

The Noyes Museum Arts Garage of Stockton University
2200 Fairmount Ave, Atlantic City, NJ 08401 • www.noyesmuseum.org

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Hak Vogrin: *A Retrospective*
Comic-Inspired Political Artwork at the Noyes Arts Garage in Atlantic City



Let's Go t' the Mall, 1999
Oil on canvas

ATLANTIC CITY, NJ – The Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton University presents a solo exhibition featuring political artist Hak Vogrin's work at the Noyes Arts Garage in Atlantic City. *Hak Vogrin: A Retrospective* will be on view from August 5 – October 30. A contemporary of the neo-expressionist movement, Vogrin's paintings sharply criticize the American political establishment, the destruction of the environment, and the treatment of women and minorities. Following the evolution of Vogrin's work, the exhibition includes delicate, thoughtful drawings and ironic cartoons as well as expressive paintings commenting on the issues facing our society. Vogrin died in 2009 but his artwork remains a critical voice of reason responding to persistent social and political issues.

Living on the Lower East Side of Manhattan in the 1960s, Vogrin was a part of the underground comics movement, contributing cartoons and drawings to independent publications. These included *Yellow Dog*, the political periodical *Liberation*, the satirical magazine *The Realist*, the anarchist publication *Good Soup*, program guides for New York public radio station WBAI and his own comic book *The Captain*. Playful drawings were later traded for a stronger approach in both subject matter and artistic style. His artistic beginnings as a cartoonist proved to be a lasting influence, as most of his subsequent work included snappy text and comic-inspired compositions. Speech-bubbles

float above many of his paintings, directly provoking the viewer with ironic commentary on the problems plaguing society.

After moving from New York City to a log cabin in the New Jersey Pine Barrens, Vogrin's focus shifted to weightier social commentary. From his new home in the woods, he adopted a bolder style, confronting the viewer with direct accusations and aggressively applied brushstrokes. Vogrin produced paintings that comment upon American involvement in third-world countries, racism, the extinction of animal species, women's rights, poverty, consumerist America, as well as local problems such as the development of the Pine Barrens. In the last decade of his life, his artwork focused primarily on erotic subjects. After concentrating for years on the ills of society, he decided to cycle back to softer, less gloomy topics.

Vogrin's style ranges from expressionistic and stream-of-consciousness to graphic and direct. Punchy paintings provoke the viewer with strident and sarcastic statements. One graphic, boldly colored canvas features a malnourished infant juxtaposed against the words: "Wonder how the market is doing today?" *Vegetarian Miss America 2001* is a portrait of his ideal beauty queen: a multi-racial, left-wing, atheist lesbian in a wheelchair courted by both Republicans and Democrats as their next presidential candidate. However, he admits that she is an unlikely choice. *It's Money! Our Troubles are Over!* presents a couple celebrating in a post-apocalyptic setting, dancing on skulls as dollar bills float down around them. These paintings comment with disappointment on the consumerist American lifestyle as well as on our ignorance of the multitude of problems surrounding us.

Largely self-taught, Vogrin took art classes sporadically throughout his life. He was a voracious reader, citing a wide range of influences such as the Polish writer Bruno Schulz, the newspaper *The Guardian*, the magazine *Mother Jones*, as well as Chinese poetry and the spiritual works of Zen Buddhism. Something of a misanthrope, Vogrin had little interest in promoting his work. Nonetheless, his cartoons, drawings and paintings have been exhibited at multiple venues including the Noyes Museum of Art, the Long Beach Island Foundation for the Arts and Sciences, the Here Art Center in New York, as well as a retrospective at the Puffin Cultural Forum in Teaneck, New Jersey.



USA #1 in Everything, 1997
Oil on canvas

About:

The Noyes Museum of Art was founded in Oceanville, NJ in 1983 to collect, preserve, and exhibit American fine and folk art, with an emphasis on New Jersey artists and folk art forms, reflecting the area's traditions, history, landscape, and culture. The Noyes Shop: Hammonton satellite gallery opened in October 2008 with a focus on emerging artists and can be reached at (609) 561-8006; they also specialize in custom framing. In February 2010, The Noyes Museum of Art formed a partnership with Stockton College (now Stockton University) to form The Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton College. Through a 2013 partnership with the CRDA, The Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton University opened The Noyes Arts Garage of Stockton University, a unique multi-use arts and retail space at 2200 Fairmount Avenue in Atlantic City. The Museum remains a 501 (c)(3) organization, with general funding provided by: the New Jersey State Council on the Art/Department of State, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Arts; the Mr. and Mrs. Fred Winslow Noyes Foundation; Stockton University; and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

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About the Noyes Gallery at Seaview:

The Noyes Gallery at Seaview Resort is located at 401 South New York Road, Galloway, NJ 08205. This 2,500 sq. ft. satellite gallery highlights selections from the Noyes Museum's collection, and work by regional artists. The Noyes Gallery at Seaview is free and open daily to the public. It is located adjacent to the Golf Shop at Seaview Resort, (855) 894-8698.

Current exhibitions at satellite locations of The Noyes Museum of Art:

Hammonton: 150 Years of Industry at the Noyes Gallery at Kramer Hall
2016 New Jersey Arts Annual: Fine Arts at the Noyes Arts Garage, Atlantic City
Allison Block at the Noyes Arts Garage, Atlantic City
Diane Tomash: Plein-Air Paintings & Prints at the Noyes Gallery at Seaview
Summerlands: Works from the Noyes Permanent Collection
 at the Noyes Gallery at Seaview, Galloway

March 7 – August 8, 2016
April 8 – July 28, 2016
May 26 – July 31, 2016
May 5 – August 28, 2016

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