangerous necessity of this social sea change. If the military were not directed outward, it would threaten the stability of the non-military institutions. Thus, a constant state of war became inevitable, and indeed the history of city-states and empires appears to confirm perpetual states of war.

The feasibility of escalating war has become absurd with the advent of strategic bombing and nuclear weapons. No military institutions can claim to guarantee security of territory.

Moreover, at the end of the age of agriculture only a minute fraction of the population is required to produce the current surpluses of food and thus the fundamental assumptions of the age of agriculture, security of territory as the means to secure food production, must be revised to the era of global vulnerability.”

— Jeffrey Rubinoff 2008

Agreeing with Rubinoff's insights, 2009 Company of Ideas Forum speaker Dr. Foss stated:

“[b]oth forms of human organization, the tribe and the state (the latter being the expression of the agricultural requirement of territory), persist today. ... [however] neither the tribe nor its territory can be preserved, much less enlarged, by nuclear warfare. ... Warfare is impossible precisely because unrestricted conflict entails nuclear weapons, but nuclear weapons cannot possibly gain the fruits of war: winning more territory for one’s tribe, one’s kinsmen, one’s fellow citizens. To put it bluntly, neither the rulers nor their generals can get out of the line of fire, and so they have lost their enthusiasm for war. ... When you see them doing this, you are witnessing the end of agriculture.”

— Dr. Jeffrey E. Foss, Professor of Philosophy University of Victoria

Commenting on the effects of the End of the Age of Agriculture on the evolution of human culture, Rubinoff recalls that for the first time in history, humanity had to cope with the potential, total existential threat of nuclear war. He argues that the ending of this age influenced globally dominant cultures because it generated a widespread belief that humanity had no future; that it would inevitably perish in a nuclear World War III.

His contention is that the consequences of not coming to terms with the reality of nuclear war was a half century of cultural lethargy, which he terms cultivated ignorance. He argues that a seriously retrograde manifestation of this was the advent of Postmodernism in Art, and then subsequently in philosophy.

Rubinoff diagnoses this cultivated ignorance as originating in the arts with the failure of artists during the cold war to evolve their own consciousness to the level of maturity we must assume of those that developed, controlled and eventually restrained the use of the global nuclear arsenal. Postmodern artists, and Pop art which was their dominant American postwar convention, could not contribute to an expanded cultural understanding of the new reality that science had evolved.

Company of Ideas Forum speaker, Jenni Pace-Presnell concurs:

“... [It] becomes clear that Pop art did not function to extend consciousness. ... As Rubinoff has suggested, Pop art, the newly re-formed art market and museum world, as well as the new educational curricula engendered by postmodernism, deny the artist’s imperative to extend consciousness. Pop art ... as it quickly circulated to a mass audience, was essentially regressive. For all the reasons and in all the ways discussed here, Pop artists failed to address the threat of nuclear winter. Their virtual autonomy in the 1960s and the long-lasting resonance of their ideas and methods, have lead to atrophy. The Pop artists failed to evolve new institutions after 1962, and their ideas have perhaps never been more deeply entrenched than they are in 2009.”

— Jenni Pace-Presnell PhD Candidate in Art History University of British Columbia

What is evident is that the predicted ‘nuclear holocaust’ and ‘nuclear winter’ did not occur, at least as it was conceptualized during the cold war. However, Rubinoff argues that more importantly, the legacy of nuclear winter still exists in the minds of those that formulated their worldview during that period, and in the minds of the generation that was educated by them. As he contends, this ‘nuclear winter of the mind’ had the consequence of denying a key part of what make our species unique: the ability to plan and effect our own future. In contrast to this, a belief in the ability of the human mind and culture to evolve is inherent in the spirit of early modernism. It is this spirit that Rubinoff seeks to revive through the example of his work.

As Rubinoff states, the purpose of his work is to “extend the ancient narrative of art and consequently rekindle the historical spirit of modernism.” The purpose of the Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park is to revive the interdisciplinary creative impetus of early modernism and to attain the understanding of art as a serious and credible source of special insight for the evolution of ideas.

To that end, the 2010 Company of Ideas forum confronted the history both at the beginning and End of the Age of Agriculture. Invited speakers presentations on addressed this history as follows:

- **Art from the Upper Paleolithic to the beginning of the age of agriculture**
In his presentation entitled “Art Beyond War: A Discussion About Prehistoric War and the History of Art by Artists,” Jeffrey Rubinoff, and makes the case that there is no evidence of war in the cave art of the Upper Paleolithic, prior to the beginning of the age of agriculture. The work of ancient artists uncovered thus far does not support an interpretation that humans are “hardwired for war genetically.”
- **World War I, key turning point toward the end of the age of agriculture**
Dr. Jay Winter’s presentation entitled, “The Lost Generation of the First World War: The Suicide of the Military Caste,” argued that a major turning point in the history leading up to the End of the Age of Agriculture was the unintended suicide, during the first world war, of the landed warrior class of the highly developed European imperial powers. He argues that it was the extent of the industrialized slaughters of the “Great War” made possible the horrors of World War II, which Rubinoff argues finally ended the age of agriculture.
- **Nuclear weapons, nuclear winter and the finality of the End of the Age of Agriculture**
Dr. Lawrence Badash’s presentation entitled, “Nuclear Winter and the End of the Age of Agriculture,” outlines the scientific history of the development and use of nuclear weapons, which Rubinoff argues finally ends the age of agriculture. Badash argues that the discovery in 1983 of the potential for even a limited nuclear war to trigger a ‘Nuclear Winter,’ makes the

development of social and political institutions to avoid such a calamity urgently necessary.

After confronting and understanding the history of age of agriculture, the Forum turned to the task of mapping a way forward beyond the End of the Age of Agriculture. Rubinoff contends that only way to move beyond this age is to overcome metaphorical tribalism and to get to what he terms “A New Humanism Beyond Prescriptive Narrative”.

As he states:

“The social relationships necessitated and maintained by the advent of agriculture have been a central component of structuring human society for over 10,000 years. Seriously considered, the concept of the End of the Age of Agriculture is highly consequential and requires a deeply thoughtful and thorough re-examination of the essential assumptions of our institutions and their evolutionary direction.

A philosophy based on our evidentiary knowledge of evolution and our consequential place in nature can provide a basis for the development of the order of consciousness necessary to overcome the virulent metaphorical forms of tribalism such as racism, nationalism and religion. Overcoming this socially atavistic, dangerous reliance is exigent given the advent of nuclear weapons.

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— Jeffrey Rubinoff 2009

To address these issues, the 2010 Company of Ideas forum invited speakers to begin to outline a pathway for humanity beyond the End of the Age of Agriculture.

- **Propositions for a new Humanism beyond prescriptive narrative**

Dr. Jeffrey Foss's presentation entitled, "A New Pan-global Humanism Beyond the Age of Agriculture," argues that the escalation of tribal conflicts that brought about the End of the Age of Agriculture, culminated in an armed standoff he terms "quasi-peace." Foss argues for a set of potential "doors" through which humanity may evolve the consciousness necessary for pan-human political entity that could bring about true global peace.

- **The role of art in the development of human consciousness**

Jenni Pace-Presnell's presentation entitled, "The Artist and the New Humanism: an Evolutionary Model for Art History," argues that art has the power to shape consciousness: that the "image precedes the idea." Her argument rests on the work of Herbert Read, who locates key turning points in the evolution of human consciousness in its externalized artistic forms from the beginning of the Age of Agriculture into the post-World War II period. Pace-Presnell thus argues for the perception of art as a major contributor to the evolution of human consciousness, in opposition to post-modern art theory which holds that "art will not change human actions."

- **Non-prescriptive narrative of the human condition**

Karun Koernig's presentation entitled, "Cultivating cognizance at the End of the Age of Agriculture," argues that the ignorance of the post-boomer generation to the industrialized slaughters of the 20th century can be partly explained by the postmodern reaction to the prescriptive social science narrative about "absolute truth". Koernig argues that consciousness must evolve beyond claims of absolute truth to address the value tensions that underlie the human condition. Koernig argues that artists who so choose, are in a position to do this without resorting to the dangerous prescriptive narrative of absolute truth.

Biographies of 2010 Company of Ideas Forum Speakers

Dr. Jay Winter – Yale University

Jay M. Winter, the Charles J. Stille Professor of History, is a specialist on World War I and its impact on the 20th century. His other interests include remembrance of war in the 20th century, such as memorial and mourning sites, European population decline, the causes and institutions of war, British popular culture in the era of the Great War and the Armenian genocide of 1915.

Winter is the author or co-author of a dozen books, including: *Socialism and the Challenge of War, Ideas and Politics in Britain, 1912-18*; *The Great War and the British People*; *The Fear of Population Decline*; *The Experience of World War I*; *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*; *1914-1918: The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century*; *Remembering War: The Great War between History and Memory in the 20th Century*; and *Dreams of Peace and Freedom: Utopian Moments in the 20th Century*.

Winter earned BA from Columbia University and his PhD and DLitt degrees from Cambridge University. He taught at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the University of Warwick and the University of Cambridge before joining the faculty of Columbia University in 2000 and then the Yale faculty one year later. At Yale, his courses include lectures on Europe in the age of total war, and on modern British history, as well as seminars on history and memory and European identities.

Dr. Lawrence Badash – University of California, Santa Barbara

Lawrence Badash received a B.S. in physics from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 1956, and a Ph.D. in history of science from Yale University in 1964. He is Professor Emeritus of History of Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he taught for thirty-six years. He has been a NATO Postdoctoral Science Fellow at Cambridge University, a Guggenheim Fellow, Visiting Professor of International Studies at Meiji Gakuin University in Yokohama, Director of the University of California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation's Summer Seminar on Global Security and Arms Control, a lecturer on the nuclear arms race at the Inter-University Center of Postgraduate Studies in Dubrovnik, Croatia, a Council member of the History of Science Society, a Member-at-Large of the Section on History and Philosophy of Science of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and a member of the Executive Committee of the Forum on Physics and Society of the American Physical Society. Badash is a Fellow of the American Physical Society and of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

His research is centered on the physical sciences of the past century, especially the development of radioactivity and nuclear physics; on the role of scientists in the nuclear arms race; and on the interaction of science and society. Badash has authored or edited six books, including *Radioactivity in America*; *Kapitza, Rutherford and the Kremlin*; *Scientists and the Development of Nuclear Weapons*, and *Reminiscences of Los Alamos 1943-1945*. Several months ago MIT press recently published *A Nuclear Winter's Tale: Science and Politics in the 1980s*.

Jenni Pace-Presnell – PhD Candidate, University of British Columbia

Jenni Pace Presnell earned a master's degree in art history from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and she is currently a doctoral student in art and architectural history at UBC. Her academic interests include: city planning and social housing, particularly British and French colonial design; orientalist art history; the history of public institutions including museums and libraries; and, museum collecting and stewardship. Jenni will be in residence at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in early 2010.

Dr. Jeffrey E. Foss – University of Victoria

Jeffrey Foss has a Ph. D., in Philosophy. He is currently a Professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Victoria. He is the Associate Editor of Philosophy in Review and a freelance writer for the Globe and Mail Toronto, reviewing books on the brain, the mind and consciousness. His major intellectual interests are the Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Mind and Philosophy of Nature. He has written numerous publications in scholarly journals, and most recently published a book called: Beyond Environmentalism: A Philosophy of Nature. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons (2009).

Karun Koernig – Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park Company of Ideas Forum Director

Karun Koernig has held the position of Activities Director for the Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park for the past 3 years. For the past several years he has worked with UN-HABITAT headquarters in Nairobi to establish an entrepreneurship, environment and most recently arts programmes for urban youth. For the past 15 years he has been the Senior Manager of the Environmental Youth Alliance International Division, managing micro-enterprise development projects for youth in the slums of Nairobi. He also founded consultancy in Vancouver, BC that focuses on environmental training and auditing. Karun Koernig graduated with honours from Simon Fraser University, where he majored in Political Science.

Jeffrey Rubinoff, B.A., M.F.A. – Chair, The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

May 2010 COI Forum Agenda

Friday May 21, 2010

- 3:00-5:30 pm Check in available at Sea Breeze Lodge
- 7:00 pm Dinner at Sea Breeze Lodge

Saturday May 22, 2010

- 8:30-10:00 am Informal welcome and continental breakfast at JRSP
- 9:00-10:00 am Tour of early work by Jeffrey Rubinoff
- 10:00-10:30 am Formal opening of the Company of Ideas Forum and Introduction of speakers
- 10:30-1:00 pm 40 min Mr. Koernig presentation "Cultivating cognizance at the End of the Age of Agriculture" Dialogue (30 min) and break (20 min)
- 1:00-2:00 pm Lunch is served
- 2:00-3:10 pm 40 min Ms. Pace Presnell presentation "The Artist and the New Humanism: an Evolutionary Model for Art History" Dialogue (30 min)
- 3:10-4:40 Break (30 min)
- 4:40-5:50 pm 40 min Dr. Foss presentation "A New Pan-global Humanism Beyond the Age of Agriculture" Dialogue (30 min)
- 5:50-6:00 pm Closing of day one
- 6:45 pm Dinner at Sea Breeze Lodge
- 9:00 – 10:00 pm Check out of Sea Breeze Lodge

Sunday May 23, 2010

- 9:00-10:00 am Continental breakfast at JRSP
- 10:00-11:30 am 40 min Dr. Winter presentation "The Lost Generation of the First World War: The Suicide of the Military Caste" Dialogue (30 min) and break (20 min)
- 11:30-12:40 40 minute Dr. Badash presentation of "Nuclear Winter and the End of the Age of Agriculture" Dialogue (30 min)
- 12:40-1:40 pm Lunch is served (books are presented)
- 1:40-2:40 pm 30 min Mr. Rubinoff presentation "Art Beyond War" Dialogue (30 min)
- 2:40-4:00 pm Jeffrey Rubinoff tour of late work
- 2:40-4:00 pm Observers are welcome to stay and peruse displayed books and materials
- 4:00-4:30 pm Formal closing of the Forum

Introduction to the Company of Ideas Forum

by Jeffrey Rubinoff

I have been asked two important questions about this year's Company of Ideas forum: "What does war have to do with art?" And from my friend and artist Susan Cain: "How do your ideas manifest themselves in your work?"

In answering the first question, I have stated that artists map the human soul. I consider the soul to be the sum of all human knowledge. The artist works at the limits perceived to be the extent of that knowledge in a given time.

War has so permeated the ten thousand year history of agriculture and dominated the five thousand year history of civilization that it is impossible to map the human soul without navigating it. Navigating the hazards of war itself is the intent of this forum.

The second question is somewhat more complicated. I have argued that original art is not limited to a reflection of culture that is contemporary to it. During the Age of Agriculture—until liberated by the Enlightenment (and then only in measured steps)—the extent of all human knowledge was controlled by the privileged. Only the elite few were literate. The priesthood set the limits of the extent of human knowledge. The narrative of culture was both prescriptive and proscriptive. This served to perpetuate the rule of the warrior class very well.

For my generation of artists, culture was defined by marketing. The art market defined originality as novelty. I realized that to make original art with artistic depth I would have to return to the lineage of the ancestors—the history of art by artists. So began a dialogue with the ancestors, artist to artist via the work itself.

What I learned was that to be able to measure the inherent value of an artist's work is to be able to accept each artist's perception of the extent of the sum of all human knowledge in that artist's time. Original art is created beyond the limits of that extent and informs rather than reflects.

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Consequently, original art itself becomes located on the map of the human soul and in so doing adds to the sum of all human knowledge. Original art and the human soul evolve together.

Cultivating cognizance at the End of the Age of Agriculture

By Karun Koernig

Presented at

The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

MAY 2010 COMPANY OF IDEAS FORUM

Synopsis of Karun Koernig's Paper

Karun Koernig's presentation entitled, "Cultivating cognizance at the End of the Age of Agriculture," argues that the ignorance of the post-boomer generation to the industrialized slaughters of the 20th century can be partly explained by the postmodern reaction to the prescriptive social science narrative about "absolute truth." Mr. Koernig argues that consciousness must evolve beyond claims of absolute truth to address the value tensions that underlie the human condition. Mr. Koernig argues that artists who so choose, are in a position to do this without resorting to the dangerous prescriptive narrative of absolute truth.

This essay is available at <http://www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org/coi/2010Koernig.pdf>

Summary of the Dialogue

Dr. Jay Winter commented that this Forum is an exciting moment for the consideration of other measures of historical narrative. He noted, in response to Karun Koernig's essay, that Post-modernism indeed undermines the idea of totalitarian prescriptive narrative, but in the end leaves us without the means to tell history as a human story. Dr. Lawrence Badash comments that in his experience there always has been a very small proportion of the population interested and engaged with their own history. The vast majority he says, have "marginal knowledge and even less interest." Dr. Jeffrey Foss counters that for his generation there might have been a purposeful cultivation of ignorance towards war in general. He reports that ignorance of war was the specific desire of his parents. Rubinoff turns the discussion towards a consideration of the role of social science in government, commenting that by and large it is the practice of governance by non-evidentiary theories of society. By their nature such theories are rooted in prescriptive narrative, which eventually wind up espousing some form of absolute truth, with all its attendant consequences. Jenni Pace Presnell comments that in her experience teaching art appreciation classes, students often glibly state that the purpose of learning history is to avoid the mistakes of the past. However, she rarely if ever hears an admission that the past events shape current modes of thought and action. Koernig adds that one can only come to terms with history by taking responsibility for its implications for the future, not by reliving past tragedies. Rubinoff warns that it is very dangerous to use art for redemptive purposes, because it can easily turn into a shortcut around truly confronting and answering to the meaning of a personal or collective history. Leba Haber Rubinoff offers an example of a socially redemptive art project in which prisoners wanted to create a mural for display outside of the prison. She commented that victims didn't want the prisoners to be redeemed, but that their collaboration was a very interesting process in and of itself. She argues that it was not art, but a form of cultural development. Dr. Winter commented that the concept of redemptive art and a non-prescriptive narrative for art are fundamentally incompatible. Rubinoff, comments that while he is not opposed to socially redemptive art, it is just not the evolution that is required to propel us beyond prescriptive narrative. Prescriptive narrative inevitably argues some form of absolute truth, which has often led to war. The purpose of finding a non-prescriptive narrative in art is to deal with the persistent issue of war in human society at the End of the Age of Agriculture.

Key excerpts of the dialogue

On remembrance as a means of measuring oneself in terms of history

“... I take the challenge here to make art dialogic with the past. That’s what I take it to be, that post modernism has basically frozen itself into some degree of concrete by not recognizing that it too has a history, and is history. Or maybe I should add, was history, at one point in time. I think an effort in remembrance in art is not turning your back on the past but finding ways to measure yourself in terms of it. ...I really think that this is an exciting moment for the construction of ... different measures of the construction of narratives about the past, the violent past, which unfortunately in most of the world is still going on quite happily. Whether we’ve distanced ourselves from it is another matter. So, I’m hopeful, and I see the effort here, and I’m very grateful for the invitation to come, as a very positive step.” — Dr. Jay Winter

On postmodernism as the self-annihilating attack on meta-narratives

“[Postmodernism is] the attack and assault on the totalitarian character of metanarratives, of master narratives of existence stated in many different forms, but they came in response to the evident failure of what might be described as a national project in which nations ... came in one after the other into national consciousness and wound up in the Nazi experience in which the hopeful and dynamic belief in liberation through the working class turned into Stalin, and ... in which the notion of humanity having some decent restraints on barbarity became utterly contradicted by Auschwitz. So, it’s the explosion of metanarratives in which the concept of human values, words that Karun used, were discredited. And I believe that from the 1980s and 1990s that interpretation in philosophy and in the art that I know of (I always speak hesitantly) is rather tired and repetitive. And there have been many individuals, you know better than I, who have gone beyond this cul de sac. It had something to say, but after a while silence is more or less what it offers, rather than anything else. ... It’s the idea that history is not a story, and if you tell a story you’re totalitarian.” — Dr. Jay Winter

On the lack of engagement of the general population with history

“I think that 5 percent of the population is on the far left, 5 percent is on the far right, and the other 90 percent don’t give a damn. They are the people who are not politically involved, not intellectually involved, and so you have a very limited number of people, or a fraction of the population, who are interested. The vast majority of the rest don’t know their history. They don’t care about their history. For a number of decades at the University of California, Santa Barbara, I taught a fairly popular course that I called, “The Atomic Age.” It was about the history of the nuclear arms race. And I remember, say in the 1990s, I would say something about Ronald Regan, and the students would say, “Who?” Now, he may have been out of office for a few years, but these students had no concept that this was a fairly recent and significant president, and for them if they knew the name he was simply an historical figure. ... These are people who have marginal knowledge and even less interest. “ — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On the purposeful cultivation of ignorance of war

“You say this ignorance of this reality has been cultivated, and what I remember was that it was purposely cultivated by my parents in me. I was turned into a flower child, and it wasn’t just my parents, but they wanted to forget the damn war. My dad, of course, dragged me out every November 11. We would remember it on the day it was to be remembered. But the thought was, you guys should live without the thought of war and without the fear of war. You should look towards the future, yes, and you should look towards the future in which peace is conceived as a possibility and is something you live. And one way to stop war is to forget the grudges and bury the hatchets. So, I think there was an explicit turning that way. ... Now, I think the last generation did try in a lot of ways to make us ignore it. I think we should return to it, but we don’t want to remember it in its full pain and agony.” — Dr. Jeffrey Foss

On purging government of social science

“I’d like to address something that Karun has said, that I think we haven’t touched on strongly enough, and that is integration of social science with government and how the prescriptive narratives that are based on theory...especially after Marx...and studying theoretical models of history that have no evidential basis. ... And so what we’ve had in government is a lot of non-evidential paradigms that come from social science, that end up confusing many issues of truth. And I think that’s part of something that hasn’t been discussed enough, on how to actually purge it. In the time of the enlightenment there was no such thing as social science. They said, ‘We have history to learn from. We have evidence to learn from...’ ...Whereas, once you arrive at social science you get paradigms that are done without the evidence of them being necessarily true. ... So, how to purge government of social sciences is a very important question.” — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the acknowledging that the events of the past shape current thought and action

“I have taught some forty, fifty art appreciation classes at this point, and we start with prehistory. And I always start with that question of ‘What do we stand to benefit from looking at all this old stuff?’ And most students at this point will give me the clichéd response, ‘Oh, so we don’t repeat the mistakes of the past,’ and they’re really smug and happy that they say that. But I almost never hear anybody that feeds into the idea about reconciliation. I almost never hear anybody give me a really honest response that there’s some acknowledgment that, events of the past shape the way we think and interact with each other.” — Jenni Pace Presnell

Coming to terms with history as moral responsibility for the future

“Coming to terms with history is taking responsibility for it, but not as in a ‘remembering the agony and being immersed in it forever’, because actually I don’t know that that really serves us in the long term. ... But it’s taking the responsibility of the meaning of history for us. ... Having the luxury of the ability to think on and come to terms with it, we must then take responsibility for it. My generation needs to be pushing on the outer edge now, of what that moral responsibility means for human evolution? ... I mean moral responsibility to the future, not only for the past. So, that’s what’s important, and so if you just are ignorant of it and you have a flat, thin understanding of

society ... that's what I meant by social theory. And social theory is very seductive to young people because it is comparatively so easy." — Karun Koernig

On the danger of the idea of art being redemptive

"You have to be very careful about art, because it gives a sense of redemptive or therapeutic qualities that we're trying to avoid. ... The redemptive qualities are extremely dangerous because it gives the idea that you've redeemed yourself when in fact you haven't answered any of the particular questions that you need to face existentially in facing yourself. So, I would be very cautious about the idea of art being redemptive." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

One case study of the conflict over the desire for redemption through art

"I just was in Philadelphia working at this organization called the Mural Arts Project, and they had a really interesting situation. They work with prisoners in a maximum-security prison, and the prisoners wanted to make a redemptive mural in the community. [However when asked], the victims almost unanimously said that they didn't want to do it and that they were really uncomfortable. And a lot of the prisoners who were in the prison were in prison for life, for murder. ... And in the end they, the prisoners, made this design for the mural, and the victims said it only represented the prisoners. They really didn't like it. And in the end, they decided to do two murals that faced each other. ... But what I thought was interesting about it, was the victims' decision that they didn't want the prisoners to be redeemed through the work, and that the prisoners were so desperate to have a voice outside of the prison space. ... It's not that I thought that it was art, but that I thought that the process was very, very compelling, because they had to work together. The victims went to the prison, and they worked on both murals together, and they had to have a conversation in the process of it." — Leba Rubinoff

On the incompatibility of redemptive and non-prescriptive narrative

"[Redemption through art] does make difficult the concept of non-prescriptive art that Jeffrey [Rubinoff] is talking about, and I think this is a fundamental question of what do you choose between the two? You can't have them both. I really think that one contradicts the other."
— Dr. Jay Winter

On the possibility of non-prescriptive narrative in art

"The concept of non-prescriptive art or non-prescriptive narrative, sets art independent of these prescriptive narratives. So socially redemptive art—I'm not opposed to it—but it's just not the world that I'm talking about. And so this aspect of what this proposal...raises is non-prescriptive narrative. ... So, part of the purpose of this is to arrive at a position ... of a non-prescriptive narrative, as it seems that almost always, prescriptive narratives—as we know them—end in war. So, no matter what happens, you're going to end up arguing some factor of absolute truth...and gradually you're going to degenerate to that particular position. So, the desire of finding a non-prescriptive narrative is to deal with the issues of war themselves. So, if it's possible to arrive at a

non-prescriptive narrative, then it's also possible we can conceive of getting past war, and I don't think we can conceive of getting past war until we do get to non-prescriptive narrative. That's how all of this ties together. ..." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

**The Artist and the New Humanism:
an Evolutionary Model for Art History**
By Jenni Pace Presnell

Presented at
The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park
MAY 2010 COMPANY OF IDEAS FORUM

Synopsis of Jenni Pace Presnell's Paper

Jenni Pace-Presnell's presentation entitled, "The Artist and the New Humanism: an Evolutionary Model for Art History," argues that art has the power to shape consciousness: that the "image precedes the idea." Her argument rests on the work of Herbert Read, who locates key turning points in the evolution of human consciousness in its externalized artistic forms from the beginning of the Age of Agriculture into the post-World War II period. Pace-Presnell thus argues for the perception of art as a major contributor to the evolution of human consciousness, in opposition to post-modern art theory which holds that "art will not change human actions."

This essay is available at <http://www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org/coi/2010Pace-Presnell.pdf>

Summary of the Dialogue

Dr. Jay Winter starts the dialogue by questioning the origins of Read's conception that the image comes before the idea. Dr. Jeffrey Foss offers that this concept has ancient Greek provenance, which held that the pure form of an object enters our mind, through its visual image, and becomes an abstract idea independent of particular permutations of that form. This, Dr. Foss says, contrasts with our current understanding that a word (or symbol) conjures up many concrete images from which we choose the subjectively most relevant. Karun Koernig asks Dr. Winter to expand on a conversation they had about the insights of neuroscience on our conception of memory. Dr. Winter explains that the neurophysiologic view of memory is a collage which changes with each recall, and that the old metaphor of the mind as a computer databank is obsolete. Jeffrey Rubinoff proposes that we also add to our discussion of memory the concept of evolutionary and aesthetic memory. Dr. Winter counters that adding categories just illustrates the impossibility of defining a collective memory. Rubinoff offers his definition of collective memory as the total knowledge of the human beings, only the extents of which can be known. This differs from same term that Dr. Winter has adapted from sociologist Maurice Halbwachs. Dr. Lawrence Badash asks about the context of Read's ideas, and how he was received by other artists of his time. Melba Dalsin comments that sculptor Henry Moore was very supportive of Read's work in the mid 1950's, and Read considered Moore the 'pinnacle of artistic achievement.' Rubinoff points to another current in 1953: the propaganda battle for the cultural allegiance of Europeans between the US and Soviets during the cold war. Read, a European was legitimating American Abstract Expressionism, as the concomitant of the kind of modern social order America had and was fighting for. Rubinoff points out that this cultural struggle underlined the history of the contentious transition of visual art into abstraction, one that musicians made without much controversy. In music the transition to abstraction was enabled by the characteristics of instruments that evolved to the stage of enabling layered contrapuntal composition. He also pointed to the contrast of this to the history of visual art, in which illustrations were used to give permanence and thus immortality to those ruling class patrons of artists. The visual arts were historically part of the system that maintained the immortality and thus right to rule of the warrior class, and thus had a terrible time transitioning out of prescriptive narrative.

Key excerpts of the dialogue

On interrogating Read's notion that perception comes before conception

"First, I wonder where does Read get the notion that perception comes before conception, that image comes before idea? It's so arresting and so challenging and, in some ways, so perverse, that I wonder where it comes from." — Dr. Jay Winter

On ancient and modern conceptions of how the image relates to the idea

"About the notion that the image comes before the idea ... that this is something that has an ancient history. ... Let's take the Ancient Greeks, for example ... The notion was that we are informed—that is the form of the thing has come into us. ... What's in our head, we want to say, is pictures. Ideas are pictures. And then the thought comes that ideas themselves are somehow or other abstractions from those original pictures. ... This was replaced, about the time of the British empiricists by David Hume. ... That is, the word "dog" as a sound, calls into your mind various images of dogs, and then you will pick the one that seems most relevant. ... This is the modern notion. So the image comes into the mind as the form of the object, leaving behind its matter but containing its form. And then that image itself is the stuff out of which ideas are constructed."
— Dr. Jeffrey Foss

Question on the insights of neurobiology on our concept of memory

"Jay Winter and I had a conversation on the ferry about memory as a collage, Jay I wonder if you could maybe expand on the advances in neurobiology that have changed our conception of memory." — Karun Koernig

On neuroscience seeing memory as a collage

"The notion of memory as a computer data bank is totally discredited by neurophysiology. Most of the neurophysiologic research is about the associative collage. It's bringing different senses to bear upon the reconstruction of an event which always changes at every reconstruction. Every memory is different from every previous one. So the old computer metaphor is just completely out the window among scientists." — Dr. Jay Winter

On proposing a category of aesthetic and evolutionary memory

"But that was something that I wanted to raise from one of your three forms of memory. I wanted to add aesthetic memory. I also wanted to add evolutionary memory." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the impossibility of talking about collective memory

“But the more levels we get, I think the more likely it is that we appreciate the sheer impossibility of talking about collective memory.” — Dr. Jay Winter

On the notion of collective memory as the total memory of human beings

“What I mean by collective memory is the sum of total human knowledge that makes up the human soul... The artist who is mapping it or moving it in evolution is actually *effecting* the universal knowledge base for all of human beings. It moves forward, and it’s not fixed in time. It moves forward and grows. It evolves.” — Jeffrey Rubinoff

Questioning the reactions of other artists to Read’s ideas

“Read was a philosopher or historian of art. Can you give us some idea of how his ideas were received by artists? Did artists react to the things he was saying about their occupation?”
— Dr. Lawrence Badash

An example of a relationship Read had with sculptor Henry Moore

“In response to your question about how artists responded to what Herbert Read was doing and the ideas that he was putting forward. One artist in particular, the sculptor Henry Moore and Herbert Read were great friends and proponents of each other’s work. They really supported one another. And Read really held Moore and his work up as sort of a pinnacle of artistic achievement and did a lot to further his career and promote him.” — Melba Dalsin

On the relation of political and art historical context of Read’s argument to its purpose

“This was the lecture in 1953, wasn’t it? Part of it is, there was a very painful transition that art went through for about five different reasons. But two of the major ones are that Europe collapsed and by 1945 America became the ascendant culture. And Americans weren’t much interested in art at all. Read brought a legitimacy to American abstractionism, not the least because he came from England. So he knew what he was doing—giving the panoply of art history to the then publicized avant-garde American art. If he couldn’t prove that Sam Francis and Jackson Pollock et al were at the apex of the evolution of art, then he had no future either. ...” — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the historical basis of the differences in the transition of music and art into art abstraction

“What was a very painful transition for visual art seems to be significantly less painful in music: to move from a liturgy or a pictorial or a verbal or a storytelling narrative in music, into the abstract world. Musicians managed to make transitions that didn’t seem to have caused a major argument among their patrons. ... But nobody seemed to think that this was a very significant problem, partly because they were using prosthetics. ... The composers made their living from ... selling their

written music to patrons who ... as adults could generally sing no more than three notes. So they, in turn, bought the written music to be able to play it on instruments. Somehow that was acceptable, and that happened over a couple of hundred years. ...

As instruments developed so that they actually could tune them to play with each other and achieve a tonic ... and play them in tune and keep them in tune, then we get this great expansion of layered music that is totally abstract. And you can add singers and narrative or not. It doesn't really matter. For one thing, if you don't understand the language it's being sung in, it's just another voice within the music itself... That evolution does not seem to be painful from our historical viewpoint.

For the visual arts, this is a very tricky business. The very tricky business for the visual artist began with illustration. That's what you got paid for: the innate ability to draw and reproduce something. ... So the ability to illustrate did something that was very important to anyone who demanded permanence. The artists gave permanence through drawing and sculpting to the warrior ruling class. And by giving them permanence, they also gave them immortality. And that immortality was all part of the system of maintaining the oligarchic structure. No matter where that structure happened to be, perception of immortality maintained the right to rule. ...

So this has been a terrible transition because once visual art became abstract, it didn't matter whether there were figures in it or not figures in it, whether there were patterns in it or not patterns in it. That just simply doesn't matter. It's, 'Does it work as art?' This is now the artists' serious question, not the patrons' quest for their own permanence." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

A New Global Humanism Beyond the Age of Agriculture: Pan-Humanism

By Dr. Jeffrey E. Foss

Presented at

The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

MAY 2010 COMPANY OF IDEAS FORUM

Synopsis of Dr. Jeffrey Foss' Paper

Dr. Jeffrey Foss's essay entitled, "A New Pan-global Humanism Beyond the Age of Agriculture," argues that the escalation of tribal conflicts that brought about the End of the Age of Agriculture, culminated in an armed standoff he terms "quasi-peace." Foss argues for a set of potential "doors" through which humanity may evolve the consciousness necessary for pan-human political entity, Panopolis, that could bring about true global peace.

This essay is available at <http://www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org/coi/2010Foss.pdf>

Summary of the Dialogue

Dr. Jeffrey Foss answered Dr. Lawrence Badash's question on how practically to achieve Panopolis, by stating his preference for it to be based on "cooperation rather than force," pointing to the United Nations and the European Union as promising developments. Dr. Jay Winter points out that there was a counter current to the narrative of national sovereignty within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, he states, little has been done to strengthen the normative conclusion, reached in 1948, that "a nation that violates the rights of its own citizens, will violate those of its neighbours soon enough." Dr. Foss argues in response, that the Hobbesian dynamic at the heart of ever larger political agglomerations has also lead to an expansion individual rights as well. Dr. Winter argued that if human rights are to have any efficacy they must eventually be judged supranationally, that is without recourse to the wishes, or within the control of nation states. He argues that the trade off between sovereignty and individual human rights has not happened yet. Dr. Foss admits that there was indeed a conflict during the founding of the United Nations between the territorial integrity of the state and the rights of individuals. Karun Koernig forwards the proposal that we consider unfixing the concept of the nation from the state. He argues that the concept of nation is a hindrance to the achievement and actualization of human rights, however, recognizes the legitimacy of territorially defined governments. As a concrete step he proposes making English the international language of instruction. Jeffrey Rubinoff argues that nations perceive themselves largely in terms of language, and that the possibility of international human rights and an international lingua franca are linked. Leba Haber Rubinoff added that the internet has made learning English a survival strategy for many. Dr. Winter proposed the counter case of Arabic being a multinational language as well as Chinese which is another global language. Dr. Badash commented that there seems to be no evidence of decreased usage among the Chinese, despite their increasing use of the English language. Dr. Foss argued that it would be better to defend linguistic rights rather than enforce a single global language. Leba Haber Rubinoff noted, that in many countries, it is perfectly normal to speak many languages, and that linguistic diversity and a lingua franca need not be mutually exclusive. On a different point, Dr. Winter argued that the redistribution of material wealth was a necessary condition for the existence of human rights. Jeffrey Rubinoff agreed with Dr. Winter, stating that in Africa insecure land title prevents access to capital that would enable agricultural productivity rises and hence increases in standards of living. Koernig countered that formal human rights have great meaning, in that at least it is legitimate for the individuals to try to protect themselves against the excesses of state power, even if not everyone can actualize that right at any given moment.

Key excerpts of the dialogue

On the emerging international order and the limits to war

“How the international order will develop, I don’t know. I hope on the basis of truth rather than disinformation. I hope on the basis of cooperation rather than force. ... We’re beginning to narrow down the circumstances and the ways in which [war] can be [waged], which we consider to be legitimate. I think these are good things to do. So I’m hopeful about the United Nations, for all its flaws. I’m hopeful about the European Union. I think it’s one of the most exciting things that’s happened. It certainly, to some extent, kept a lid on the violence in that part of the world which was surely the most damaged by technological violence.” — Dr. Jeffrey Foss

On the tension between human rights and the sovereignty of the nation state

“The claim that human rights involve individual freedom has been trumped by a definition of human rights as the restriction on the sovereignty of the nation state. The difference between a European and a North American view of human rights is precisely that. The notion of individual freedom is so deeply ingrained in the American Constitution and Declaration of Independence, and in Canadian documentation, that the choices seem to me to be precisely in door four because you talk about stopping war, but then you’ve got the phrase, “Protects the rights of all human beings,” which you didn’t talk about in there. The link between the first part of that and the second is critical. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights had it in 1948 that those countries that violate the lives of their own citizens will violate the lives of their neighbours soon enough, and that the activity of a sovereign state that feels that the rights of their own citizens can be destroyed, is preparation for the destruction of the rights of the neighbours. We can understand how people came to that conclusion in 1948. But a hell of a long time has gone past, and not much has been done to really turn that claim into more than, I think, normative power.” — Dr. Jay Winter

On the connection between the expanding magnitude of human rights and of political order

“Now, how do we get ... from a global system to human rights? Now, I said there’s no necessary connection. ... There’s no guarantee. ... the first political regimes, though they guaranteed a certain amount of civil order, nevertheless did not guarantee human rights. ... in some ways, order is better than disorder, even at the global level. Now, could we come up with justice? I think the link is this: since, in the end, we have to freely agree to be ruled—I mean I think we really are free, and I think the global order will break down if indeed we feel that we are set upon. We will come to the same calculus that Locke came to. ... I think the same thing will occur—that same dynamic will occur. ... As a matter of empirical fact, the rights of human beings have enlarged over the same period that the Hobbesian dynamic has been at work. That is as the nation states have gotten larger, free countries have emerged, and indeed no democratic nation has ever lost a war when it was fighting against a non-democratic nation. I think in large part—I mean for the same reason you saw what happened in Iraq. People there will cut and run. I mean they have no real allegiance to their state. They don’t trust it. We, on the other hand, have a deeper allegiance to something that we are more voluntarily involved in as a democratic people.” — Dr. Jeffrey Foss

On the incompatibility between national sovereignty and human rights

"I think I'm not satisfied with your answer because you're still working within the framework of a nation state. The concept of human rights is transnational or it's nothing. What you've described within democracies, within Iraq, within Canada, or where else, strikes me as being a dead end because the way in which sovereign states operate is to close themselves off from judgements that are transnational, that are supernational. ... And the claim I'd make, you see, is that the challenge to the human rights agenda, and necessary challenge for the pan-humanist manifesto is to think of, 'Are you, as a Canadian, prepared to sacrifice the sovereignty of your state in the interest of some principle that will be operated by someone you don't choose, someone unelected by you, that may be appointed by another body somewhere, and that might have a great influence over the way you and your children live?' You have to say that, I think, in order to support human rights. You've got to give up national sovereignty. The trade-off is one that hasn't happened yet." — Dr. Jay Winter

On the history of this debate informing the creation of the United Nations

"There's an interesting historical story. I mean there was sort of two United Nations formed in 1948. One was Franklin's and one was Eleanor's, right? And Franklin's nation state respected the integrity of boundaries, of national borders and said, 'We do not intervene in the internal affairs of the nation.' Eleanor's United Nations said, 'No, there's these things called human rights, and the welfare of individuals which have to be held higher than the rights of nation states.' Now, both of these things are still in the United Nations. They're in various parts, various documents in the United Nations. So we have a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We also have declarations about non-intervention within states." — Dr. Jeffrey Foss

On there being no need for the concept of 'nation' to define human rights

"I'm proposing we unfuse the nation and the state. The first thing, would be to make the language of instruction in school one language. I mean this is perhaps a radical suggestion, but drop the nation out of the nation state ... I don't see it as entirely necessary to retain the concept of 'nation' as bound to the territorial community. I think that it's perfectly legitimate to have geographic boundaries and have certain localized prescriptions within those boundaries for whatever traditional reasons. ... So one of the things that I would say, at least from my perception, is that I'm all for jettisoning the nation. For example, I think what Germany should do is make the language of instruction be English. They should just stop being Germans and just be humans, that should be their statement. ... But I think that we should just jettison that whole concept of the nation. We need to become a global federation of states that freely subscribe to a normative regime, because that normative regime is something that each territory is able to buy into, such as with other global conventions on trade, environment etc." — Karun Koernig

On the importance of a lingua franca

"The first and most important question in all of this "What is the lingua franca?" Esperanto tried to do this. It didn't go anywhere. ... But until you deal with the question of language, you're not dealing with the essence of the way that people perceive nationhood. ... Without a lingua franca,

there's no way of even discussing these things, it won't happen. It just simply won't happen. And I hate to say that, but that's just the way that it is, because people will fall back into all of those prejudices that come from the very, root cultural level. ... Are people willing to go there? In many ways English has become it. Well, it's becoming it. And I really think that was Jeff Foss' point last year about the Internet becoming Terra's brain. ... But that's the first step towards two things: the breakdown of the nation, and the possibility of international human rights. I don't think there is a possibility without [a lingua franca]." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the role of the internet in promoting English as a lingua franca

"The Internet, mobile technology. I mean many people who want to do business, even in developing countries, learn English. And they learn it on their cell phones, and they learn it on the Internet, they learn it on television, they watch American movies. It's a survival mechanism for many people." — Leba Haber Rubinoff

On the counter case of Arabic and Chinese as a multinational language

"Let me put to you the counter case. The counter case is that Arabic is a multinational language with a great and rich and powerful philosophical tradition behind it, and it's not going anywhere. It's alive and well, and it is another global language, and growing. And the second objection is Chinese. I was going to ask you about the question of whether the Chinese language itself is one that's being sacrificed for modernization. You've just come back from a visit [Dr. Badash]. You know China well." — Dr. Jay Winter

On the non-diminishment of the Chinese language despite increasing usage of English

"I think they're using a lot of Western terms, something the French would not like to do. So Internet and technological terms are being adopted. I saw no evidence that Chinese was going to be used any less." — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On the desirability of linguistic diversity as opposed to enforcing an international language

"Though I agree that people tend to misunderstand people of other languages, I don't think it's impossible for them to live under the same overarching political regime. And I think, actually, protection of language rights would be far more important than finding a single language and trying to get everyone to speak it. ... I think it's a loss, myself. I'd love to see those things preserved. So I don't think forcing an international language is a good way to go. I would say recognizing linguistic and ethnic rights is the way to go." — Dr. Jeffrey Foss

On the non-exclusivity of learning and using multiple languages

"They don't have to be exclusive of each other. I mean many people in Kenya, for example, are multilingual. They speak three or four tribal languages, they speak Kiswahili, and they speak

English. Many people in the Arab world speak English, French, or they speak in Egyptian Arabic because of the movies. But, if you talk to somebody in Algeria, they speak a different dialect than somebody who's born and raised in Syria, but they can understand each other. But many people also speak a second language. You know, many people in the Arab world speak two or three languages. Many people in Africa speak many tribal languages. So I don't think that I agree with you. I don't want to lose any cultural richness. But I don't think that they have to be exclusive of each other." — Leba Haber Rubinoff

On security of livelihood as a necessary condition for the actualization of human rights

"I wanted to raise a Marxist objection to this. ... I want to put it to you that the concept of human rights makes no sense when the concept of human dignity is undermined by poverty and disease of a kind that exists all along these discussions of rights. And until basic levels of consumption and medical care are available to millions of individuals, that it is smug on our part—and I put myself with us, within this—to spend all this time talking about rights because rights, since—this is [Thomas] Aquinas —rights don't exist without the notion of dignity, and dignity doesn't exist without enough to eat and some degree of protection against the most basic ravages of disease. So far as I can tell, the need to redistribute material income, material wealth, is a premise of the protection of the rights of human beings in door number four. And yet it's not there. It's not. There isn't any recognition of that." — Dr. Jay Winter

On the lack of clear ownership of land as a barrier to access to capital in Africa

"An argument along the same line as Jay [Winter], but from capitalist point of view has been postulated by *The Economist*. One of the problems in Africa at this particular time is that there's no clear ownership of land, and their argument is—so this is the anti-Marxist argument— that there's no property recognition so that they can actually own their own land and borrow against the capital to grow food. ... And then the second part of this, which they were adamant about, was that the European Union had to open up so that Africans can trade, and actually enter the market of international agriculture. ... They're arguing very strongly against that centralized [distribution] system that seems to automatically grow out of Marxism." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the desirability of theoretical human rights, even though not yet fully realized by all

"There is a degree of theoretical, even if unrealized human rights, that people seize upon even though they're not realizable for everyone, because the sense of indignation of violating your unrealized rights is still real. So even though you are angry that it's impossible for you to access law, you still want there to be—you still want there to be a legal system, even though you don't have a lawyer ... You would still prefer there to be something you could appeal to or, in theory, have access to." — Karun Koernig

**The Lost Generation of the First World War:
The Suicide of the Military Caste**

By Dr. Jay Winter

Presented at

The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

MAY 2010 COMPANY OF IDEAS FORUM

Synopsis of Dr. Jay Winter's Paper

Dr. Jay Winter's presentation entitled, "The Lost Generation of the First World War: The Suicide of the Military Caste," argued that a major turning point in the history leading up to the End of the Age of Agriculture was the unintended suicide, during the first world war, of the landed warrior class of the highly developed European imperial powers. He argues that it was the extent of the industrialized slaughters of the "Great War" that made possible the horrors of World War II, which Rubinoff argues finally ended the age of agriculture.

This essay is available at <http://www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org/coi/2010Winter.pdf>

Summary of the Dialogue

Following the presentation, Dr. Lawrence Badash asks the question firstly whether after World War I Britain was an agricultural importer, and secondly, who replaced the fallen officer class. Dr. Jay Winter responded that Britain was already an agricultural importer prior to World War I, and that the war had been a contest with Germany over who controlled the food supply of Europe and thus foreign policy. On the second question, Dr. Winter answered that it was widely recognized that the lost generation was replaced by lesser officers whose deficits had to be made up by mechanization. Jenni Pace Presnell commented that Goya showed the horror of a mechanized death in war, potentially foreshadowing some of the later developments in art in World War I. She argues that historians and artists should work together over a broader arc of history. Nancy Hofbauer offered a hypothesis that Hitler's rise to power might have been more difficult had there been an intact military caste in Germany to counter his vitriolic rhetoric. Jenni Pace Presnell commented that there is a lack of art emerging from the two wars that the United States is currently waging in Iraq and Afghanistan, other than blogs. Jeffrey Rubinoff responded that much of the art that came out of the Second World War was literature rather than painting. Dr. Foss comments that much of the honour that was traditionally associated with death in a war to protect one's country, is no longer possible with the new reality of mechanized mass slaughter. Janet Leblancq asked Jeffrey Rubinoff to speak more to the issue of the divisiveness of the First World War for the artists of the time. Rubinoff responded that the artists of the time were just beginning to discover the possibility of a non-prescriptive narrative for art, and saw themselves as part of a movement of universal revolutionary social change. The artists clearly saw themselves as international, but the war necessarily sharpened the focus on national divisions among them. Heather Goldman asked whether the transnationalization of war has really changed the nature of warfare, and what that meant for artists and historians. Dr. Winter responded that war is increasingly not following the model of conflict between nation-states, and that non-state actors involved in war should be treated as international criminals. Dr. Foss commented that since the Nürnberg trials, there were standards set for the criminal culpability in war, one must "stand on higher moral ground if one is to exercise the force of arms against another people." John Kirk asked why South and Central America and Africa seemed less prominent in both world wars. Dr. Winter responded that they certainly played a role in the war due to their affiliation with the imperial powers at war in Europe. The difference was in the amount of damage they suffered due to differing levels of industrialization. Imperial powers concentrated their resources at the "cutting edge" of the fronts in Europe, rather than in less industrialized countries. He argued that now that the field of action in war is unlimited, and with the proliferation of nuclear weapons, war has become "unbelievably dangerous."

Key excerpts of the dialogue

Question about the effects of the suicide of the military caste

“Just a few quick factual type of questions. If the landed gentry sold off much of the estates, who were the new owners? Did Britain become an agricultural importer in the period thereafter? And who comprised the officer corps in the ‘20s and ‘30s in Britain?” — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On the effects of the Great War on agricultural imports and the officer class

“Britain had been an importer from the 1850s on. Three quarters of the British diet was imported in 1914, which is why they could not tolerate the German naval control of the English Channel. The First World War was a war between Britain and Germany for control of Northwestern Europe. That’s what it was about. And if Germany had controlled the food supply, it would have controlled the foreign policy. The officer corps in the 1920s and 1930s are basically the survivors, poorer individuals who were not as gifted who were the ones who went over the top and got mowed down. The way the British army behaved in many of the early battles of the Second World War showed it. Singapore is one of those examples... So there is a recognition across the board that mechanization has to make up for the loss of talent. You need machines because the men who could serve with brilliance were dead and couldn’t conceivably make a difference.”

— Dr. Jay Winter

On Goya’s stripping away the glory of death in war

“I’m sure you’re aware of Goya’sⁱ *Los Caprichos*, and *The Disasters of War*ⁱⁱ. ... So around 1800, he produced this series of prints on the disasters of war. And the underlying theme is that there’s no glory in a death in a war like this, mechanized, innocent civilians up against a machinelike army. Death serves no higher purpose. And he seems to be one of the first artists to really suggest that. But he just totally strips away all the previous associations with the glory of death in war. It’s so interesting to me that he foreshadows, in many ways, a lot of what happens in World War I. ... And so I agree with that historians and artists need to work more closely together...establishing these interconnections across a broader arc of history.” — Jenni Pace Presnell

Question about the contribution of the loss of the military caste to the rise of Nazism in Germany

“I’m thinking about the *Lost Generation* and multiple terms that—when all of these young men were killed in World War I, ... had there been these elite young men in Germany, would Hitler have been allowed to have succeeded? I don’t think he would have. But there was no opposition. There was no one to intellectually challenge him, so that the masses who were left kind of bought into this garbage that he was preaching.” — Nancy Hofbauer

On the relative paucity of art emerging from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars

"I think it's really interesting to consider who's producing art and who would produce art in response to war in the last 50 years. Obviously in World War I, and to some extent World War II, we have either officers or GIs providing poetry and literature and art. But, especially in the United States after the draft ends, up to the present, the makeup of the armed forces is completely different. And so I haven't really seen much art at all. Maybe in blogs a little bit, in response to Iraq and Afghanistan in the present day. But there's very little visual art that addresses the experience of war or even the state of American life in the midst of two wars." — Jenni Pace Presnell

On the novel as the form of art emergent from the second world war

"In the Second World War, much of the works that came out of it were novels by people who had directly experienced it. So I think of *The Naked and the Dead*, and *The Thin Red Line*. These became sort of icons of American literature as opposed to paintings." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the sacrificing of honour in modern warfare

"In a modern war, you do not die with honour. You're reduced to an inconvenience. You are an insect. Those words were used in the Second World War. This removes attractiveness for war in another dimension. It's not simply that the nuclear bomb will reach you or the weapons of mass destruction are something which you can't escape from, but your own honour in being involved in such a process has been sacrificed. Much better, as it were, to stand up to somebody else with whom you differ and fight to the death. There's honour in that. And it agrees, to some extent, with our willingness to die for those we love. To simply be exterminated as an inconvenience takes something like the honour corps out of battle." — Dr. Jeffrey Foss

Question about the divisiveness of the Great War

"When you said that the Great War was divisive for artists, I just wanted you to expand on that. ... Can you tell me a little bit more about what you meant?" — Janet Leblancq

On nationally based wars destroying an emerging view of a non prescriptive narrative for art

"Look at the history of Modernists at that particular time, who they were, what countries they came from, and their ideology of having a new set of design, ... revolutionary aspects of the thing, including architecture, which might or might not be a plus. ... For artists, it was the new world that they were creating which was this escape from the prescriptive narrative ... that they were required, in a sense, to meet before photography. So there was this great revolution that was coming of being able to think of art liberated in much the way that music was liberated in the 18th century. So those people all communicated with each other. There was a time when the Modernists all were just communicating. And they ended up on the German side, they ended up on the Russian side, they ended up on the French side, and the Belgian side, as a matter of fact."

— Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the divisiveness of the World War I among artists

“The [Great] War was extraordinarily destructive to the blossoming art of that particular time. Franz Marcⁱⁱⁱ died in it. A number of artists died in it. A critical part that was destroyed among the Modernists was their universality. There was a hope on the end of the nineteenth century that there would be something revolutionary happening among them. The divisiveness of the war was an unmeasurable catastrophe. And out of that came Dada—the artists’ reaction to their smashed futures.”— Jeffrey Rubinoff

Question on transnationalization and the changing nature of war

“I was wondering, Dr. Jay Winter, if you could maybe comment a bit on the growing trend of transnationalization and what that really means for historians and for artists with the counterinsurgency, growing piracy, the whole mafia rings, paramilitaries running parts of countries. Is this sort of a blip that we’re going through now, or is it a growing trend?”
— Heather Goldman

On the treating terrorism as international piracy

“There’s no question about the fact that we’re not dealing with war anymore between national units in the same way as I think the conventional definition since the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 had it. It’s not even feudal wars. They’re wars that involve networks that are very inchoate without responsibility or direction on them. So I don’t believe this is a blip...The second part of it, though, I think is that there’s a fundamental difference between treating people who engage in things like the narco wars in Colombia as soldiers and as criminals. You see, there’s a very interesting problem about Sheikh Khalid Mohammed^{iv} if he ever gets put on trial for the 9/11 crimes. Were they criminal, or were they war crimes? ... My guess is that the best way to treat international terrorism is as crime, like piracy. And in piracy, the international law has it that any nation can seize and detain criminals who are engaged in piracy anywhere in the world.” — Dr. Jay Winter

On the legal limits of warfare

“The Nuremberg Trials had the effect of saying to the common soldier, the man who’s required in order that a war can occur, that you do not have to obey your officers. Indeed, it may be illegal for you to obey your officers. ... I still understand that the marines march around saying, ‘Burning babies, I don’t care.’ No, no, no. I think they should also be taught that there is a higher order and that you can’t just do anything you want. You have to stand on higher moral grounds if you’re going to take it upon yourself to exercise force of arms against other people.” — Dr. Jeffrey Foss

Question on why central and south America and Africa are less central to Europe in WW I & II

“Why has it mostly been a Northern Hemisphere that’s involved in these great wars. If you take Central America, South America, the majority of Africa, they avoided—stayed out of the First and Second World Wars.” — John Kirk

On the involvement peripheral countries in the war due to their imperial affiliations

“They didn’t stay out, because they were part of the imperial networks that fought them. They weren’t in the line of damage and destruction, that is true. But India was in the war. South Africa was certainly in both world wars. And a host of countries indirectly controlled by the British, by the Bank of England—Argentina, Brazil—they were in the war. ... The first point is a function of industrialization. The industrialized countries were the imperial powers, and they therefore could create a cornucopia of resources, all sort of feeding into the cutting edge, which was several fronts in Europe, in the European continent. In the Second World War, the Japanese were, you know, making their play for world mastery as well. But the atomic bomb, as we were talking about, that was built to be dropped on the Nazis. That’s what it was for. And the war in Europe was the one that was primary. I think the primary strategic objective of the United States Government was to destroy the Nazi regime before getting to the Japanese one. It isn’t the way that it happened. Industrialization explains it to me that the Southern Hemisphere has been less eviscerated by the institutions of war. But now that war has mutated into a whole range of things, I think the field of action is unlimited. And that’s what makes the nuclear proliferation issue we’re going to come to so unbelievably dangerous.” — Dr. Jay Winter

ⁱ Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (30 March 1746 – 16 April 1828) was a Spanish romantic painter and printmaker regarded both as the last of the Old Masters and as the first of the moderns. ... The subversive and subjective element in his art, as well as his bold handling of paint, provided a model for the work of later generations of artists, notably Manet and Picasso.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Goya

ⁱⁱ The Disasters of War (Spanish: Los Desastres de la Guerra) are a series of 82[a 1] prints created between 1810 and 1820 by the Spanish painter and printmaker Francisco Goya (1746–1828).
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Disasters_of_War

ⁱⁱⁱ Franz Marc (February 8, 1880 – March 4, 1916) was one of the principal painters and printmakers of the German Expressionist movement. He was a founding member of "Der Blaue Reiter" ("The Blue Rider"), an almanac the name of which later became synonymous with the circle of artists collaborating in it.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franz_Marc

^{iv} Khalid Sheikh Mohammed ... (born March 1, 1964, or April 14, 1965) is a Pakistani in U.S. custody, Guantamano Bay for alleged acts of terrorism, including mass murder of civilians. He was charged on February 11, 2008, with war crimes and murder by a U.S. military commission and faces the death penalty if convicted.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khalid_Sheikh_Mohammed

Nuclear Winter and the End of the Age of Agriculture

By Dr. Lawrence Badash

Presented at

The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

MAY 2010 COMPANY OF IDEAS FORUM

Synopsis of Dr. Lawrence Badash's Paper

Dr. Lawrence Badash's presentation entitled, "Nuclear Winter and the End of the Age of Agriculture," outlines the scientific history of the development and use of nuclear weapons, which Rubinoff argues finally ends the age of agriculture. Badash argues that the scientific discovery in 1983 of the potential for even a limited nuclear war to trigger a 'Nuclear Winter,' makes the development of social and political institutions to avoid such a calamity urgently necessary.

This essay is available at <http://www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org/coi/2010Badash.pdf>

Summary of the Dialogue

Jeffrey Rubinoff starts the dialogue with a question of what happens to the decommissioned weapons, given the fact that the fissile material still is radioactive for a very long time. Dr. Lawrence Badash responds that under such programs as the Nunn-Lugar legislation, the United States pays to secure fissile material, and destroy missile casings. It is also possible to reduce the danger of residual highly enriched nuclear weapons grade materials by mixing them with low enriched uranium, because re-enrichment to weapons grade is a costly and time consuming process. Rubinoff commented that it is absolutely vital that the current generation understand that the euphemism 'battlefield weapons' refers to weapons of the power used on Hiroshima, and which would contrary to their name, be likely used in cities. Dr. Badash responded that for the first time in history there is an official number put to the United States nuclear arsenal, 5113 of which approximately 2000 are battlefield weapons. He pointed out that while most Americans believe that nuclear weapons would not be used against cities, history shows otherwise, and argues that the proximity of industrial and military targets in or near cities makes it very likely that cities will be in the path of nuclear destruction. Rubinoff poses the question of whether there is some organization through which intellectual pressure could be brought to bear on policy makers not to leave the nuclear weapons in a 'default condition' which, if history is a guide, would see them used eventually. Dr. Badash mentioned the Pugwash movement as a good example of productive dialogue on nuclear issues among prominent scientists who speak as individuals and do not officially represent their governments. Acting as individuals they are able work on technical solutions, as well as political ones, which by virtue of their merit have gotten the attention of governments. Rubinoff commented that the reality of nuclear weapons makes it imperative to think about their stewardship on a time scale hereto unknown by humanity, and requires a new kind of thinking to address. Leba Haber Rubinoff asks why there wasn't more activism and public awareness on nuclear issues from the 1980's until now, especially after the debut of the Nuclear Winter theory. Dr. Badash responded that the political climate in the United States in the 1980's was dominated by a fear of a first strike by the USSR, who then could blackmail the US into not launching its remaining arsenal at Soviet cities, for fear of retaliation against American cities. This period was dominated by president Reagan's ambition to protect America against this threat by expanding weapons systems and defence spending. Dr. Winter asked whether Dr. Badash thought that given the possible impact on global weather and agriculture of even a limited nuclear war between India and Pakistan, scientists and military on both sides could engage in a non-official channel of dialogue. Dr. Badash commented that given their long history of conflict, it would be unlikely that the population would listen to scientists and military urging restraint, although he conceded that dialogue may be useful. Dr. Winter also urged us not to assume that the military is eager to start a war, and indicated a potential avenue of engagement is younger officers in their 30's who still have a long professional career ahead of them. Karun Koernig commented that the decision by the United States to make its nuclear posture review public, decreased the likelihood

of a knee jerk reaction towards nuclear war. Dr. Badash urged participants not to assume the military's posture is defaulted towards war, because they are most intimately aware of the suffering war causes. Koernig asked whether we must in any political system, accommodate the ambition of social elites who inevitably compete for power thus provide the fuel for war, and further posed the question of who was today's warrior class. Dr. Badash commented that there is indeed a prestige associated with nuclear weapons through which a country gains a certain status on the world stage. He implied further that the military industrial complex was part of what replaced the warrior class, a group who profit very highly from nation-states being permanently readied for war. Jenni Pace Presnell asked whether there was any possibility of using nuclear waste for energy, however, Dr. Badash mentioned that it was likely less expensive to make fresh fuel for energy purposes. Dr. Winter argued that a bottom up approach to achieving awareness of these issues was likely to be most effective, proposing to look to the generation currently in their 30's.

Key excerpts of the dialogue

Question about whether decommissioning really means weapons are rendered harmless

"Part of the goal of this [Forum], is to pass this knowledge onto another generation. Now, one of the aspects of it, to this next generation, is what happens to the residual nuclear material, even if the weapons are decommissioned? Are they really decommissioned, or are they simply put on the shelf, ready to be pulled out at another time?" — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the destruction of weapons delivery systems and denaturing of explosive materials

"Decommissioned materials: basically you're taking weapons grade plutonium, which is an element in itself, and weapons grade uranium 235, which is 90% U-235. When it's found in nature, and uranium ore, the U-235 component is only 0.7%. So 99.3% is U-238. And what they had to do physically, because it's chemically the same element, physically they had to separate the two isotopes. And it's an expensive, laborious process. We read in the papers about Iran and it's centrifuges today, that's what they're trying to do. Most reactors, except the Canadian CANDUⁱ reactors, use fuel up to 3% enrichment. That seems to work out well. If you take it up to 90% enrichment, then you have bomb material. What do you do with it when you take a bomb apart? Well, you can store the material, as both Russia, and the U.S., and I suppose other countries, do. And they have it under lock and key. We hope that the locks, and keys, and the security systems are good. You can also denature it. This means you can mix it with some other material. In the case of U-235, mix it with U-238. Then you have to go through the whole process again of separating it physically to get the fissile material back. You can also use U-235 and plutonium in breeder reactors, or in reactors, in which they are bred. [Also] by the Nunn-Lugar legislation, the U.S. provides some money for the dismantlement of weapons in Russia. It's been extended to chemical weapons as well. And the fissile material is locked up under conditions, for which America helps pay also in Russia. But also, they crush the missile casings. They're really destroying the weapons so they can't be used again. They can't take them out of the garage and slap the pieces back together and use them. They would have to really rebuild the whole thing. So while it's not foolproof, while it's not a wonderful system of handling the decommissioned materials, they're doing something." — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On cognizance of the euphemism of battlefield nuclear weapons

“The part that’s missing from here for this generation, is the euphemism called ‘battlefield weapons,’ ... battlefield weapons sound like something that’s going to happen somewhere out of town. By now, we already know that there is no out of town in all out war. And so, this euphemism needs to be accounted for. ... The battlefield weapons that we’re talking about, each one is more powerful than the ones used on either Hiroshima or Nagasaki. And so, they sound like things that, you know, you’d use at the Battle of Waterloo, or something like that, and it’d be out on a playing field somewhere. What we know about that is in all out war, war still goes back to cities. So if there are three, or four, or five thousand of these battlefield weapons still out there ... this is a very important aspect of awareness in the next generation. This is your stuff – the next generation. Our generation has not done a whole lot about it. And so you’re going to inherit it. And I think it’s very important that that information be available.” — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the number of battlefield weapons and their use

“As far as the battlefield weapons, also called tactical nuclear weapons, they exist. They’re simply smaller than the strategic weapons, which are expected to go between continents. These go a smaller distance. They’re generally smaller in explosive power. Jeffrey [Rubinoff] is entirely right that most of them are larger than Hiroshima and Nagasaki weapons. The Obama administration, for the very first time in American history, released, or declassified, the information about how many nuclear weapons we have. And the number is 5,113, including these tactical weapons. So that’s strategic and tactical. The only number we knew before this was in about 1948/49 that the U.S. had fewer than 100 atomic bombs. And in all those decades since, the number had been guessed at, sometimes with greater accuracy than at other times. But no one really knew except people within the system. Now we’re told that we have 5,113. Of these five thousand, it’s believed that something like 2,000, if I remember correctly, are tactical weapons. Some Americans take great umbrage at the thought that we would throw a nuclear weapon at a foreign city. We don’t do that. We don’t do such things. We’re the good guys. We wear the white hats. Except they don’t remember that the U.S. is the only nation in history to have used nuclear weapons in anger, and they were used against cities. And it was policy at one point, until we got the ability to target weapons with such great accuracy that we can avoid cities if we wish. However, if the other side fires first, we’re not going to fire our weapons at empty silos. So we’re going to pick some other targets than the ICBM [Intercontinental Ballistic Missile] silos that we had initially targeted. And cities have industry nearby, and command, communication control, and intelligence facilities nearby. So even if you’re not aiming at a city per say, cities will be targeted because of the so-called military and industry targets they’re in or nearby. So that’s why the nuclear winter scientists said, ‘Of course you have to look at cities. Cities will burn.’ “ — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On application of intellectual pressure on policy makers not to ignore nuclear weapons

“Is there some form of organization where pressure can actually be applied at the intellectual level to bring about the kind of change that needs to be done? And the reason I say that, is that we can name 40 key people, say, in the Manhattan Project who changed the world. Is it possible that there is a level of intellectual pressure that could be placed by a large number of people, a much larger number of people than that, but at a level where these things can actually be discussed, and actually approached, and awareness brought to government that something needs to be done about it? If it’s simply left in the realm of politics, what we can see is that very little will be done about it. And in my presentation will ask the question as to what the default condition is, if whether or not war is a default condition. So, if we leave this in a default condition, it’s most certainly that these weapons will either be used, or misused, or in another way simply be ignored. And what is the consequence of ignoring them, is another thing, even if they’re no longer weapons?” — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the efforts of various organizations to address this issue

“As far as pressure on the intellectual level, I’m not sure intellectuals have that much influence and power. But you do have the organizations I talked about: the Federation of American Scientistsⁱⁱ, the Union of Concerned Scientistsⁱⁱⁱ, you have the Pugwash Conference Movement^{iv}, which won the Nobel Prize in something like 1995 for its efforts at arms control. There are groups, and there are individuals out there striving to move in this direction. ...The Einstein-Russell Manifesto^v ... was a public statement, and an opportunity for signatories to say that, ‘We don’t like the direction we’re going in. We think that nuclear weapons have to be abolished, and let’s do something about it.’ It led, within two years, to the Pugwash movement. And there they’re able to discuss technical issues, like, ‘What do you do about MIRV^{vi}, this space bus of many warheads atop a single missile? How do you counter that?’ Or, ‘What do you do about antiballistic missiles?’ These are technical people who come up often with technical solutions, in addition to political solutions. But anyway, Pugwash has been very successful, to the point of winning the Nobel Peace Prize, because there were prominent scientists invited, they had rather good ideas, and their governments were interested in these ideas. And the governments liked the idea that they weren’t official representatives, whose hands and tongues would be tied by diplomacy. These people could speak their minds and come back with ideas that could be adopted. And this has happened over the years. So the Pugwash movement is quite alive and well.” — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On the awareness of the need to looking after a nuclear materials for millennia

“The consequence of the material is that it needs to be looked after. As I understand it, if you’re going to deal with plutonium, you’re going to have to look after it for 25,000 years. We don’t have a structure to think about anything like this – we have no history that says: ‘We will look after something for 25,000 years.’ We don’t even have very good abilities to look after our offshore drilling for any length of time. ... A strong reason for dealing with the finality of the end of the age of agriculture is to bring awareness that we’ve entered into issues that we’ve never encountered before in our history. For example, 25,000 years of having to look after a material that we’ve created and make sure that it’s properly accounted for. And so, this is a very different mode of thinking that we’ve entered. The finality of this—the closing of an age that we could no longer

afford—requires an entirely different kind of thinking than was ever used in that particular age.”
— Jeffrey Rubinoff

Question about why there was not more activism on nuclear issues in the 1980's and thereafter

“I’m just curious why there wasn’t more education, or activism in the ‘80s, especially after this public education about nuclear winter, or in the ‘90s, or currently. Can you, talk about why the trend has been to talk less about it, even though there are more countries with weapons?”
— Leba Haber Rubinoff

On the influence of Reagan on the nuclear and defence budget debate in the 1980's

“You had in the late ‘70s the so-called Committee on the Present Danger^{vii}, which hypothesized a scenario in which the Soviet Union would have a first strike against America’s ICBM missile complex, destroying it – well most of it. The U.S. submarine fleet, ballistic missile submarines, would be intact, able to respond, but not accurate enough to fire at Soviet silos, so they would fire only at Soviet cities, a larger area target. And the Soviets would warn us, ‘You do that and we’ll obliterate all American cities.’ And the Committee on the Present Danger said, ‘No American President is going to do that.’ And, you know, Americans don’t like to be bombed, or blown up, or defeated in any way. We’re exceptional – we have to be first and best in everything. And Carter had to respond by increasing the defence budget. So this is all background, and Ronald Reagan was part of this movement of ‘America is a paper tiger.’ We have to get real defences, we have to get real strength. So Reagan, in addition to his missile defence ideas, which were kind of crackpot, and after billions of dollars we didn’t get very far with them, he wanted to modernize the whole arsenal. And he poured a lot of money into that. So, you have all this activity of the ‘80s of portraying American exceptionalism and strength, or we have to regain that strength. So, there’s opposition of course, but Reagan was a great communicator, and he dominated that discussion. So, there wasn’t that much activity trying to deny him the opportunity to expand the weapons systems.” — Dr. Lawrence Badash

Question on possibility of Indian and Pakistani nuclear dialogue between scientists and military

“A question I had for you is about India and Pakistan. I have some friends there, and their scientific communities and their military are sophisticated. These are complicated states. What would be your view about a direct appeal to their scientists and their military to talk this over in public? Since this is January 2010, and the article [about the potential for nuclear winter given a limited nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan] is a very powerful, and from what I saw, from what I read, very persuasive argument. Would you be in favour of that kind of foray? You know, Pakistan is a chaotic state with many different centres of power. But we should not underestimate the extent to which people in these countries are aware of precisely the fact that they’re at ground zero for something that could have global catastrophic meaning. Have you ever looked into this as among scientists for example, in your own speciality, India and Pakistanis, along with the military to talk it through?” — Dr. Jay Winter

On the madness of India and Pakistan to continue nuclear rivalry

“There are Indian and Pakistani scientists who are prominent internationally in arms control efforts. As far as them talking with, or to each other, I don’t know of any of this occurring. And I would think that any kind of discussion is going to be good. You should never say you’re not going to talk. I fear Pakistan more than India. I think of India as a more democratic state. Pakistan, of course, is so ridden with factions, but the military controls so much of what goes on there. And you have this tradition of assassination and violence, although you have that in India as well. But mostly, you have this long history of discord between India and Pakistan. And for Pakistan, which has about, what, one-third the population of India and a smaller territory, to pick fights with its larger neighbour, and get its nose bloodied each time, is rather strange. And yet they do it. And as far as the contested border in Kashmir, I’m not sure who’s the aggressor more often than not in that region. But I don’t think either side is entirely blameless. So there’s so much hostility of long standing that I don’t know if they can comfortably talk, or if the population at large would listen to the military and scientists who might counsel some kind of restraint. But it’s madness for them to continue hostilities, particularly now that they are both nuclear powers.” — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On the reluctance of the young military officers to use nuclear weapons

“I don’t think you should eliminate the military in their 30’s, who are in there as a more formative career as professionals. There are very interesting discussions among people within the military on this issue. And you shouldn’t assume that they’re gung-ho for using the weapons on some kind of maximization of resources, no matter what. There’s more going on, I think, than we realize in the world of the military, who are after all, spending their lives with this.” — Dr. Jay Winter

On the public nuclear posture review reducing the risk of knee jerk nuclear war

“And I think the recent [nuclear] posture review is interesting, because it was something that was secret before, the idea being to confuse the enemy. So the other side really didn’t know what they could expect. The U.S. may do this, they may do that. And even if it was leaked, it was not really much of a help because the posture itself was vague. So the real policy was always not the stated policy. So in the time of conflict you knew that you could really not predict what they were going to do. Stating this now though, out and open, ... at least there’s some degree of certainty, or a higher degree of certainty so at least the knee-jerk reaction wouldn’t be in the direction of nuclear war.” — Karun Koernig

The knee jerk reaction to war is not the default position of the military

“The knee-jerk reaction to war is not among the military. As I said before, I think the military deserves more credit than they’re given for being very reluctant to go to war. Because they know that they’re the ones who get hurt in a war. And I think in the last 10 years or so, we’ve seen how war does hurt the people who engage in it, particularly the battlefield soldiers with all the scandals at the military hospitals, and the VA hospitals. It’s a very unhappy experience.”
— Dr. Lawrence Badash

On ambition of and competition among elites as fuel for war

"I wonder if we can go back to one sentence that I found quite interesting, where you said that preparing for war is more lucrative and less dangerous than fighting a war. ... in my paper I asked the question, "Where did the warrior class go?" And maybe deeper than that, what about the elites? Is there not some deeper question of, do we have to somehow accommodate elite ambition? Do they just have to somehow find some arena to battle it out no matter what kind of social organization we have? ...now they're not the landed aristocracy, now they're the people who sit at their desks ... Are they the warrior class? Or is it the Cheney's, or the Halliburtons? What is this persistent fuel that's behind the preparation for war?" — Karun Koernig

On nuclear prestige and the military industrial complex doing well out of preparing for war

"It's that need for prestige. And I think that in the same way with nuclear weapons, that a country feels that if we're going to be a significant player on the world scene, and certainly China and India are the countries to watch in the rest of this century, among a few others perhaps. China has nuclear weapons. India looks upon China as its major potential adversary, so it feels it should have it, for protection of course, never for aggression. Anyway, it's a terrible cycle. And we've seen it before so many times, and I fear we might see it again in the future. ... What is the warrior class today? Well, I think we eliminated the grunt, the chap in the foxhole, from the warrior class. ... I'd probably be willing to include some CIA officials, the people who sit in these windowless rooms and control the drones that fly over Pakistan and Afghanistan. I'm not sure where I would stop. I don't know whether I would include the Defence Secretary, or Leon Panetta^{viii}, the head of the CIA, among this warrior class. I think you asked about the military industrial complex. It's alive and well. ... 'The military industrial complex has put the U.S. on a permanent war economy,' as economist Seymour Melman^{ix} from Columbia, called it. Whereas before World War II, navy warships were built in the navy yard in Bath, Maine. You had a few army arsenals that made some bombs, and missiles, and such, but mostly it was geared up in wartime. If you look at the industrialization in the World War II, where Detroit changed from making cars into making jeeps and tanks, and things like that. So American industry responded magnificently to the build up, but after World War II, a lot of that continued. And that's why Melman called it the permanent war economy, because we had so much military hardware being produced. ... So, the military industrial complex is alive and well, and too well I fear, to the point where American troops in the field are fed not by G.I.'s peeling potatoes on K.P., but contractors hauling in everything from gasoline to the MRE's^s, and so forth. We've contracted everything out, because I suppose that's the way budget gets through Congress. You couldn't get the budget in the proper category to pay for that if you wanted to give it to the Defence department." — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On the issue of looking after nuclear waste and the need for nuclear energy

"This is probably the most obvious question possible, but I just wonder how we can balance the need to look after nuclear waste for some 25,000 years with the increasing need for energy? And what is maybe your prediction for how nuclear waste will be used for so-called peaceful purposes in the future?" — Jenni Pace-Presnell

On the economic implications of using nuclear waste for energy

“As far as nuclear waste versus the need for nuclear energy, the waste materials have some energy in them. The cost and the danger of extracting that particular energy may be so high that we don’t go that route. We may just mine fresh uranium and make new fuel rods from that, rather than use some of this old material in the fuel rods. So that remains to be seen. It’s going to be more an economic decision, I think, than a national security decision.” — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On the generations inheriting the nuclear reality and bottom up approaches

“I think the two issues of what might be described as popular perceptions of the dangers of accidental war, and political action about it, should be separated. And I think you’re right, that the cynical could take over and destroy the popular. I would never underestimate the extent to which there’s still possibilities of getting young professionals. ... There are people at the age of 30 who are not blind to what you’ve said today, and should be informed further. If you put it in political movements, I think you’re likely to get co-opted, or blocked, or jailed, or whatever else usually happens. But the bottom-up way has been available in many parts of the world, surprisingly human rights were clearly bottom-up for a century. ... an opportunity like this park is one that, I think, could be used precisely for that issue. Is not to go the way towards the political frustrations that you talk about. ... There’s an age group issue. And, you know, the age of 30 is the critical age at which you can see any possibilities. ... But I think, you know, your point you stated Karun, it’s a generational matter. You spoke about a generational perception, and that’s where I would look for the opportunities in the future is with the kind of work that you’re doing.” — Dr. Jay Winter

ⁱ The CANDU (“CANada Deuterium Uranium”) reactor is a Canadian-invented, pressurized heavy water reactor. The reactors are used in nuclear power plants to produce nuclear power from nuclear fuel. ...

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CANDU_reactor

ⁱⁱ The Federation of American Scientists (FAS) was founded in 1945 by scientists who had worked on the Manhattan Project to develop the first atomic bombs. These scientists recognized that science had become central to many key public policy questions. They believed that scientists had a unique responsibility to both warn the public and policy leaders of potential dangers from scientific and technical advances and to show how good policy could increase the benefits of new scientific knowledge.

<http://www.fas.org/about/index.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ Union of Concerned Scientists: Founded in 1969, UCS was born out of a teach-in organized by a group of scientists and students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to protest the militarization of scientific research and promote science in the public interest.

<http://www.ucsus.org/about/ucs-history-over-40-years.html>

^{iv} The purpose of the Pugwash Conferences is to bring together, from around the world, influential scholars and public figures concerned with reducing the danger of armed conflict and seeking cooperative solutions for global problems. Meeting in private as individuals, rather than as representatives of governments or institutions, Pugwash participants exchange views and explore alternative approaches to arms control and tension reduction with a combination of candor, continuity, and flexibility seldom attained in official East-West and North-South discussions and negotiations.

<http://www.pugwash.org/about.htm>

^v The Russell–Einstein Manifesto was issued in London on July 9, 1955 by Bertrand Russell in the midst of the Cold War. It highlighted the dangers posed by nuclear weapons and called for world leaders to seek peaceful resolutions to international conflict. The signatories included eleven pre-eminent intellectuals and scientists, notably Albert Einstein just days before his death on April 18, 1955. A few days after the release, philanthropist Cyrus S. Eaton offered to sponsor a conference—called for in the manifesto—in Pugwash, Nova Scotia, Eaton’s birthplace. This conference was to be the first of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, held in July 1957.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russell–Einstein_Manifesto

^{vi} A multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle (MIRV) warhead is a collection of nuclear weapons carried on a single intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) or a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM). Using a MIRV warhead, a single launched missile can strike several targets, or fewer targets redundantly. By contrast a unitary warhead is a single warhead on a single missile.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiple_independently_targetable_reentry_vehicle

^{vii} Committee on the Present Danger: The focus of the committee, which is non-partisan,[1] is evidenced by its name; to lobby Washington to take what the committee sees as needed action to counter a perceived present danger to the United States and its sphere of influence.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Committee_on_the_Present_Danger

^{viii} Leon Edward Panetta (born June 28, 1938) is the current Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. An American Democratic politician, lawyer, and professor, Panetta served as President Bill Clinton's White House Chief of Staff from 1994 to 1997 and was a member of the United States House of Representatives from 1977 to 1993.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leon_Panetta

^{ix} Seymour Melman (December 30, 1917 – December 16, 2004) was an American professor emeritus of industrial engineering and operations research at Columbia University... He wrote extensively for fifty years on "economic conversion", the ordered transition from military to civilian production by military industries and facilities. Author of *The Permanent War Economy* and *Pentagon Capitalism*, he was an economist, writer, and gadfly of the military-industrial complex.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seymour_Melman

^x The Meal, Ready-to-Eat — commonly known as the MRE — is a self-contained, individual field ration in lightweight packaging bought by the United States military for its service members for use in combat or other field conditions where organized food facilities are not available.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meal,_Ready-to-Eat

Art Beyond War:
A Discussion About Prehistoric War and the History of Art by Artists
By Jeffrey Rubinoff

Presented at
The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park
MAY 2010 COMPANY OF IDEAS FORUM

Synopsis of Mr. Jeffrey Rubinoff's Paper

In his presentation entitled "Art Beyond War: A Discussion About Prehistoric War and the History of Art by Artists," Jeffrey Rubinoff, and makes the case that there is no evidence of war in the cave art of the Upper Paleolithic, prior to the beginning of the age of agriculture. The work of ancient artists uncovered thus far does not support an interpretation that humans are "hardwired for war genetically."

This essay is available at <http://www.rubinoffsculpturepark.org/coi/2010Rubinoff.pdf>

Summary of the Dialogue

Dr. Jay Winter begins by posing the question about the difference between the fusion of artists with individuals versus collective phenomena, and whether that means that there are two trajectories for art. Jeffrey Rubinoff responds that it was his aim to show artists whose work demonstrated the fusion of the artist with their subject, and that it didn't matter whether it was collective or individual. Dr. Lawrence Badash mentioned that the cave paintings looked like unfinished sketches, rather than complete works of art. Rubinoff mentioned that to his modern eye they look like finished works, the cave artists could capture the whole animal in a few life lines, which is evidence of a high degree of abstract vision. Jenni Pace Presnell asked whether Rubinoff could clarify what he meant by life lines. Rubinoff commented that life lines are from life drawing, in which you try bring the subject in the work to life through abstraction of its form. Rubinoff comments further that he sees life lines everywhere, especially in nature, which he uses as counterpoint to his own work. Robert Denning posed the question about why the presentation was limited only to European art. Rubinoff responded that art in China for example used the stylized line, which became a prescription for the work of artists who are essentially seen as craftsmen. The history of art in Europe demonstrates a different path, with the artists breaking the social prescriptions for art which hold the subject at a distance from the artist and the perceiver. European art is peculiar in that at one point artists broke that prescription, fusing with their subject, and reducing that remoteness for the perceiver as well. Jenni Pace Presnell requested some elaboration on how ancient European cave art could have formed a meme that was passed to down to Michelangelo. Rubinoff responded that Richard Dawkins posited that birdsong is transmitted analogously to genes, but through generational learning of units of cultural knowledge he termed 'memes.' Rubinoff argues that the evidence of the similarity of life lines of Michelangelo's work and in the caves, which are only 300-400 miles away but separated by millennia, might be evidence of a meme. Dr. Winter proposed that another meme might be the view that animals are gods, a worldview that is prominent in Greek mythology. Rubinoff argued that the human soul is the total knowledge of human beings. That includes perceived knowledge of the divine.

Key excerpts of the dialogue

On the fusion of the artist with the singular and the collective

"Just a brief conjecture: there seems to be a disconnect between the breakthrough of Donatello¹ and Michelangelo² and having the fusion of the artists and the subject and the both and the viewer, and the inherently collective nature of war, which is less about individuals than about groups. And I noticed clearly that the [Otto] Dix³ witnessing of the Isenheim Altarpiece⁴, you can

see that Christ of Grünewald upside down with the pock marks in the skin very much clearly referring to the collective experience of the German Renaissance. I wonder whether you'd agree that there are two pathways, one towards the fusion of an artist as an individual with the face of humanity or of animal life that he sees, of living things that he sees and that witnessing. And the other being the puzzlement of an artist facing a collective that may be the source of the violence, not the individual, not human nature, but something about certain kinds of social organization under conditions of contests for power, wealth, women and so on, a whole range of issues that are not genetic, certainly not, but may be involved in collective life. You show very much the individual as the focus of your measure of the artist. But is there a separate sub-trajectory that you want to think about in which the artists view the collective? I'm thinking of Sienna where in the Town Hall, I think the very first secular painting is a Manzetti. I forget who it is but it shows good and bad government on the walls of the Town Hall in Sienna [Italy]. And that's 1350. It's before Masaccio⁵ and Frangelico and so on. But it has a collective focus rather than an individual. I wonder if you'd comment on the perhaps different agendas of artists when they're facing an individual human versus a collective? ... Were there life lines in the in the Dix? See, what I'm saying, if we deal with collective works there are." — Dr. Jay Winter

On the importance of the fusion of the artist with the subject whether collective or singular

"What I wanted to show is the idea of art being a fusion with the subject. So, it wouldn't have mattered to me whether it was collective or singular. I wanted to show works that are not that commonly shown. I picked Michelangelo's drawings because the drawings in the cave use that life line so strongly. So, there was a different purpose to this showing. ... notice that there was this fantastically complete abstract painting from the cave. So, you could say, "Well, you know, they're painting animals." Well, no, they're not just animals. They had abstract vision, and there is a complete modernist painting there that crosses the line. ... It seems to me that if artists' experience is collective they're going to fuse with the collective reality, if that's the reality that they choose to fuse with. Dix fuses with many singular subjects later though his collective experiences in the trenches are the ones that he expresses in *Der Krieg*⁶..." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

An observation that the cave art seem like unfinished sketches

"The observation is that some of the cave paintings appeared to me to be more like sketches, than finished works of art. Was this meant to show motion where he had different images of cats? ... There were three or four life lines in a row. You don't think it was trying to indicate motion, combat with the animal?" — Dr. Lawrence Badash

On the mastery evidenced by the cave artists' use of abstraction

That's why I showed those Michelangelo drawings. You can see that he just shows parts and each is a very complete drawing. There is ... an ibex in the presentation from Lascaux, that's just a stroke and a couple of horns and you see the whole ibex. Now, that's the nature of abstraction itself. So, well, when you say sketches, I don't regard those as sketches. If you can catch that life line, *that* may be the whole work. But that is to my modern eye. I don't know what they thought, but certainly they left those pieces. ...The cats are amazing, and those come from the Chauvet

Cave⁷. There are three cats in that drawing and they're side-by-side-by-side. Firstly, the cats are scarier than hell, because you have to then think what would they do with the cats? Did they eat them? Did they share food with those cats, or did the cats come and raid their food? Who the hell were those cats? There are no cats in Lascaux⁸. There are no cats in Altamira⁹. I found those cats terrifying, but very interesting." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

Request to elaborate what is meant by a life line

"... the idea of what you're calling the life line, ...if you'd mind elaborating on that first, because that may be a new concept for some people?" — Jenni Pace Presnell

On the extension of the concept of life lines from life drawing

"Well, the life line is from life drawing, so anyone who has done life drawings knows. You know when that thing is alive because you've brought that line up exactly vibrating with the life of those lines. One line can do. [Pablo] Picasso used to do it just to show off—'Watch me do this.' It's in every one of those pictures that I showed. It manifests itself in very many different ways. In my work I like to use it from nature itself. The work lives in counterpoint, because there's so many of those lines everywhere that I look. The mountain has one, the set of mountains has it, tree lines have it, individual trees with leaves have it, trees without leaves have it, and so the piece works counterpoint to all of it. The awareness of it is absolute." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

Question about why the presentation was limited to European art

"With the comparison, you were showing the cave art, which is in Europe, but all your other comparisons were European artists. Is there a reason that you didn't go beyond?"
— Robert Denning

On the prescription of the stylized line and the peculiarity of the European life line

"If you look at ancient Chinese art, you're going to find what I call the stylized line. It's very important to understand that stylized line, just as it's important to understand the life line that I have talked about. The stylized line is a prescriptive line for artist-to-artist, and you (Robert) are dealing with Islamic art. If you look at the way most of the world has perceived their art and their artists, including many musicians over generations, is as craft and craftsmen. And the ability to faithfully reproduce that craft was considered talent. [William] Turner¹⁰ did a great series after Chinese landscape painting; his were European to the core. But if you look back on the Chinese ones, they're very carefully done. The lines are all represented in a very specific way, and you realize that the student tries to match the master's ability, and then that's passed from generation to generation to generation. And so the life line really is very peculiarly western, so that's why I concentrated there. I looked at art from everywhere. In the Americas, it tends to be warriors highly stylized with a totally macho statement. What I wanted to do was show Rembrandt¹¹ at his most gentle with the same fury in his work as those artists in the cave. And it's there because it exists in the fusion of the art where the artist becomes the art and the art becomes the artist. I don't know

that that happens elsewhere in the same way. ... I know that that's the route of European art, and that's why they were shown that way."
— Jeffrey Rubinoff

Question about how the life line could have been a meme passed from Lascaux to Michelangelo

"I think Michelangelo didn't get to go down into the cave... Just for the sake of everybody here, if you wanted to explain memes very briefly." — Jenni Pace Presnell

On the possibility of the life line being a meme

"What goes on in those caves is the European's approach to art, and I find it's absolutely fascinating, because it's so local—a few hundred miles from Florence. You can draw a radius around it, and you can just watch this generation after generation after generation. That's as close to a meme as I think that I could describe, and that's why we didn't talk about memes this time around. Last year we talked about memes, and it was—do they exist or don't they exist? And so, without real evidence of somebody saying, 'Here's a meme,' they don't really exist. I would like to really hear whether or not this could possibly be one of the memes that sits out there, something that's gone on extant and on a local basis from 36,000 years ago till now. ... [Richard] Dawkins'¹² speculation was that bird songs were learned and transformed and changed over generations by variation. These variations and new ones would be passed from generation to generation to generation. And so it has something to do with looking for that meme, but Dawkins was only speculating—so this may be it. This may be one." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

On the possibility of the view of animals as gods being another meme

"Obviously, no evidence for this, but one thing that might reinforce the notion of meme is to see the animals in Lascaux as gods, which is after all a big motif in Greek mythology. But the concept that animals are perhaps superior, they have some being that is more divine than ours, is embedded in Homeric poetry¹³." — Dr. Jay Winter

On the human soul being the total of all knowledge that humans have

"I want to make another point, and that is the human soul is the sum of all of the knowledge that we have. So, you see as the artists of the caves were mapping the soul, their fusion with the animals was manifest. However, it is the concept of the divine being separate from ourselves that sets up the conditions for the ideal. An example is the Kouros¹⁴. We set up an ideal. It's there. It's not us. It's youth, it's beauty and it's separate from us, but it's permanent and we are going to age. This is the opposite of fusion." — Jeffrey Rubinoff

¹ Donatello (Donato di Niccolò di Betto Bardi; c. 1386 – December 13, 1466) was a famous early Renaissance Italian artist and sculptor from Florence. He is, in part, known for his work in bas-relief, a form of shallow relief sculpture that, in Donatello's case, incorporated significant 15th century developments in perspectival illusionism.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donatello>

² Michelangelo di Lodovico Buonarroti Simoni[1] (6 March 1475 – 18 February 1564), commonly known as Michelangelo, was an Italian Renaissance painter, sculptor, architect, poet, and engineer. ... Michelangelo's output in every field during his long life was prodigious; when the sheer volume of correspondence, sketches, and reminiscences that survive is also taken into account, he is the best-documented artist of the 16th century.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michelangelo>

³ Otto Dix (1891-1969), the great German Expressionist, was famous for his unique and grotesque style. Although Hitler's Nazi regime destroyed many of Otto Dix's works, the majority of his paintings can still be seen in museums throughout Germany.

<http://www.mess.net/galleria/dix/>

Otto Dix, Triptychon der Krieg (War Triptych), 1929-1932

http://www.km.bayern.de/blz/eup/03_07_themenheft/images/6_breit.jpg

⁴ The Isenheim Altarpiece is an altarpiece painted by the German artist Matthias Grünewald in 1506-1515. It is on display at the Unterlinden Museum at Colmar, Alsace, now in France.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isenheim_Altarpiece

Isenheim Altarpiece

<http://www.lib-art.com/imgpainting/6/6/11866-isenheim-altarpiece-second-view-matthias-grunewald.jpg>

⁵ Masaccio (December 21, 1401 – autumn 1428), born Tommaso di Ser Giovanni di Simone, was the first great painter of the Quattrocento period of the Italian Renaissance. According to Vasari, Masaccio was the best painter of his generation because of his skill at recreating lifelike figures and movements as well as a convincing sense of three-dimensionality.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masaccio>

⁶ Der Krieg [The War] 1924 arose out of Dix's own experiences of the horrors of war. As outlined above, he had volunteered for service in the army and fought as a machine-gunner on the Western Front. He was wounded a number of times, once almost fatally. War profoundly affected him as an individual and as an artist, and he took every opportunity, both during his active service and afterwards, to document his experiences. These experiences would become the subject matter of many of his later paintings and are central to the Der Krieg cycle.

<http://nga.gov.au/dix/>

⁷ The Chauvet Cave... or Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc Cave is a cave in the Ardèche department of southern France that contains the earliest known cave paintings, as well as other evidence of Upper Paleolithic life. ... It is located near the commune of Vallon-Pont-d'Arc on a limestone cliff

above the former bed of the Ardèche River. Discovered in 1994, it is considered one of the most significant prehistoric art sites.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chauvet_Cave

<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v439/n7079/images/nature04521-f5.2.jpg>

⁸ Lascaux is the setting of a complex of caves in southwestern France famous for its Paleolithic cave paintings. The original caves are located near the village of Montignac, in the Dordogne département. They contain some of the best-known Upper Paleolithic art. These paintings are estimated to be 17,000 years old.

<http://alum.mit.edu/sliceofmit/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/vldordognelascaux1.jpg>

⁹ Altamira (Spanish for 'high view') is a cave in Spain famous for its Upper Paleolithic cave paintings featuring drawings and polychrome rock paintings of wild mammals and human hands.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cave_of_Altamira

<http://artaula.files.wordpress.com/2009/09/altamira.jpg>

¹⁰ Joseph Mallord William Turner RA (23 April 1775[1]–19 December 1851) was an English Romantic landscape painter, watercolourist and printmaker. Turner was considered a controversial figure in his day, but is now regarded as the artist who elevated landscape painting to an eminence rivalling history painting.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._M._W._Turner

¹¹ Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn (July 15, 1606 – October 4, 1669) was a Dutch painter and etcher. He is generally considered one of the greatest painters and printmakers in European art history and the most important in Dutch history.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rembrandt>

Hendrickje Bathing in a River, 1654

<http://www.wetcanvas.com/Community/images/12-Apr-2007/39499-bathing-riversmall.JPG>

¹² Clinton Richard Dawkins, FRS, FRSL (born 26 March 1941) is a British ethologist, evolutionary biologist and popular science author. ...Dawkins came to prominence with his 1976 book *The Selfish Gene*, which popularised the gene-centred view of evolution and introduced the term meme. In 1982, he introduced into evolutionary biology an influential... concept, presented in his book *The Extended Phenotype*, that the phenotypic effects of a gene are not necessarily limited to an organism's body, but can stretch far into the environment, including the bodies of other organisms.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Dawkins

¹³ Homeric poetry: Homer is a legendary ancient Greek epic poet, traditionally said to be the author of the epic poems the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. The ancient Greeks generally believed that Homer was an historical individual, but most scholars are skeptical: no reliable biographical information has been handed down from classical antiquity,... and the poems themselves seem to represent the culmination of many centuries of oral story-telling and a well-developed formulaic

system of poetic composition. According to Martin West, "Homer" is "not the name of a historical poet, but a fictitious or constructed name."

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homer>

¹⁴ A kouros ... is the modern term... given to those representations of male youths which first appear in the Archaic period in Greece. The term kouros, meaning (male) youth... Kouroi are invariably naked, beardless and take a formulaic advancing posture...

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kouros>

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/ea/Kouros_anavissos.jpg