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## The New Frontiers of Conceptual Art

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# The *Word Hoard*

*/wɔːrd/hɔːrd/* n. 1. A journal open to all Arts and Humanities scholars.

## The New Frontiers of Conceptual Art

*Wherein the author speculates about the future of conceptual art in the name of the Christie's, the Charles Saatchi, the Holy Sotheby's, Steve Wynn.*

**Trevor Abes\***

### **#17: Invoicing the 1%**

Tanner Bartholomew, fruit bruise remover at Ivor's Cakes and Ices, collects buckets filled with slices of rotten banana, apple, peach, mango, pear, and watermelon in his parents' shed. He leaves the door unlatched and the buckets half-covered so as to attract fruit flies for breeding.

After three days, Tanner enters the shed wearing a hazmat suit for which he traded at a pawn shop a gold ring his mother never wears and he hopes she won't remember owning. He quickly snaps the lids shut and drills small holes in each, through which he then pours a quarter cup of rubbing alcohol.

Five minutes pass.

He bags the cleanest specimens, vacuum seals them, and ships them express to Damien Hirst's studio in Baja, Mexico, for incorporation into his next round of fly paintings. Tanner includes an invoice in the package for \$675, 000 USD.

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*\*Trevor Abes is a poet and essayist with a penchant for conceptual art. His work has appeared in Torontoist, untethered, (parenthetical), and The Hart House Review, among other journals. He is currently theatre critic at The Theatre Reader.*

**#14: I Got That Work**

Paul Sheboygan, copy editor for the Government of Canada, proofreads answers to the pre-approved questions texted to politicians' Blackberries before their radio and TV interviews. Every day at 5:30 a.m., he reports to an office in a building perpetually under construction and sits at a desktop computer monitored by three security cameras. One is above him on the ceiling, another is set on him from the top of his computer screen, and the last is set on the computer screen from the top of his high-backed chair. A middleman, known only as Dashiell, emails Paul an encrypted .docx document divided into question and answer pairs that he is to return corrected at no more than seven minutes per page. Dashiell then cuts it up and distributes it to the appropriate talking heads. The document contains no information about who the Q&As are for or on which programs they will air. Paul's contract includes a clause that threatens jail time if confidentiality is broken.

Viewers are invited to guess Paul's per-page pay rate and leave the difference between their guesses and the correct answer as his Christmas bonus.

**#13: Drawn and Quartered**

Norm Lietzke, unpaid intern, develops feelings for a tree on his walks to work. It sulks from last November's ice storm and descends the greyscale, siphoned by dandelions committed to frugal living.

Compelled by heart flutters, gut stirs, and brain bells, Norm takes a machete to the dandelions and blends them into fertilizer. He applies it under the tree with the certainty of a medieval monarch, the first in his *Drawn and Quartered* series.