

Had a nice little visit to Beale Street last night.Â Went to Alfred's on Beale for dinner and the Memphis Jazz Orchestra.Â The former was so-so, the latter quite good.
The St. Louis art scene was sparse yesterday.Â It being Sunday, almost everything was closed, save [SLAM](#) and [CAMSTL](#).Â CAMSTL, unfortunately, was entirely given over to the Jeremy Deller exhibit we saw in London last year.Â Oh well, off I went to SLAM, located in the central Forest Park, along with the Zoo and several other cultural sites.Â Quite a lovely park, if I do say.
Right off the bat I saw a piece I liked, an Anselm Keifer "Bookcase" piece:

The collection at SLAM is typical for regional art museums, with the exception of a large collection of Max Beckman, and other 20th century German artists, all from a bequest of Morton D. May, of May's Department Stores. The museum is currently getting a new addition, which will open in June of this year. Unfortunately, that limited my visit somewhat. One highlight, which will likely draw me back again, was "Stone Sea" by Andy Goldsworthy, which the museum commissioned last year. The piece, a densely packed cacophony of stone arches is in a well between two galleries, but is currently visible only by peering down from the windows of the museum café. Once the new galleries are open, this



Anselm Kiefer

will be much easier to see.



Andy Goldsworthy - Stone Sea (2012)

Funny thing is that I only stumbled across this when I saw a large selection of Goldsworthy's books in the gift shop. I quickly Googled and found that he had made the piece. A helpful docent suggested the café viewing option. Thanks!

Back on the road, I decided to bail on the Interstate and drove about an hour or two on US-61, the "Big River Road" down to Cape Gerardeau, MO. That was a great choice! I've grown weary of the sameness of the expressway view of the world, and really enjoyed the ups and downs, swerving and turning, slowing and stopping and small towns along the way of the old road.

The other day, on my way from Wichita to Jefferson City, I found myself driving right underneath a humongous bird swirl. You know, one of those massive flocks of, typically, starlings, which swoop and flit as one — much like schools of fish in the ocean. Well, back on the highway for the stretch through Arkansas, around mile marker 41 on I-55 in Arkansas, I was underneath two even bigger ones, combining into one!!

It was like the most sensual dance you have ever seen, this airborne pas de deux, as the two flocks seemed unsure (like tentative lovers) whether to combine or not. Ef-ing spectacular!! I cannot even begin to do justice to this in words, it was an almost religious experience. Then, about 20 miles later, I was underneath yet another large flock. These all happened around sunset, which I think is when the starlings take flight in search of their insect prey.

Anyway, the drive to Memphis was nice. I had a pleasant evening stroll through a mostly abandoned downtown, seeking something to read at dinner (having exhausted every word in my *New Yorker*). I finally came across a *Memphis Flyer* box with a few issues in it, and over dinner immersed myself in that. Good read.