



Born

1929, New York, NY

Education

BFA, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
 Honorary doctorate, New School University/Parsons School of Design, New York, NY

Lives and Works

New York, NY

Media & Materials

painting, photography, sculpture

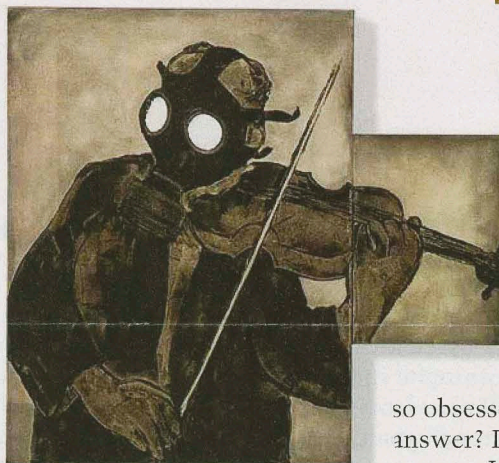
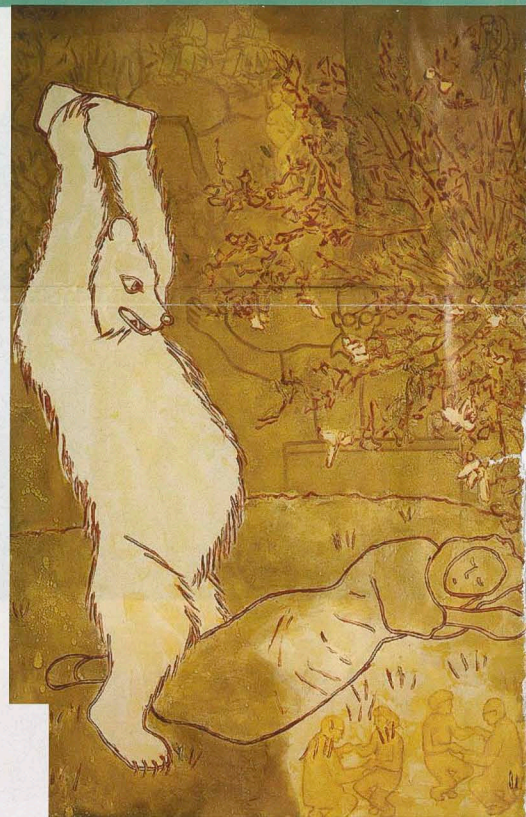
Biography

Applebroog has been making pointed social commentary in the form of beguiling comic-like images for nearly half a century. She has developed an instantly recognizable style of simplified human forms with bold outlines. Anonymous “everyman” figures, anthropomorphized animals, and half-human/half-creature characters are featured players in the uncanny theater of her work. In her most characteristic work, she combines popular imagery from everyday urban and domestic scenes, sometimes paired with curt texts, to skew otherwise banal images into anxious scenarios infused with a sense of irony and black humor. Strong themes in her work include gender and sexual identity, power struggles both political and personal, and the pernicious role of mass media in desensitizing the public to violence.

Ida Applebroog

“Yes—my work is not about beauty, and I know it does not hang over a couch very well, matching the burgundy colors on the pillows. It’s not work one hangs over a couch in that way. But I make the work, and I make it because for me it’s necessary. It’s not coming from anything bizarre or hidden or covert. It’s coming from everything around us. I mean, I am witnessing it. I am a witness to everything that goes on in the world. But everyone is. It’s just that everyone has different ways of reacting to it.

Right: *Mother mother I am ill*, 1993. Oil on canvas, two panels, 110 x 72" (279 x 183 cm) overall. Collection of the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.



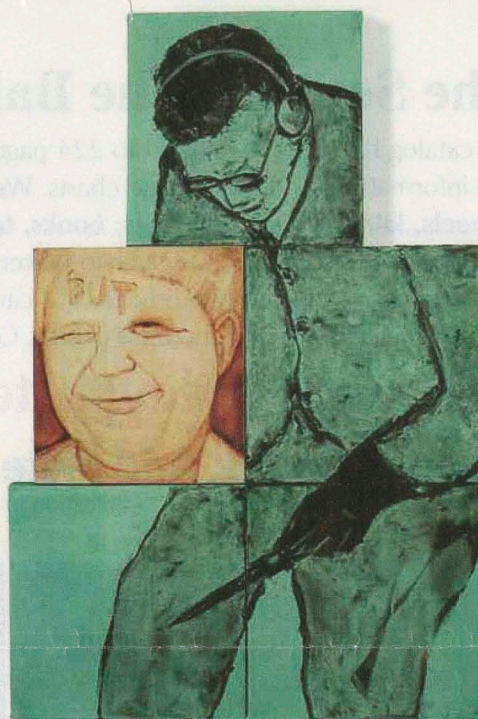
Left: *Marginalia* (Isaac Stern), 1992. Oil on canvas, two panels, 35 x 39" (89 x 99 cm) overall. Photo by Dennis Cowley. Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York. Courtesy PaceWildenstein, New York.

“I do a lot of work on violence all the time, you know. I’ve also had that come at me, ‘Why are you so obsessed with violence?’ And you know my answer? I look at them and I think, ‘Why do you say I’m obsessed with violence?’ I live in this world—this is what’s going on around me. I can’t change that. So when I’m doing the work,

it’s like I’m in the studio and I have all this stuff on my back. I have all this baggage, and I try desperately to start working. I’m carrying in how the postman looked at me that morning, what happened in my personal life, what did my dealer say to me, what did my friend say on the telephone—all the different things that go on in your mind. What do I have to do? What appointments do I have? And then how do you get to do the actual marks on the canvas where that disappears? It takes a long, long time and then this is not really what you’re doing, but in a way it’s like peeling off the layers, peeling off the layers. And finally you’re not conscious any more of anything being there, and you’re free and you’re working and you don’t know that time has gone by—and it’s hours and hours and hours. But then you have to go back into the real world and the real world is the world that the six o’clock news is about and your own personal life, because your own personal life is involved in that also.

"I come from a very rigid, religious background. And it's the idea of how power works—male over female, parents over children, governments over people, doctors over patients that operates continuously. So it's not as though I set out to say, 'Well let's see what the power balance is between this piece in my painting and that piece in my painting.' This is the part we're talking about—that you never really know what you're doing until at the end you realize, 'Ah, that's what I'm doing that's what I've done.'

"A lot of the pieces that I do—these single pieces—they're comments on the larger work that I'm working with or whatever the subject matter happens to be at that point. So they're very short comments—marginalia—and I have many, many short comments. My work is full of marginalia."



K-Mart Village IV, 1989. Oil on canvas, five panels, 48 x 32" (121 x 81 cm) overall. Collection of the Artist. Photo by Jennifer Kotter. Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York.



Digital Outtake of Work in Progress, 2005. Production by Rita MacDonald and Robert MacDonald. Courtesy Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York.

Activity Suggestions

Create a series of drawings or prints that explores a specific social issue. Using shifts in color and tone as well as repetition and fragmentation, create up to ten images that express the issue through different points of view and imagery. Bind the images together to create an artists book to share with others.



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ART IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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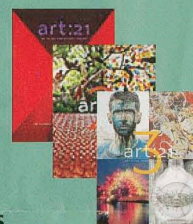


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