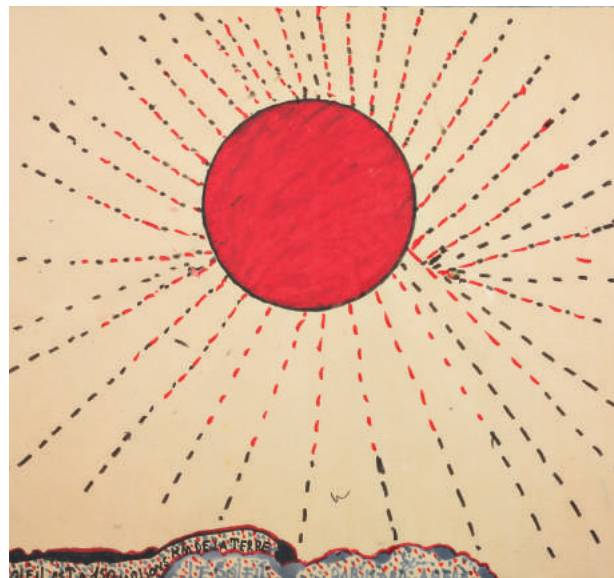




Harald Stoffers



Latefa Noorzai



André Robillard

LIVING IN ART BRUT: WORKS FROM THE HANNAH RIEGER COLLECTION

Bildraum Bodensee
Bregenz, Austria
July 17 – August 17, 2018

Ever since, in the 1940s, Jean Dubuffet identified a genre of artistic expression he called “*art brut*”, research and collecting activities like those of the influential, French modern artist have played a large role in determining the scope and concerns of this distinctive field. In Europe, the Vienna-based collector Hannah Rieger, who began acquiring works of this kind in 1991, has assembled a collection that is strong in its representation of classic and contemporary European *art brut* creators. In recent years, it has also incorporated pieces by art-makers from the Americas,

Asia, and other regions.

This exhibition of nearly 60 works was presented at an art centre in one of Austria’s westernmost cities. On view in Bregenz, among other exemplary works by more than 30 artists, visitors encountered marker-on-canvas pictures by Oswald Tschirtner, an artist who was associated with the Art Brut Center Gugging, near Vienna, from whose gallery Rieger has acquired numerous pieces and to whose museum exhibitions she has lent art, too.

A charming image of the sun, in felt-tip pen on paper, by the French artist André Robillard; one of the German Harald Stoffers’ overall-inscribed “letters”, in waterproof felt-tip pen on paper; and untitled, mysterious human forms, in pencil on paper, by the Iranian Davood Koochaki, offered evidence of Rieger’s abiding admiration of the draughtman’s

art. So did an untitled portrait in acrylic and India ink on paper – two simple ovals and an expressive face – by Latefa Noorzai, an Afghanistan-born artist who is associated with Creative Growth Art Center in California. A portrait rendered in acrylic on a scrap of corrugated metal by the American Mary T. Smith was cleverly mounted on an upright metal rod, allowing the piece to be appreciated both as a painting and as a sculptural form.

In conjunction with this exhibition, Rieger launched “Living in Art Brut” (www.livinginartbrut.com), a website showcasing her collection and offering her testimony about the special relationship she has developed with it. She observed, “This kind of art is very strong. That’s why I say that one finds oneself living *in* its powerful ambience, not just *with* these unusual objects.”

Edward M. Gómez