

Selected Reviewers Comments Regarding Beauvais Lyons and the Hokes Archives



"...Beauvais Lyons has done more than simply pull off a good prank. He has also raised important questions about our willingness to accept what is presented to us as institutionally sanctioned fact, and out our tendency to romanticize the past. If you are paying attention, it should make you laugh and think."

Tom Patterson, "Hokes Show Unearths Message,"
The Charlotte Observer, Sunday July 9, 1995, p. 2F.

"There is so much convincing authority in its presentation, I had to ask myself once more if Hokes was a made-up character and if these pieces of organic matter were indeed alien to the body. Playful but with a purpose, Lyons somehow calls into question everything we think we know about science, history and art by challenging us with a parody so straight-faced, we almost forget we're experiencing a parody."

Jerret Keene, "Gross Anatomy," *Las Vegas City Life, August 7, 2008.*

"Via printmaking, the work of Hokes Medical Arts is wonderfully technological and archaic at the same time, furthering the illusion that the work is much older than it really is. Not to say that printmaking is outdated; far from it. It is responsible for some of the most vital work of the last decade. But printmaking is old-school, man—and from the Bible to Banksy it has an inherent nostalgia. As a medium it can register a place in time in a very physical way. By virtue of its mechanized nature, it does much to erase the hand of the artist. Conversely, that same process gives the work a very intimate essence. Lyons himself describes the conceptual potential of the medium as a kind of 'middle ground' where mechanical reproduction and artistic personality might oddly convene."

Danielle Kelly, "A Fine Hokes," *Las Vegas Weekly, August 7, 2008*

"This show is a slow-burn sight gag, with a deeper message composed of irony and self-reflective cultural commentary."

Jeff Hoodock, "Fake Academia Highly Recommended by Critic," *Harrisonburg Daily News Record, 1995.*

"Lyons and many others working in this genre cultivate a deadpan sensibility in presenting this work. The tension between what is real and imaginary is a source of its aesthetic tension as well as its subversive implications. Additionally, the work is ultimately playful."

Lawrence Weschler, *Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder, Pantheon, 1996, pp. 74-75.*

"Going well beyond one single exhibition and into the construction and dissemination of information about the history and material identity of the entire archives, Lyons has increased the scope of his work without sacrificing all of his amazing care for detail and continuity on conceptual, stylistic, and materials levels."

Linda Hutcheon, *Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony, Routledge, 1994, p.171*

"Lyons' biggest fans aren't those who believe his charade, but those who admire his talent and the seamlessness of his visual fiction. It ain't easy to achieve that National Geographic look. Lyons is an attentive, meticulous lithographer who spends hours in libraries, sneaking illustration ideas from travelogue/sketchbooks popular in the 1800s and poring over the windy tracts of long-forgotten scholars. He's careful to include real archaeologists and historical events in his accounts; foreign translations are checked with language experts beforehand. And his 'artifacts' are virtually indistinguishable from the real thing. Everything you see in Lyons' exhibition could have happened. It just didn't."

Mike Mason, "In an Artist's Studio, Science Meets Fiction," *People Magazine, October 23, 1989*