

SOME THOUGHTS
ON PRODUCING
A WAND

LYNDON
BARROIS JR.

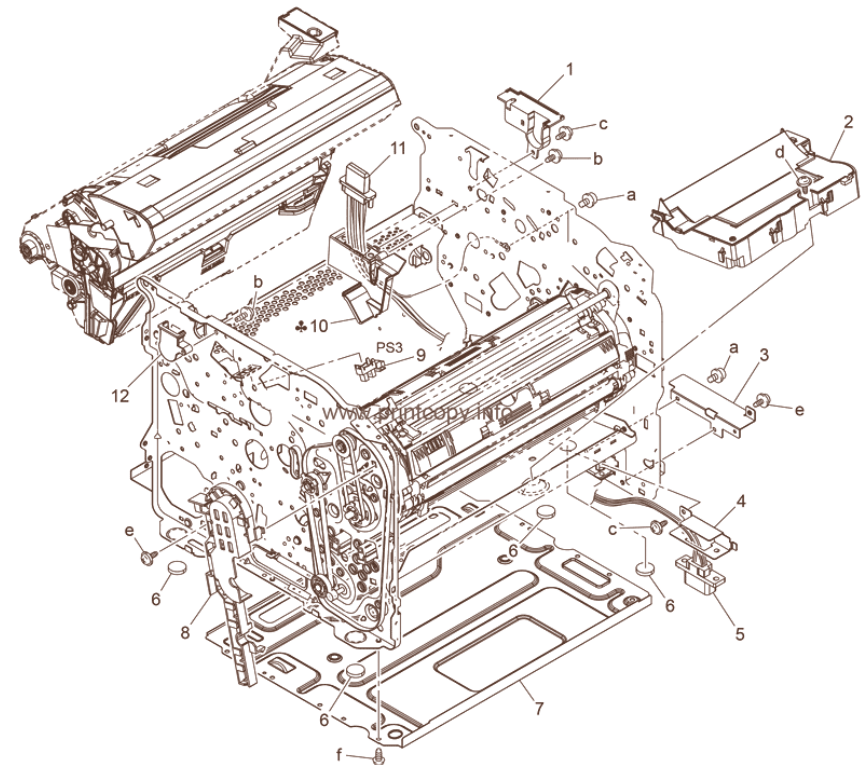
ARTISTS SPACE



PART ONE

MAGICOLOR 1600

In the beginning, there was a printer. Not a remarkable one, but an abandoned printer found among scraps and curiosities on the fourth floor of an Omaha warehouse.





I was interested in the object, and certainly its brown box, which was set off by the bright blue graphics I had come to love in Konica Minolta packaging. The printer's name and model brought to mind an old painting of mine, a dark memory scene of a kid's birthday party at Chuck E. Cheese.

In the foreground, a table of children surrounding a cake, in the background, occupying most of the composition, a tuxedoed animatronic band. Above the stage is a glittery banner reading 'Magi-' with the 'c' cropped out. I then thought of the famed biblical Magi, the source of numerous depictions throughout the history of painting. I wondered if there was a version painted in 1600. Perhaps I would make my own copy. What magic could be conjured from a printer past its prime?

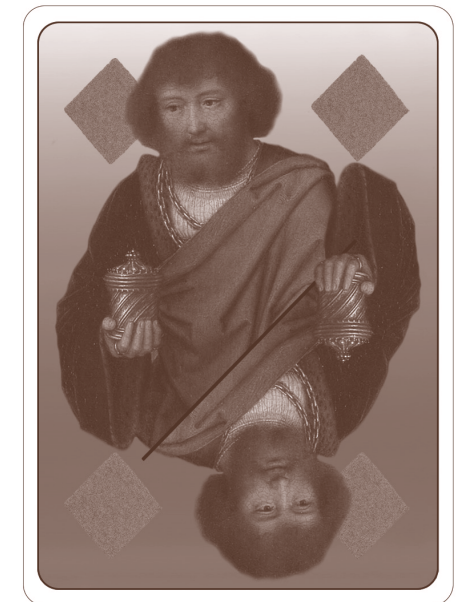


PART TWO

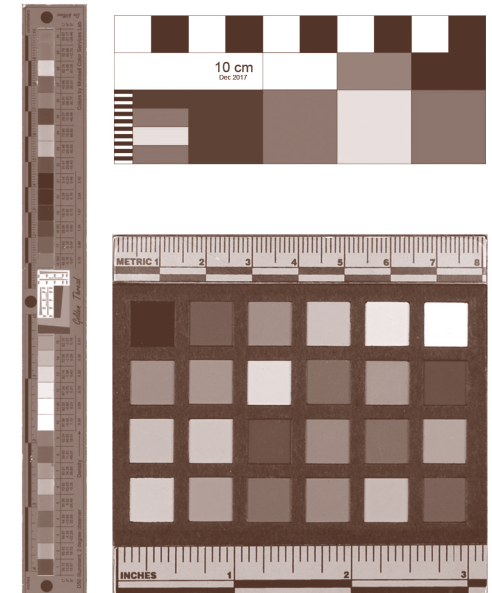
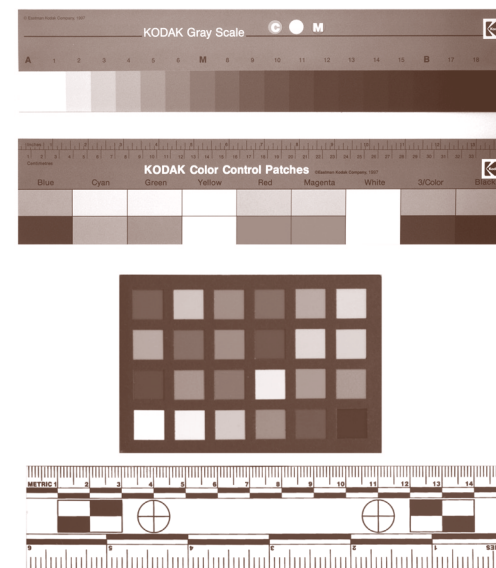
GIFTS AND GOODS



Gerard David (1460-1523) was a Flemish painter that kept emerging in my search, as he painted multiple iterations of the *Adoration of the Kings* genre pictures. The compositional orientation, temperature, density, and the complexions of the traveling kings shift with each pass, I imagine, to suit the tastes of the one commissioning the work. It is said that this genre of picture, in addition to its commemoration of the divine, came to represent merchants and the exchange of goods.



So, separate from its religious connotations, it's interesting to consider the journey of objects in the world. It was something of a miracle to receive an unimaginable object, flavor, or lifeform from a far off, unimaginable place. So we have in these pictures of Adoration, a frame of mirrored gestures.

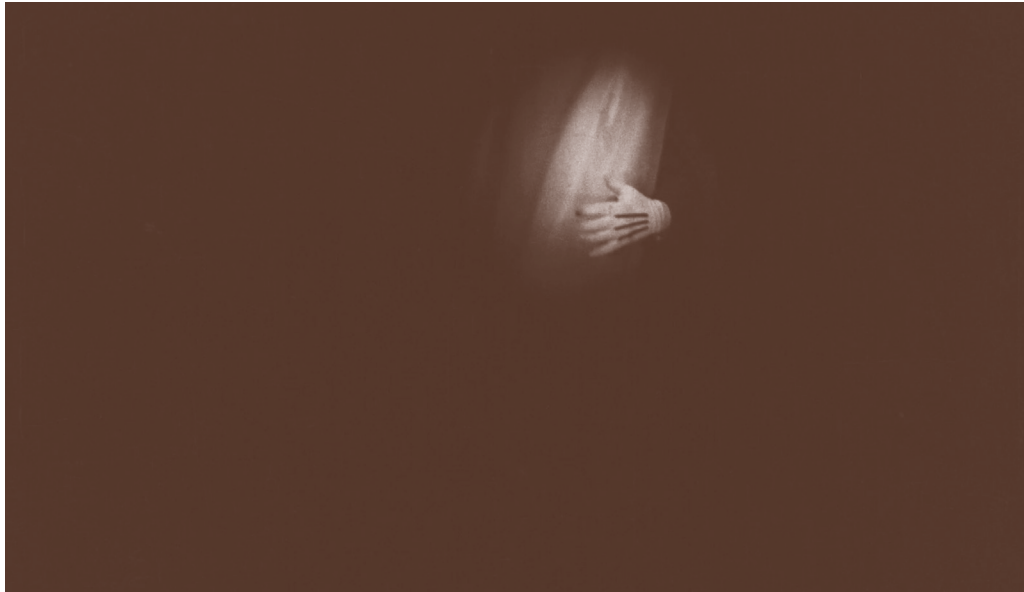


Presenting divine goods to a divine agent. I wonder the ways our expectations have changed regarding witnessing a miracle?

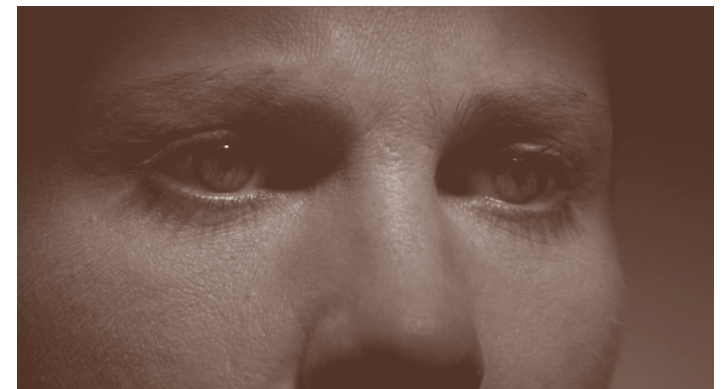
PART THREE

MIRACLE IN THE MAKING

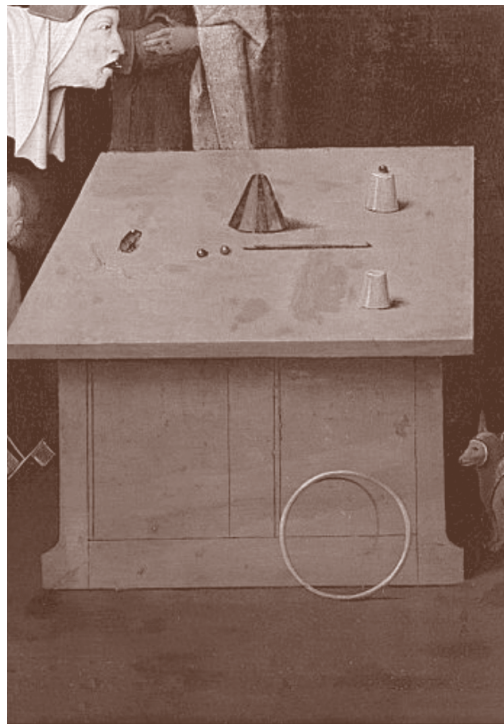
In a different episode, a woven basket begins in the same way with the same stuff. The same method towards different means. It's quite simple, but even as it unfolds before my eyes, it still feels like a trick. This is one of many glorious episodes from *Hands*, an Irish documentary series produced by David and Sally Shaw-Smith during the 1970s and 80s, capturing traditional Irish crafts before their inevitable disappearance.



I am watching a man build a *currach* out of hazel rods and sally twigs. A brief archival clip shows him sticking pliable rods into the ground, in the outline of what will become a stout paddle boat. He bends them towards each other to form a frame, then weaves twigs across the grid to fill it out.



I am enraptured, because while I know there are hands behind these objects, to see is to believe. To know that every basket seen is a basket hand-made is something put aside in our brains. Quality objects have the feeling of arriving readily made, as if procured through a process of divination.



Diverses EXPERIENCES par la BAGUETTE.



Perhaps interdisciplinarity (as a movement away from specialization), the availability of fabrication, and the increasing pace of our access to seeing *results*, has made any painstaking activity unfathomable. Through these films (and cinema at large) I travel back in time to move slower. These quaint and quirky profiles of quiet craftspeople—from candle makers to stone carvers to bookbinders—remind me that “technology” doesn’t always have a power switch. They reveal the miracle of things being made, that magic production is a devoted orchestration of skills.

PART FOUR

A DONKEY CON



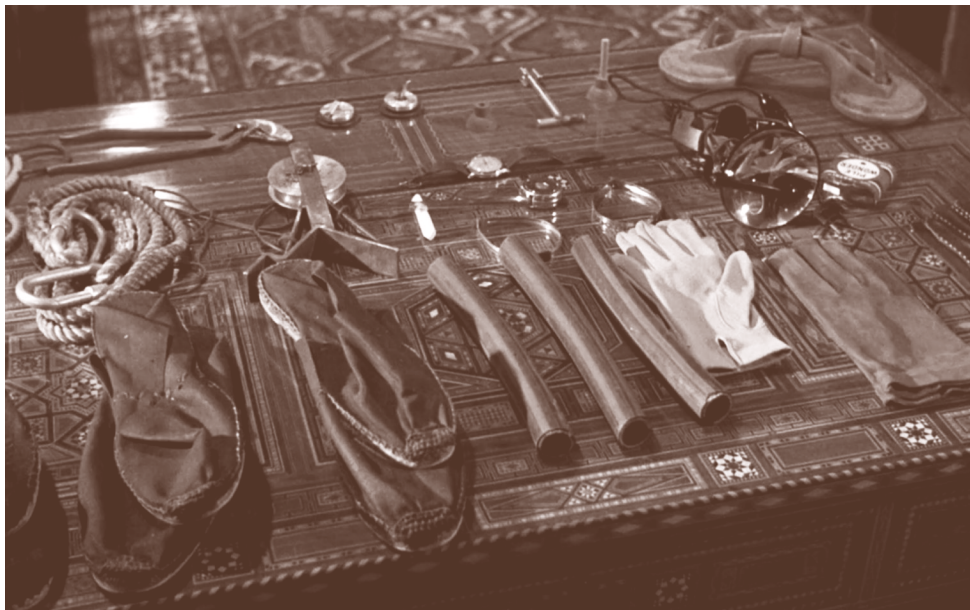
The donkey is both my mascot and timepiece. A sort of sundial that interrogates our sense of time's linearity. They have always been here, working.

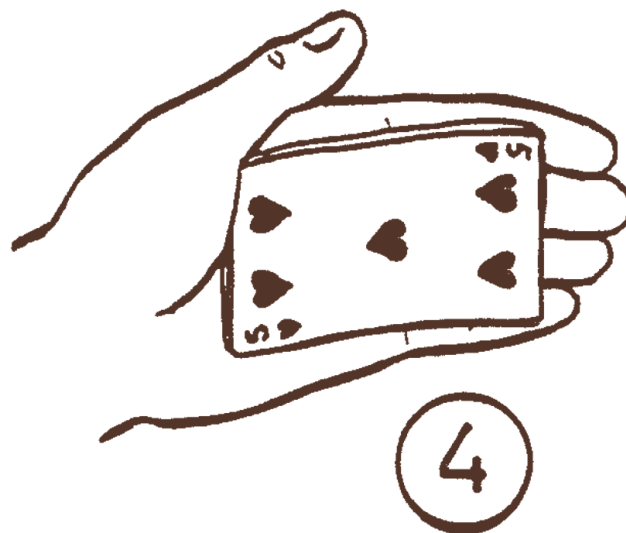
From *Black Narcissus* (1948) to *Big Top Pee Wee* (1988), the donkey has traversed time, geography and genre on screen, which echoes its condition as a laborious body around the world for millennia. The donkey is a transnational icon whose image has persisted in the periphery of civilization around the globe. Like watches, they are instruments of measurement that remain useful, not by changing themselves, but in how change over time is measured against them.





Confidence requires conviction. And conviction is contingent on expectation, either in crime or on a stage. In the 1999 film *The Thomas Crown Affair*, forgery is a gesture of mastery that *elegant* men are expected to conduct, and in the context of criminality, heists are made to be heroic. The forged work in question is guessed to be made by the son—not daughter—of an imprisoned notorious forger. We live in such a world of shorthand imagination that to cast a woman as the source of this niche technical expertise begs an equity of expectation. It becomes a transgressive act.





Why would we expect a modelesque painter in her 20s (her brooding pout, fashionability, and perceived shallowness made her an apt agent of misdirection) to be capable of such adeptness? Such labored touch and technology? Our words and images have told us otherwise for such a long time. And in the presence of MagiColorful printers, paintings of a certain kind find company in the repository of waning traditions.

Lyndon Barrois Jr.: <i>Mirage Collar</i> is on view at Artists Space from February 11 – April 23, 2022.	Shane Akeroyd Negar Azimi Jonathan Caplan Stephen Cheng Martin Cox Claire Distenfeld Olshan Darby English LaToya Ruby Frazier Barbara Gladstone Carol Greene Rachel Harrison Ebony L. Haynes Joan Jonas Philippa Polskin Seth Price Eleanor Heyman Propp Allan Schwartzman Amanda Sharp Rirkrit Tiravanija	Founding Artists	Imperfect Family Foundation Robert Rauschenberg Foundation The Stavros Niarchos Foundation The Willem de Kooning Foundation The Fox Aarons Foundation Herman Goldman Foundation The Destina Foundation The Luce Foundation May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation The Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation Laurie Tisch Illumination Fund Arison Arts Foundation NYU Community Fund The David Rockefeller Fund The Jacques and Natasha Gelman Foundation The Jill and Peter Kraus Foundation The Richard Pousette- Dart Foundation	Friends Pedro Barbosa & Patricia Moraes Cecily Brown Lonti Ebers Marty & Rebecca Eisenberg Wade Guyton Jeanne Hardy Hauser & Wirth Marieluisse Hessel kurimanzutto Joshua Mack Matthew Marks & Jack Bankowsky Modica Carr Art Advisory, LLC Barbara & Howard Morse Laura Poitras Emily Russell & John Charles Thomas Andrew Ruth & Gabe Catone Steven Schindler Marsha Soffer Jean-Edouard van Praet & Tappan Heher Christopher Wool David Zwirner
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