

## Thinking With My Hands

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Photos courtesy John Shaw-Rimmington

# "Stone Art - Wallin' and Waffen."

This article followed on from another entry on John Shaw-Rimmington's blog... [On the theme of Art and Collaboration](#)



The Creation of Thea Alvin

"I thought of Thea's work when I added the Jackson Pollock comment. (see previous post) And just to be clear I quite like abstract art ! Yes, AL does indeed really dislike Thea's work. We have 'agreed' to differ.

The problem with such criticisms is that they are trying to make out it's something it's not. Thea's work is not pretending to be anything other than it is. Those that criticise it see it from a very, very, blinkered perspective. They attribute more to it than there is and then criticise/knock it down on these (their) terms. You might as well complain that the works of Shakespeare are a terrible abuse when it comes to

assessing the beauty of a tree. After all a book (at some point) came from wood pulp which comes from a tree. Just because its stone does not mean it is a wall, and arguably not at all if it's actually trying to be art. It's a bit like Pat McAfee's dislike of Oatmeal Stout because it's not Guinness. Neither is it Guinness or pretending to be so, neither is it red wine, both are what they are and ought to be enjoyable in their own right.

If you cannot appreciate this diversity your life is probably the less for it. You might as well criticise an elephant for being grey but not being a dry stone wall. Thea's work is technically flawed, but it is artistic and I'd defy any of the naysayers to produce anything nearly as good at the rates she does and so there is I think more to her work than meets the eye of these naysayers. If Goldsworthy did it and photographed it as art it would be lauded.

It is easy to be negative about things, far more difficult to stand back and work out why something might be good and work out why others might appreciate it even if you don't. The British art galleries have contained Gainsborough, Turner and piles of bricks at the same time. It is unlikely that everyone likes them all, but even if you dislike one aspect, if you cannot realise why others might appreciate it, it is probably you that is at fault or at least missing out on something.

Those that criticise everything that is not 'pure' or 'correct', walling are the equivalent of the Nazis when it comes to stonework. If you want to defend Thea within your art theme blog (and I would suggest you ought to) please feel free to quote any of this... 'proper walling' according to whom - the wallin' (Waffen) SS?, pah !!!! Rant is concluded. "