

Diary, January 19-31, 2016

A. Richard Langley

January 19, 2016: I dived into the Writing for Art World course—lots of absorbing reading and research. I need to start organizing study activities and assignments for the entire course to help manage my time. It feels good to be a student again—and to challenge myself editorially outside of the corporate world.

January 20, 2016: Continued organizing course work, and started researching which piece or exhibition will be the focus of my synopsis and 1,000-word essay. I visited websites for numerous Atlanta-area galleries and museums, including the High Museum of Art, Atlanta Contemporary, and the Savannah College of Art and Design, to research current and permanent exhibitions. No works at any of the venues sparked my creative juices.

Finally found an intriguing exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) of Georgia: [*The Unbearable Flatness of Being*](#) by Atlanta-based artist [Sarah Emerson](#). Online, I saw her edgy, wildly colorful work and read the press release, taken in by a specific sentence on Emerson's creative approach: "She uses the camouflage of beautiful colors combined with a deliberate composition to explore themes that reflect on the fragility of life, the futility of earthly pleasures, and the disintegration of our natural landscape." Not a cheery outlook, but I have always been attracted to dark and challenging themes in art, books, and films. A friend and I plan to view Emerson's exhibition at MOCA—our first visit—this Saturday, January 23.

January 21, 2016: Viewed Sarah Emerson's work on her website and on MOCA's, and worked hard to develop a thesis for the synopsis. I am considering analyzing the creative and philosophical similarities and differences between Emerson's exhibition and Milan Kundera's novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. Started watching and reading course supplemental materials, and enjoyed informative video on who writes about art. It reinforced that anyone who works in the art industry has to be able to communicate (written and verbal) the pros and cons of a piece or exhibition with the proper vocabulary and tone to align with the knowledge level of varied audiences.

January 22, 2016: I worked from home today due to the inclement weather. Concerned that if ice hits Atlanta, MOCA will be closed tomorrow.

January 23, 2016: It was very cold in Atlanta today. The good news: The roads were dry and MOCA was open. I worked on my synopsis of the installation until my friend and I headed for MOCA around 2:15 p.m. The interior of the museum is stark, with monochrome colors, exposed ceilings, and concrete floors.

Until a few minutes before we left, we were the only guests, which gave us the freedom to immerse ourselves in Emerson's installation in the museum's main exhibition space. To paraphrase a cliché, viewing the installation online did not do it justice. It is comprised of 18 individual paintings, which are separated into four sections on four walls. We were floored by the exhibition's vibrant colors, dimension and scope, and breadth of creativity. On Tuesday, January 26, we will hear Emerson speak about *The Unbearable Flatness of Being* at MOCA.

January 24-25, 2016: I was totally focused on writing my synopsis. Throughout the process, I reorganized the content structure to meet the challenging word count and to achieve the right tone and impact.

January 26, 2016: Stepped away from the synopsis during the day. I reread it that night—many times—before submitting it for instructor review.

January 27, 2016: Approximately 60 people attended Sarah Emerson's talk at MOCA tonight. At the outset, Emerson admitted that she was a bit nervous that the talk was being filmed for MOCA's archives, that she did not like to stand in the center of an audience, and that she preferred people asking her questions—not her talking to them. With the guests in front of her, Emerson answered questions about herself and her exhibition for nearly one hour. What are the exhibition's main themes? Is the inspiration for the wild, colorful images based on real events? Where does she get her ideas? What's her creative process? Are the paintings in the exhibition intended to be in four sections on separate walls, or combined as one continuous, circular work?

January 28, 2016: Continued week 2 assignment reading, especially checklists, wall text, and press releases. I received instructor evaluation on my synopsis of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, and concurred with feedback that my angle of comparing Emerson's work with Kundera's novel is forced. Collected and organized Emerson's talking points, and started determining which of them would be relevant for my essay on her exhibition.

January 29-30, 2016: Reread both press releases for this week's reading assignment. The press release from the David Zwirner Gallery for the exhibition **Above and Below** meets the four criteria of a good press release, it follows standard art style guidelines for texts and pictures, and it is written in third person. Near the top left, the following items are noted: the artist name and the title of the exhibition, the times and dates for the opening reception, a press review with the curator, a guided public tour with the curator, and related film screenings.

Below this information is a provocative image of one of works in the exhibition. It has all the required caption information, and it is representative of the other works in the show. The gallery name and contact information are at the top right. The first paragraph notes the specific late works by the artist, particularly in film that are the focus of the exhibition; the name of the curator; Matta-Clark's filmic explorations that the curator has included in the exhibition; and the address of the gallery. (In the first sentence, should "**Above and Below**," have been added after "present"?)

The next five paragraphs concisely capture the essence of the exhibition's features mentioned in the first paragraph. After that, the artist and curator bios cover their personal background and academic and professional accomplishments.

Then the special programs associated with the exhibition are covered in short, informative overviews—and all of them include dates, contact information, and website addresses (if applicable).

The last section (its first page notes exhibition and gallery information) discusses the genesis of each work, the artist's intention for and the viewer's experience with the work, quotes from art authorities (which are footnoted), and an image of the work next to the text. Save for some typos (e.g., first page, fifth paragraph, last sentence, "... of ["Iá

á€ ~KÉ ðœEÙû□k3N□ÌÔÿ□÷ôíý□h□œ\Ùóôý...'²a□‡⁻9|Ñ'□ÝÒ!x44Ú‡½,!r‡j,sing(isstew,
this is a well-orga)m(β-f@b^8,,n□m 8m'x□>X(Aμ°°Â@Âë«I□/ÃÄà

ÂZ° □Iô□Ý□%□"□Ù"ÈÖð Î,O¼ðngaging press!release.

Cont¥Ò£F7Ø†°7;ÍéþÍµFí,E⁻□S□"ª□@β□□pà‡ãçynÖ×^TM□ÍÓß· hes0nofe of
the□\$»Š©»(,mÿl>rB□*he deficiefcies ,í1íB‡^a&o□'~ r pagE, immediate?p@_\$_í
L□ÁÄú†Û□—Á
É—...□Ó□_‰□[ÄperiençE, and

Diary, Janua □/□Éd°Ûf A. Richard Langley
Ùh<²□Ñage 5 o& 5

Ñage 5 o& 5

contiÆÁ\æÁ.À_w7æFý□îöÖÛ...→&x□□¹□_Ó□ª'dÓç□zUª|íð:eðä{šÛ\°Q%r;T uv?#" ords

"For im-edir'#□œ•ýq(Ô'ÂtX[cPiÉj • ÆÁrøo.:~iishould"nop be

abdõÝUgÃúèMÅÛp⁻ ¼µì ædUp' □m >ÉÐ

IUs(lettebs shouldy= »H Öãó{ãóÁ^<&the first letteR in each word

sh2×%ööôô<□(...áa9ê~×Ávš,ªN□Í@«,b¾,‰:hiâition's title, the artist's name should be

bo9FÐè-]uµ

îÿ¾š□¶GC^Áo}>A •*9çÈèaÁŽ of each wobv shov²□,—ÆÈ□6gĭ)□K~°M†Á°

•Î} □= §²u· fÉ□¼-M[□V8□î-ÿŸ<k□7¶\Ã ^s ÝI□@_†¶½;□‰Eôxàè□-Ñvø çA~tdíÁ

-7m□™thEy should be aligned to the leþ%p□½□-|ç™ŒÝ~´Hhe0date and time (which is

formatted incorrectly). Worse, the first page does nolDæœnβRfòF=*0ÁGuand contact

information of the gallery. (This information is on the last page and is incomplete and formatted

incorrectly.) And the critical first paragraph has only one incomplete sentence (no period) that

does not tie to the second paragraph and is irrelevant.

Nowhere on the first page, or elsewhere, does the press release clearly address the four criteria of a good press release—or the title of the exhibition (work?)—or include any images from the exhibition. The second paragraph mentions a work that may or may not be part of the exhibition. (Disturbingly, the exhibition's title, the word "exhibition," and the artist's name are not in the press release.) All of the paragraphs and sentences are too long, poorly structured (no consistent tone or logical transitions, and too many semicolons and colons), incoherent, and incorrectly formatted (font size, spacing, alignment).

This alleged press release is an unreadable, misguided, and misinformed mishmash of insulting content.