



To Rome With Audrey, With Turrell to the Sky

By Edward Goldman

I've been in love with Audrey Hepburn all my life. Well, not really all my life, but at least since the moment I saw her in William Wyler's 1953 classic film, *Roman Holiday*. I was just a kid living in Russia, and I could only dream about traveling to Rome. With the exception of high political officials, no one was allowed to travel abroad. Last Sunday, I went to the Hammer Museum for a screening of this favorite movie of mine and, once again, Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck did a fantastic job being my cicerones, my personal tour guides to the Eternal City.



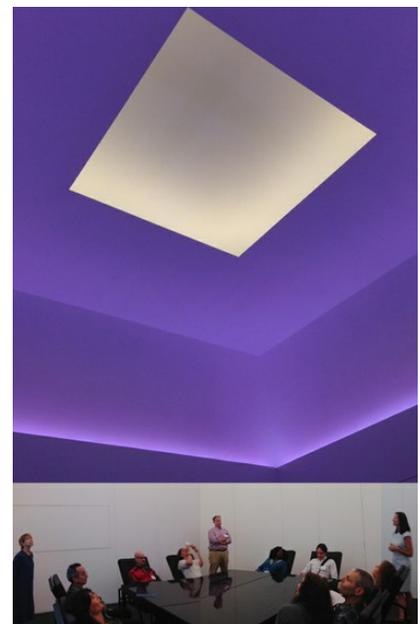
Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck in *Roman Holiday*, 1953.

Last year, I went to the signing of Douglas Kirkland's book, *A Life in Pictures*. He is one of Hollywood's best-known photographers, with almost 50 years of capturing priceless moments in the history of movie making. His 1965 photo of Audrey greets me every time I enter my apartment. However, my debt to Audrey goes even further. It's difficult to believe, but Hollywood beat Moscow by 10 years by the very fact that King Vidor's film, *War and Peace*, came out in 1956 while the Russians only managed to come up with their version a decade later, in 1966. So, here goes Audrey again, playing the title role of Russian princess, Natasha Rostov, in an American retelling of Leo Tolstoy's famous novel. I was in my early teens then, still hadn't read the novel, and Audrey was the one who introduced it to me.



Audrey Hepburn, Paris, 1965. Photo by Douglas Kirkland

And talking about the magic. James Turrell, the great American artist whose recent exhibition at LACMA was such a huge hit, has a way--his very special way--of making you look at the sky in a way you've never seen it before. There are several of his Skyspace installations here in Los Angeles, but they're in the homes of private collectors. But his most recent one was done for the conference room of Kayne Griffin Corcoran Gallery on La Brea Avenue. Over this past weekend, I took a group of collectors to see this Skyspace, and if you take a look at the photo I took, it was pure magic.



James Turrell, *Skyspace*, 2014. Kayne Griffin Corcoran Gallery

You've probably heard the British saying that "children should be seen but not heard." Occasionally, when I hear some artists speak, I feel like saying that "artists should be seen but not heard." This definitely applies to Jeff Koons, who puts me to sleep every time I hear him. A few months ago, I heard him responding to a simple question about what kinds of books he likes to read--in his infamous monotone, he responded, "I love to read Plato." Hmm, how about that?

But over the weekend, I had the good fortune not only to meet, but also to hear two major Los Angeles artists, each of them with nearly half a century of successful art careers under their belts. Joe Goode met with a group of collectors at his current show at Kohn Gallery, and the way he spoke about his very improvisational process of art making--revealing the fact that he never knows what the final result will be--made us experience and enjoy his abstract work in a particularly personal and intimate way.

George Herms, another much-revered veteran of Los Angeles' art scene, had a signing this past Sunday for his new piece *The River Book*, published by Hamilton Press. It took place at LACMA's Art Catalogues bookstore, and the crowd of his admirers had not only the pleasure to hear him speaking, but performing as well. So if you haven't been there, you will never know how special his singing and melodious warbling can be.

Last weekend, LACMA unveiled yet another first rate exhibition, this one titled "Variations: Conversations in and around Abstract Painting." I found this exhibition to be first rate not only in the quality of its abstract paintings and sculptures--mostly from the museum collection--but also in the joyful and elegantly sparse way it is installed. Here for you to enjoy are major works by Gerhard Richter and Mark Bradford, Rachel Lachowicz and Sterling Ruby, and the list goes on...

Leaving the museum's Broad Building, where the exhibition is held, I took a look at the amazing panoramic view of Los Angeles, and thanked the Angels for our good fortune of living in a city with such a thriving art scene.



Joe Goode. "Flat Screen Nature," 2014. Kohn Gallery



George Herms at Art Catalogues at LACMA during the signing of his "The River Book," by Hamilton Press.



Installation view. "Variations: Conversations in and around Abstract Painting." LACMA



View of Los Angeles from LACMA's Broad Building