



burton
kopelow

press release

the philosophical research
society is proud to
present...

april 27 - june 22

the hansell gallery

(323) 663-2167
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3910 Los Feliz Blvd, Los Angeles

myth in
the
making

burton kopelow

(PRESS RELEASE)

THE PHILOSOPHICAL
RESEARCH
SOCIETY

The Hansell Gallery – Los Angeles

Opening Reception:
April 27, 1-5pm with curator led tours

Panel Discussion:
May 11, 4pm

Regular Exhibiting Hours:
Tuesday-Friday 12:00-6:00pm
& by appointment (INFO@PRS.ORG)

myth in the making



“The work of Burton Kopelow touches a unique place in the human spirit. In one respect, viewing his art feels as though we are seeing again something we’ve long forgotten. The mythic qualities his work gives form to are those that artists and thinkers have considered for thousands of years and we are better because Kopelow offered us his vision of them.”

-John Bucher, PhD
Executive Director,
Joseph Campbell Foundation

Burton Kopelow produced over 3,000 pieces of art in his lifetime. He was an artist’s artist, dedicated so fully to his craft, so fully immersed in the potential of art and the ongoing creation story that binds us all, that his peers would refer to him as “the guardian of the threshold.” Perhaps it was this stewardship, this devotional practice, that dissuaded Kopelow from self-promotion: Burton’s mind, body and soul were too busy painting.

The process of creating art, he would say, is like the alchemists trying to produce gold from lead. His practice was dedicated to transcribing this transformation of the self into a higher level of being. In his words:

“The world is made of archetypes and has the same images running through all kinds of cultures. Regardless of the kind of culture it is you will find the same motifs appearing and that unites everybody into one bag, so to speak, that we’re all related and that appeals to me.” For Kopelow, life is not only predicated by our collected and collective mythology – it is the ongoing creation of these mythologies.

Myth in the Making provides a succinct, retrospective view of Kopelow’s life as an artist, revealing a man deeply tuned to universal spiritual archetypes, Theosophy, Jung, Campbell, Tibetan thangka paintings, and Zen. Kopelow’s painting career spanned six decades of exploration, expression and invention. His bold use of color, evocative imagery and personal mythology are strongly felt in all of his art.

On what would have been his 100th birthday, the audience is invited to explore Kopelow’s personal path as an artist, and contemplate the myth he was making.

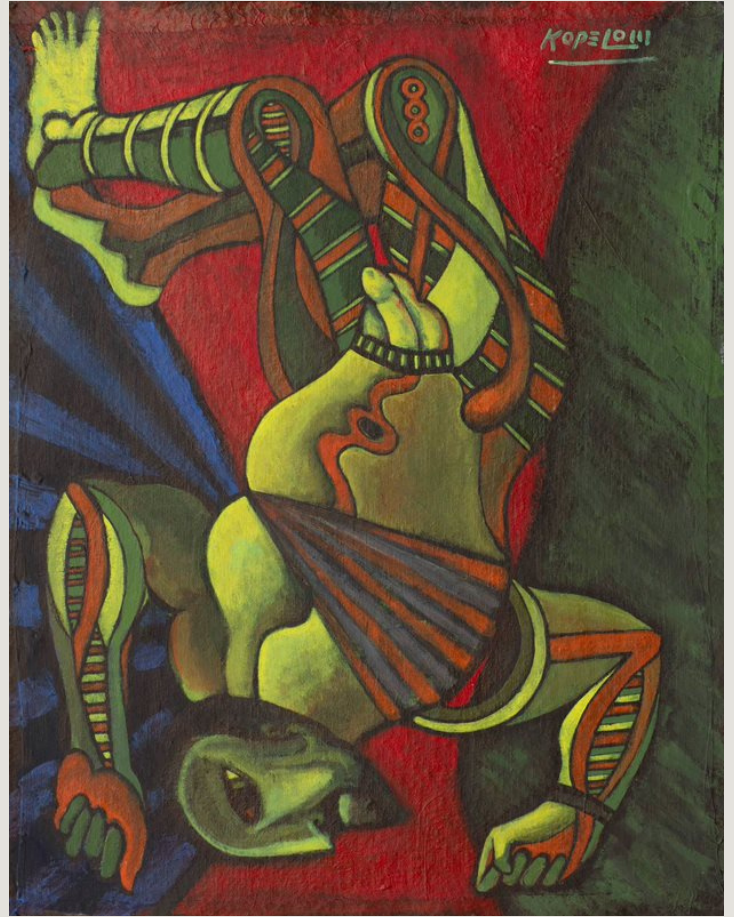
past is prelude

Burton Kopelow (1924–2015) was a Brooklyn-born, self-taught artist and early resident of the Downtown LA Loft scene in the 1980s. He discovered his artistic calling and dedication to color when, as a teen, a shade of ultramarine blue sang to him from a Titian painting while wandering New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art. Kopelow received a Purple Heart after being wounded in World War II and thereafter studied literature and philosophy at NYU under the GI Bill. His interest in philosophy expanded upon moving to Los Angeles and frequenting institutions like the Philosophical Research Society, where he encountered metaphysics and Theosophy’s influence on early 20th century art.

Kopelow’s work, which numbers over 3,000 pieces, draws from multiple chapters of his colorful, bohemian life in the US and Mexico and tells the story of an artist who explored and invented radically different styles over his lifetime. His catalogue ranges from abstract, mystical mandalas reflecting his interest in Jung, alchemy, consciousness, and personal transformation, to figurative works with mythological and Dionysian themes.

Kopelow worked in relative obscurity until 2014, just one year before his passing, when his first solo show at LA Artcore’s Brewery Annex launched to much fanfare and record attendance. Even despite limited mobility in later years, he continued painting daily, driven by a never-ending pursuit to glean deeper knowledge through artistic practice. Kopelow was greatly admired by his peers as an “artist’s artist,” who had an intense work ethic, ignored artworld trends, and painted for the sheer joy of it.

Inspired greatly by Carl Jung, Kopelow’s work is a mythology unto itself. And here, in “Myth in the Making,” the audience is invited to take part in the ongoing creation story of an artist we should all be getting to know.





NANCY BLUMSTEIN Nancy Blumstein, curator, is the archivist and manager of Burton Kopelow's work. In that capacity, she has mounted, or assisted in mounting, five shows, including "Burton Kopelow: Circling the Square" at The Philosophical Research Society, curated by David Orr. She is also the author of the monograph Burton Kopelow, Paths of Discovery. A graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, she worked in theatre, film, and television production for many years, before changing directions to work in administration at UCLA, which gave her more time to concentrate on writing, photography, and on Kopelow's work. She is now happy to be able to concentrate full time on these efforts.

JOHN BUCHER is a mythologist and story expert who has been featured on the BBC, the History Channel, in the LA Times, and on numerous other international outlets. He serves as Executive Director for the Joseph Campbell Foundation and is a writer, podcaster, storyteller, and speaker. He has worked with government and cultural leaders around the world as well as organizations such as HBO, DC Comics, Paramount Pictures, Nickelodeon, A24 Films, Atlas Obscura, and The John Maxwell Leadership Foundation. He has served as a producer, consultant, and writer for numerous film, television, and Virtual Reality projects. He is the author of six books including the best-selling Storytelling for Virtual Reality, named by BookAuthority as one of the best storytelling books of all time. John has worked with New York Times Best Selling authors, YouTube influencers, Eisner winners, Emmy winners, Academy Award nominees, magicians, and cast members from Saturday Night Live. He holds a PhD in Mythology & Depth Psychology and has spoken on 6 continents about using the power of story and myth to reframe how individuals, organizations, cultures, and nations believe and behave.

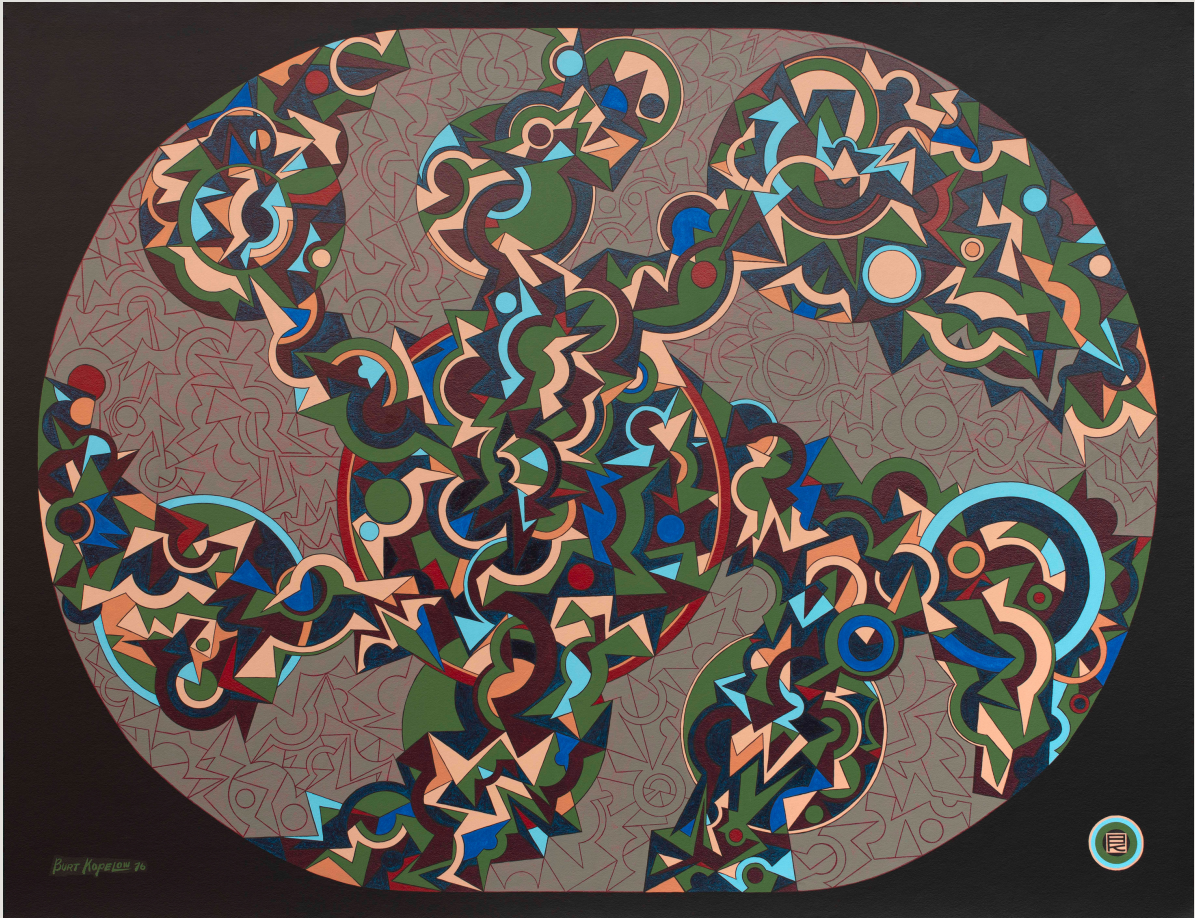
DAVID ORR is a visual artist based in California. His work has been shown extensively in the United States and internationally in shows juried by representatives from the de Young Museum, the International Center for Photography, the Lucie Awards, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, The New York Times, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among others. His work is in public collections among such artists as Ansel Adams, John Baldessari, Jim Dine, David Hockney, The Brothers Quay, Edward Weston, and Joel-Peter Witkin. David is the founder of the Hansell Gallery and the contemporary arts program at PRS. He is a member of The Long Now Foundation.

panel discussion with
**Nancy Blumstein,
John Bucher &
David Orr**

may 11
4pm



The Philosophical Research Society is a Los Angeles-based, nonprofit institution founded in 1934 by scholar and prolific author Manly Palmer Hall as a repository of multicultural wisdom sources and a center of learning. With a campus designed by architect Robert Stacy-Judd and later designated a historical-cultural site by the city of Los Angeles, PRS is “dedicated to the ensoulment of all arts, sciences, and crafts.”



HANSELL GALLERY AT PRS 3910 Los Feliz Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90027 323-663-2167

Parking is available in both front lot (entry from Los Feliz Blvd. when heading east) and back lot (entry from first alley way, off Griffith Park Blvd. from intersection with Los Feliz Blvd.), as well as ample street parking on Griffith Park Blvd.

Please email events@prs.org or phone 323-663-2167 with any questions.

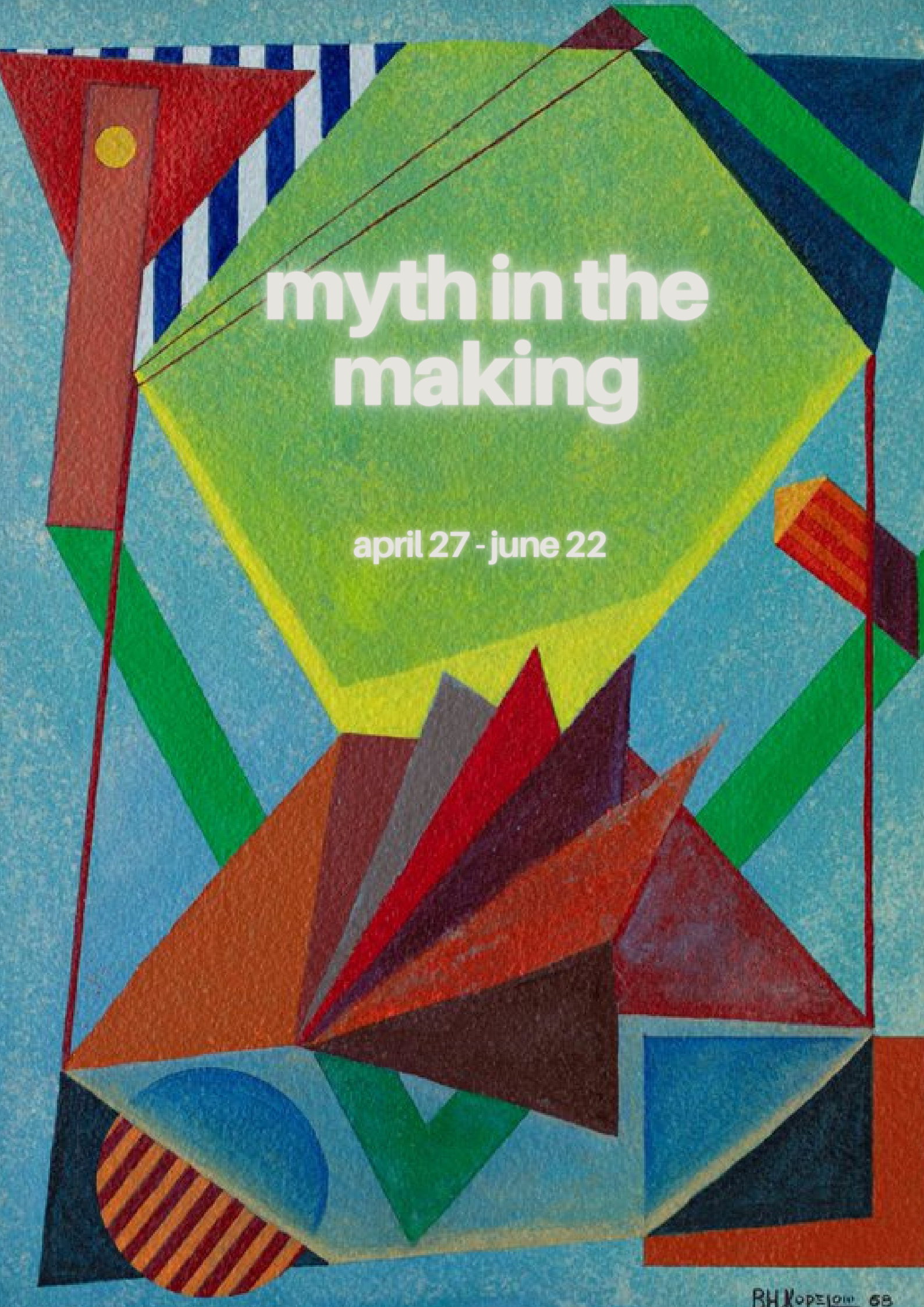
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