

## Culture: High & Low

With Carolina A. Miranda

# Roundup: Vegas style in Turkmenistan, art's 'patron Satan,' fear of shiny planet

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### Carolina A. Miranda

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**T**he leader of Turkmenistan builds an insane statue to himself. A cartoonist and activist is held in Iran. Plus: that strange intersection between LACMA and the Sony Wikileaks emails, the guy who shot Chris Burden in the arm, the Case Study House that may be in danger of being torn down, and the dark world of cholo Goth.

— Artist and political activist [Atena Farghadani has gone on trial in Iran for drawing a cartoon](#) criticizing a proposed law that would restrict birth control. Farghadani faces up to two years imprisonment and lashes. (She is being held at Evin Prison, the notorious Tehran detention center where cartoonist Mana Neyestani was also held — a story that the artist transformed into [an excellent graphic novel](#).)

— A fully functioning mosque set up by Swiss artist Christoph Büchel as an art installation at the Venice Biennale [has been shut down](#).

— In Turkmenistan: Building a cult of personality, [one ridiculous sculpture at a time](#).

— How LACMA turned up in the [Sony Wikileaks emails](#).

— Is UC San Diego about to lose its [university art gallery](#)?

- The story behind Bruce Dunlap, [the guy who shot Chris Burden in the arm](#).
- Plastic: when it comes to issues of conservation, [not so fantastic](#).
- Manhattan real estate prices are [driving out](#) longtime arts nonprofits.
- You too can buy \$12,000 paintings from Instagram-friendly dealer/[choner](#)-clad “[patron Satan](#)” Stefan Simochowitz’s [new art website](#).
- Architect Allison Killing describes our architecture of death. For anyone commissioning a new hospital, [this video should be mandatory](#).
- Historic L.A. real estate on the market: [A 1926 textile block house by Lloyd Wright](#) (son of Frank) in Glendale and [Case Study House #18](#) in Pacific Palisades, for sale as a possible tear-down. GAH.
- “[An increasingly fragile California dream](#).” If all the hyperventilating coverage of California (real or cinematic) is good for one thing, it’s a snort-laugh. Also, [ahem](#).
- Plus: [Reimagining Watts](#).
- J. Hoberman on [Batman’s connection to pop art](#). Very interesting.
- The Guardian has [an epic profile of abstractionist Agnes Martin](#), an artist who has never quite gotten the attention of her male peers. That may change with an upcoming show of her work at the [Tate Modern](#).
- UCLA’s Chicano Studies Research Center is digitizing photographs from [the iconic Chicano newspaper La Raza](#). Can’t wait to see some of these.
- Douglas Coupland has a very worthwhile essay on our culture’s fixation with “[Shiny](#).” ([Weisslink](#))
- “The worst thing to happen to camping since poison ivy.” Christopher Solomon on how luxury camping is [pushing out the poor from public parks](#). Plus, you’re in the wilderness. Put the TV away, already.
- And last but not least, the brooding darkness of [cholo Goth music and culture](#). (And, yes, there is black nail polish and swearing involved.)

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