

An Art Newspaper

SPECIAL!!!
DECADE ISSUE
Vol. 10 Nul. 23
APRIL 01, 2011
FREE

"Embracing the futility of the medium"

The Naughties

DECADE ISSUE

letter from the editor

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Dear Reader,

Here we are again. It's been a long, bumpy and hilarious road. A decade is a long time and so much has happened both unforgettable and otherwise. Therefore it is our pleasure at *An Art Newspaper* to have made this trip together with you. And now, here in these pages, we revisit all those special moments that made it what it was. Remember Matthew Barney? Remember Vanessa Beecroft? Remember... But they're all here in a digestible format for your enjoyment.

Our special decade edition on what we have referred to as "The Naughties" is a tribute to our dedicated readers and to the longstanding and yet undercapitalized use of humor and satire in art. This is, after all, a satire and a work of art too: Just look at the signature below, and it's a limited edition too. Pretty neat. Our guys down in R&D went through the trouble of making sure we referenced the referenced references in just the right way to make it make sense for you. This work on paper is an exhibition of and about information both visual and verbal, a time-capsule *boite-en-valise* and a presentation of how this fading medium has created that special echo between art and popular culture. Everything within is a composition that we've created dedicated to the nebulous nature of authorship, the desire for one's actions to be adopted and adapt to popular language, the probability of predictability, and, most especially, the art world's chaoticly beautiful truth.

During the The Naughties we witnessed early on the effects of overripe subjectivity and art journalism. We at *An Art Newspaper* saw the benefits of multiplying our role in this game in order to build confident consensus and protect our markets with noble intentions like *An Art Fair*, *A Public Collection*, *A Foundation*, *An Art School* and *A Foot Massage Parlor*. We embraced rather than ambiguated the chaotic -the-eggs-and-chicken advertising. In the end at *An Art Newspaper* we are just a happy medium. I believe we are not afraid to say that our advertising is content, and damned good content at that. We figure that it doesn't make sense to tell you a lie about what's the point? It's all true innit? Or is it? Exactly.

Thank you for checking out our Special Decade Issue and don't forget to read our subscription when the time comes. We'd appreciate your support. If you agree you would like to advertise in *An Art Newspaper* it's yours for the taking. Watch this space... ad eij.

Warm regards and best wishes,

Cortie eugiat

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Aaron Minto
Creator
An Art Newspaper

This work of art, titled "An Art Newspaper: Special Decade Issue" is a limited edition of 100 copies. It features a variety of artworks and text. The names in all text are fictional, except in the case of the iconic figures who are or can be used as the subjects of satire. Any other use of real names is accidental or coincidental.

An Art Newspaper

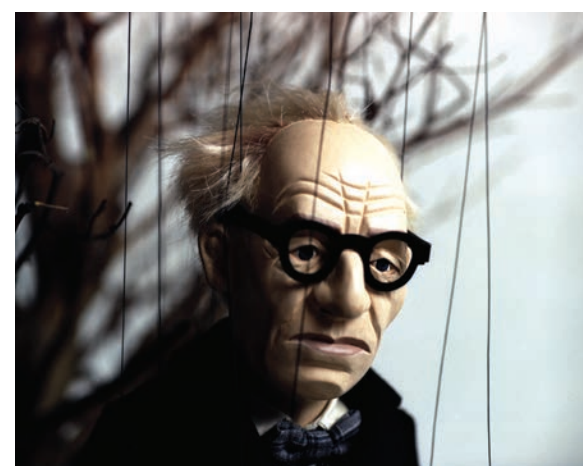
"Embracing the futility of the medium"

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Gimmickery, Lies and User-Generated Content: *The Naughtyies*



The Eyes of Homer:
Why was sight so
specific to
Professor Zilehof?
On Page 8



TWOMBLY FREED!

Artist found in Upper West Side
black site in state of deep trauma
Twombly, Page 5

KINGS SUPERSIZE IT

They are calling it a "gamechanger"
Burger Kings, Page 24

CLOWNS SUE KOONS

Oh how the tables have turned
Balloon Underdog, Page 5

DO YOU FOLKS PASS?

Verbology columnist Craig Garrett
tells us how to do the delicate
dance of Art'n'Language
Art'n'Language, Page 36

EURONATING

Sarah Thornton investigates the
provenance of fountains versus urinals
Dirty Urinals, Page 45

THE ESTHETICIST

Our weekly columnist gives his
greatest hits of correspondence
advice from the decade
The Estheticist, Page 32

SHITCAN POPPED

A second-hand account of what was
inside our imagination
Manzoni, Page 14

The Tirana Controversy

A look inside the biennial that shocked no one
Aaron Moulton

TIRANA, November 11, 2000
On December 8th, 2000, *Flash Art* publisher and art-world maverick Giancarlo Politi received an unapologetically frank e-mail from Oliviero Toscani. In the latter half of the '90s, Oliviero Toscani's success from Benetton advertising and *Colors* magazine provided an orgy of confrontational imagery and psychically base depictions. The message to Politi read: "Dear Director, your magazine makes me want to throw up," and continued to express his discontent with the magazine's stance and its attempts to classify and simplify artists as of-the-sea after high ground himself in a way tied to last place in a *Flash Art* survey of Italy's Top 100 Artists. The e-mail was floridly decorated with expletives only the Italian language can muster. Politi, known himself for verbosity, astutely replied in a manner both headed and cutting: "Success and money have gone to your head, but it's better to go crazy while rich than poor, am I right?" In another e-mail

**"the biggest work of art
there has ever been"**

dated December 8th, 2000, Politi responded to his newspaper's reporting calling him a separate megaloniac, saying that (Politi) always appreciated the legacy of Luciano Benetton as a greater artist than Toscani. A tête-à-tête ensued wherein suddenly the acrimony cooled to a sinister dialogue. On New Year's Eve of 2000, Politi announced he had just returned from Tirana where he would be organizing a new art biennial. In collaboration with the local government and artist/mayor Edi Rama, they would create the First Tirana Biennale: a quiet blowback for the decade's biennial madness. But where most biennials occur in the security of art world confines, this would be the first "low-budget" biennial and the beginning of popularized art-world slumming and avant-tourism. "I'm incredibly excited by the idea of a grand exhibition in a completely desolate and archaic place where the form of art is survival," wrote Politi. He would go on to ask someone for tycoon status — may be that

Flash Art contributors, including Massimiliano Gioni, Jean-Henri Francaesco Bonami, Kathrin Rhomberg, Nicolas Bourriaud, Iara Boubnova, Han Ulrich Obist, et al — to propose artists and projects with a tight remit on the subject of the desire to make it happen. In the same letter Toscani was invited to participate. Toscani's reply was first one of reluctance and then enthusiasm, even suggesting that Politi's favorite artist, Luciano Benetton might be willing to provide some funding. Toscani also mentioned artists who he felt merited recognition for their efforts in participation to the standard that he felt problematized the aforementioned Top 100 Artists list: Nancy Bellano, or "the incredibly Italian and *conservatissimo* Carmelo Gavotta," and even someone completely new: an African artist like Baba Eca and Hamid Piccard for their depiction of the unknown to the Western world. The e-mail ended on a warm note requesting a

continued on Page 24

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News in Brief

SPECIAL DECADE ISSUE

Core Design Culture Role

EDITOR'S LETTER

Pag 2

NATIONAL

Twombly Freed from Upper West Side Black Site. Pag 5

Clown Cry for Justice. Pag 5

Maria Abramovic's New York. Pag 5

Interview with a New Obscurity: Assimilation. Pag 10

Something Very Easy Printed by NEA. Pag 6

WikiLeaks: Obama's Hidden Art Czar. Blow by Blow. Pag 4

Can You Kid Act Like That? Pag 5

The Eyes of Homer: Eminem Art History Comes to Life. The Problems of Sign, Bilingual Self. Pag 8

Did We're's My Art?! Found the Best of the Red List Classic. Pag 4

Interview with Robert Smithson. Pag 10

INTERNATIONAL

The Tirana Conspiracy. Pag 3

Hirst's Return to Back to the Wild. Pag 7

Mainfest 0: Will Draeland Palestine. Pag 8

Uriel Exams Madrid to Art Fair. Pag 8

Stacy Copcove's Abandonment. Pag 3

Tehran MoCA Presents Western Art Collection. Interview with Tiziana Sfrizzi. Pag 3

Bieschke's Raw and Wild. Pag 8

Tate Namibia: Forward and Backward. Pag 7

Kigali's Perspective. Pag 4

Ai Weiwei's Return to China. Pag 3

Artist's Portfolio: Land Art in Trash. Pag 6

Man in the Hat. Pag 4

Icelandic Artist Eliasson Shows. Pag 5

Room and Art: Athens to Athens. Pag 4

SCIENCE, DESIGN, HEALTH, TECHNOLOGY, STRATEGIES, EDUCATION

When Natural Disaster Strikes, Send in the Eco Artists. Pag 9

Artists Can Tell the Difference Between Apes and Dogs. Pag 8

Is Your Mother Well? Pag 8

Placebo Art Trials Finish Results. Pag 8

When Packaging Becomes Content. Pag 3

Ex-Royalist Artist: Orhan Inatli's Kid Project. David Hammons and Nabholz. Pag 5

Carster's Designer: Kid's Right to Like. Pag 3

Scientists: Copy the Copy is Actually a Digital Artist's World. Pag 8

IKEA Scandal. Pag 7

The Great Fall. Pag 8

Disruption. Pag 10

Karma Chameleon: Interview with Donelle Woodford. Pag 2

MOVIES/FILM/THEATER

After Recess: Performance Art. Again. Pag 7

X-Rated Crew Master: Rowing a Wild. Pag 3

RE: Performance: Interview with Maria Abramovic. Pag 2

Behind the Scenes: VIP Art Fair. The Documentary. Pag 3

Castaway: The Last Street. Pag 2

"To Be Titled": Orhan's Core's New Film about Art World. Pag 8

"Mad in Heaven" Premieres. Pay Per-View. Pag 3

UNEDITED OPINIONS

Art's Lag. Pag 8

The Establishment. Pag 3

Art Magazine: Chill Uses Personal Attack to Discredit Skeptic. Original Controversy. Pag 3

Curator's Corner: FYI DIY: The Perfect Breakfast. Pag 3

In the Line of Critique: On a Against Intellectual's Traditional Mag Exhibitional Affiliate Proven Authentic. Pag 9

HOROSCOPE

Pag 3

TRIVIAL PURSUITS

Pag 10

FREE/WORK/MARKET/ECONOMY

You Are Free. Pag 3

Phillips' Dump Auction. Pag 8

Strip for the Underdog. Pag 6

Interview with Robert Shapiro. Pag 4

Lift a Finger: Outspoken Contemporary Art. Pag 7

White Collar Hires Share Market. Slips. Pag 8

Reggie Urias: Has the Art Market Gone Mad? Pag 3

What a Contemporary Artist Depends On: What Your Definition of 'Is' Is. Pag 4

COMIC RELIEF

Pag 6

OBITUARY

Harald Zeeman. Pag 8

Steph Arrin. Pag 8

CLASSIFIED ADS

Pag 3

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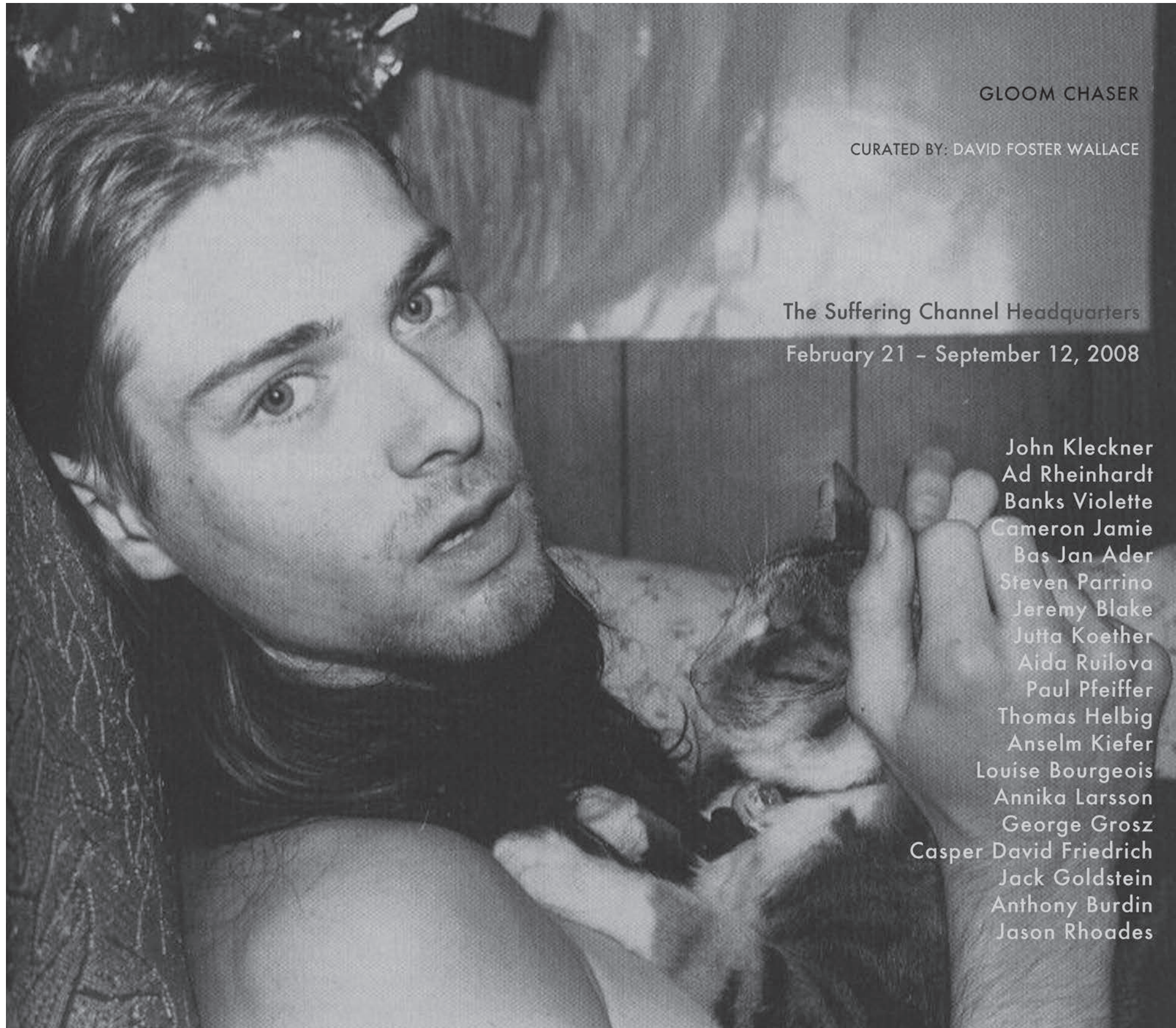
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NATIONAL

After Recession, Performance Art Deemed Again Lame

WALL STREET, Septemb r 9
 As the Great Recession comes to a close, dealers, curators, artists and audiences in contemporary art are u ck y cm ig to th realization th t Perfo - mance Art is indeed actually lame. "I was thinking th se last 5 ars th t what I was d g was k d 6 p rfo man e art," said n recen ly in erv ewed sculptor, Johannes Kurzweil, 28, of Berlin-Mitte. "But now that I'm making money again, I just d t h e time. I was atted g a p rfo man e just last week, and thought to myself 'Man, this is p ettl ame.'"

After enjoy- ing a h d y in the late 1960s and '70s, performance art after this peak became the quickest way to empty a room at an art fu tip engendering jokes such as "Q: Hw may performance artists does it tak to screw in a lightbulb? A: I don't know, I left th ee h s ago." Self-pro- claimed p rfo - mance artists disappeared into obscure Mid-western art departments, and the practice was only kept alive by a small hardcore

band of practitioners, still covering their naked bodies with honey and whipping themselves in small raw g lleries in fi ash n b e p rts 6 Ls Ag les, New Yo la n d C h cag
 "I used to perform to audiences of three or four people, including my mother" said sadomasochist, g y rih s activ st, ad artist Btu ch e Carru h rs p acticig fo th still-p m ig Perfo ma, "ad at first I thought maybe they were here for the beer, but it just exploded. Now that's it over again, I'm js t th fi li t b ten ed
 Th ecom ists h e reassn ed th p rfo - mance art community of a potential "double-dip," it h sh t stp d th wealth frn settig reco d prices on mediocre art from big names and heating

p th s6 t-ed 6 th mark t n m6 tly n ested g artists, esp cially th e wh mak th g that are easy to store. "It was tough there for a while," said Los Angeles dealer Claudia Kruger of Krg r Prj ects. "We were b tig p rfo man e, lots of group shows. I'm so relieved we can go b ct a cta lly ellig h g "

Officials at successful international art fairs Art Basel ad Art Basel Miami Beach are rm d ed to b d b tig an t rih b n n p rfo man e art at th fairs. "We b liev p p e we're js t atted g

performances at the fair so they didn't have to buy anything like expensive dinners, more art, exclusive p rties," said an insider speaking on condition of anonymity. "But money is back on tap. Performance art is fine for poor people or students, but we are committed to the history of art. And besides, it simply doesn't sell."

With the recent economic downturn, broke cn ato s at n e well-endowed institutions and artists (even those with rep- resentation in



Ch lsea) tn n d to p rfo man e art as a rev e d medium, arguing that it was an important and x lid a e n fo e p essin in v sa l art, ad th t it js t h p n d to b ch ap r. "We h d to can el th K e retro p ctiv cas e we js t d l th e any money," said New York curator Mirjana Gonzalez-Fraser sp ak ng v a a cn ato ial in ern "So with all th mo y we h d left after we p id n bar tab, we booked performance artists, had a couple of symposiums, it really seemed to be wo kg ad ch ap y. Btu th d s are startig to pony up again in a real way, some even dangling their blue-chip art collections in front of us as potential donations. We're happy to report that K e is b ckt h p g am"

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The Eyes of Homer: Eminent Art Historian Completes Life's Work on the Problematics of Sight, Blinds Self

By Chris Wiley

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS,

April 11, 2000

"After I had finished the book, the weight of vision's tyranny simply became too much," observed Zilany Zilehof, emeritus professor of art history at Harvard University and author of numerous highly regarded treatises on art, including *The Death of Everything: Art, Nihilism and the End of Meaning* and *Fortune's Fool: Mediocrity and Financial Remuneration in Art*, during our first meeting at St. Jude Memorial Hospital in Cambridge, Massachusetts. A week earlier, Prof. Zilehof had finished the final round of revisions on his much-anticipated magnum opus, *The Eyes of Homer: Blindness and Grace in the Age of Visual Slavery*, and, after dropping the polished manuscript in the mail and eating a light lunch, he blinded himself with a silver-plated letter opener that had once belonged to the French philosopher George Bataille. It was a brutal — though many have said not entirely surprising — act that has sent shockwaves through Cambridge's tight-knit academic community and the world of art at large.

Over the course of his nearly thirty-year career as an art historian, Professor Zilehof has been both consistently revered and consistently controversial. On the one hand, he has gained wide respect for the depth and historical urgency of his books, as well as his ability to effect tectonic shifts in artistic taste through his infrequent though highly regarded contributions to contemporary art magazines and journals such as *ArtForum* and *October*. On the other, Zilehof has also been consistently dogged by critics who have assailed him for fostering unquestioning, cult-like devotion among his followers and for mounting, in the words of one critic, "patently ludicrous and facile arguments hidden in a thicket of prose so impenetrable one would think he learned English by reading third-rate translations of Heidegger." However, in the wake of what many believe to be his final statement to the world, professor Zilehof's colleagues have mouthed a vigorous public defense of his work. Professor Janice Hortemonger, who collaborated with Zilehof on his much-debated masculinist study *The Penis of Venus: the Abuse of the Phallus in Contemporary Italian Sculpture*, had this to say: "What many people fail to recognize is that the difficulty of Zilehof's prose is in fact a political tactic, in the sense meant by de Certeau. Zilehof exploits the fissures and slippages he has discovered in the monstrous edifice of received language in order to frustrate the various crypto-fascist linguistic notions held dear by the bourgeois, chief among them textual linearity and its tyrannical grammar of "sense-making" and "readability." As a result, Zilehof confronts the reader with a text that is also an object, one that, unlike the fungible object/signs that form the basis of post-industrial capital flows, resists or—more pointedly—refuses commodification. His books' very existence, therefore, constitutes a political act: they are dense bricks of language designed to be lobbed through the windows of the smug engineers of our collective oppression."

In contrast to this tremendous outpouring of support for Zilehof's work, his recent actions have been met with strenuous ambivalence on the part of many who have otherwise expressed their support. "Listen, I both understand and empathize with professor Zilehof's antipathy to the eye's deceptive pleasures, as well as his critique of vision's role in the structuring of so-called 'Enlightenment' thought and its attendant pathological psycho-social and political ramifications," his long time friend and colleague professor Toptance Mortimer told me when asked about the incident. "But at the same time, I think about his wife, and the life of dark glasses, dogs and indignity that awaits her, and I just marvel at his selfishness." Upon further reflection, however, professor Mortimer concluded that Zilehof's self-



mutilation "did prove he had some balls on him, I'll grant you that."


When reached for comment, Constance Zilehof, Professor Zilehof's wife of almost twenty-five years, seemed to have reconciled herself to her husband's decision. "I came home with the groceries, and there he was, knocking about the house like a modern-day Oedipus, trailing blood all over the Persian rug, and wailing like a hoard of marauding Comanches. It was horrific, but there was a part of me that had known for many years that self-enucleation was the logical terminus of his philosophical inquiry." Mrs. Zilehof also added that she has been both pleased with and grateful for the outpouring of support from the world community that she and her husband have received during the recovery process. She cited, among other acts of generosity, the large collection of haptic and olfactory art that was anonymously donated in Zilehof's honor to Harvard's Fogg Museum this week, as well as the one-of-a-kind sunglasses that Zilehof's friend and admirer Miuccia Prada had designed in his honor. "The idea," said Prada, who, in addition to her credentials as a fashion designer, also holds a PhD in Political Science, "was to create a pair of sunglasses that plays with the homonymic irony that arises between the physical object—a form of *spectacles*—and philosophical underpinnings of the action that necessitates their wearing—a critique of *spectacles*, in the board's sense."

While the mood in Cambridge remains one of relative calm, the aftermath of Zilehof's action has left some art dealers scrambling. "The loss of Zilehof as a critic," complained one New York dealer who requested to remain anonymous, "is going to be an economic disaster. Collectors like big words, they like the meaty heft of a thick book. Maybe they don't know what Zilehof's arguments mean, or really have the time or inclination to care, but they like to know that they're there. I was told recently by our receptionist, who got an M.A. in Art History at Harvard last year, that Zilehof is supposed to be some sort of Marxist, but his work has been one of the best marketing tools I've ever had at my disposal. The


man could really spin straw into gold." Other members of the artistic community were slightly less alarmed, assuring me that business remained brisk despite the loss of what some consider to be one of the art world's major intellectual rudders. When asked about the significance of Zilehof's exit from the critical arena, auction house impresario and noted dandy Tobias Meyer simply asked, "Who?"

In my conversations with professor Zilehof, he seemed to remain comfortably above the fray, resolute in his belief that his actions were philosophically necessary, the inevitable outcome of a lifetime spent thinking deeply about what he frequently referred to as the "real issues" at stake in contemporary art. "Ever since the so-called 'innovation' of linear perspective," Zilehof told me during one of his many impassioned diatribes, "humanity has been pulled ever deeper into vision's cave, enchained by the notions of discrete, monadic 'individuality' tacitly propagated by the artificial construct of the vantage point, and drunk on the absurd belief that vision and truth are somehow equivalent. Visual art, of course, is the wicked handmaiden of vision's despotic regime, beguiling us with meretricious ocular obscenities designed to trick us into believing in the importance of politically counter-productive notions of 'personal' expression, and, worst of all, beauty. How long it took me to realize that I was beset on all sides by shadows, false Gods set upon alters in a tidy little white-walled hell! But now that I have exited the masturbatory cul-de-sac of the retinal, I feel that, for the first time, I can truly see."

Doctors at St. Jude Memorial Hospital expect that Zilehof will make a full recovery, and should be able to return to his home within the month. Meanwhile, student health organizations and campus security at Harvard University have been notified to remain vigilant to prevent a rash of copycat incidents among students with an affinity for Zilehof's work. "If you ask me," said one member of campus security when asked about the threat, "these fucking kids just think too fucking much."



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radical work it amounts to a political act with an agenda perceived, in dialogue with the community and its history. Reflecting on his experience in a gallery in the 60s, Dan Graham observed "if a work of art was written and reproduced in a magazine it would have difficulty attaining the status of 'art'. It seemed that in order to be defined as having value, that is as 'art', a work had to be exhibited in a gallery and then to be written about and reproduced as a paragraph in an art magazine." Art, then, with its reliance on discussion through refereed forums and journals, is similar to a professional field like science. What would it mean to step to the side of this carefully structured system? Duhamel's Robert Rife's research stands as a caution about the futility of more recent attempts to extend this institutional system has been well demonstrated. Can a work survive through dematerialization and dissemination, as in the case of the artist's *Spiral Jetty*, for example, was acquired by the Dia Art Foundation which discreetly maintained a paragraph about the work in its Dan Graham's *Diary* at a café, a tasteful assertion of ownership.

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In Search of a New Obscurity:

Interview with Massimiliano Gioni

■ K, December 20, 2010

MASSIMILIANO GIONI's curatorial voice has been emblematic of the last decade. In this interview we discuss with him his various philosophies regarding the past ten years, his position on curating, and the spectrum of artistic practices that inform his work.

An Art Newspaper: *I would like to start off by asking you to briefly tell our readers who or what has been influential to your work.*

Massimiliano Gioni: I think many artists, art works, curators, books, films, songs and bands have been very influential for me and for the way I think — or try to think — of art. However the most important thing is that the list of influences needs to keep evolving and changing: it can not be a fixed system. For example, for the past three or four years I keep thinking of the importance of Carl Andre, a name that when I started doing this job felt to me quite distant. I started to think more and more about Carl Andre's work after working with Martin Creed who is a great fan of his. I am saying this to stress the fact that influences are dynamic, they change with time and they are often the result of a dialogue with other influential people.

So it's difficult to make a concise list: I can tell you that at the very beginning for me, when I was really just a kid, some books were very important. The writings of Tristan Tzara, André Breton and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti were a major revelation for me. And then the books of Lucy Lippard, first her *Pop Art* book and then the incredible book *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object*. Germano Celant's *Arte Povera* was also a major shock.

AAN: *Let's look back at the last ten years, the "noughties." What will the decade be remembered for? And to anticipate the backpedaling of lost classics, what did we miss altogether that deserves revisiting?*

MG: I think if you look back at these first ten years probably the first thing you will notice are the crazy prices, the auction houses, the rise of the collector with his/her private foundations. I think those are some of the most obvious changes, if only because they captured the imagination of the media, which amplified the importance of those changes. Then it is also probably the decade of the mega-museum: after all, the effects of Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Bilbao were felt more after 2000 than in the nineties. And probably it is a decade in which art has entered the mainstream of popular culture with unprecedented strength (think of Takashi Murakami and his Louis Vuitton bags). Then again what makes art very special is that it can not be reduced to unified trends. For each of these new mega collectors, there has been just as many new not-for-profit, artist-run initiatives. In response to the hyper-produced sculptural genre that dominated this first decade of hyper-capitalist realism, many artists have adopted absolutely modest, almost monastic means of expression. I think somehow if I were to summarize the first decade in all its schizophrenic variety I would put on one hand of the spectrum Jeff Koons with his polished surfaces and on the other Tino Sehgal, with his immaterial art. It is clearly a very simplified view of a decade, and there is so much more that one could remember, but probably there is not enough space to mention everything here.

AAN: *Your debut on the international stage as a curator was in Francesco Bonami's Venice Biennale in 2003; an edition which, at the time, was controversial not only for the heat but in the reception of his strategy for allowing a somewhat schizophrenic octopus-style of curating. In what way would you say this biennale changed*

the game in how we see the event and think about curatorial practice, research, etc?

MG: Obviously I cannot be objective or keep a critical distance when talking about that edition of the Venice Biennale. I think it was the culmination of a process that had started in the nineties and that had signaled the emergence of the figure of the curator. After all, Bonami's idea was to replicate and improve the structure of the 1993 Aperto section, in which thirteen curators from all over the world had been invited to select the most interesting artists of the moment. Bonami was one of those thirteen and his 2003 Biennial was very much a nod to that 1993 Aperto. In 2003, the idea of involving thirteen curators and to invite them to each organize different shows immediately placed a new emphasis on the idea of the exhibition as a format, as a tool. The 2003 Venice Biennale was not only about the art works on view; it was also about the genre of the exhibition itself. In this sense "Utopia Station," the section curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, Molly Nesbitt and Rirkrit Tiravanija, served as the ultimate self-questioning exhibition: a speculation about what an exhibition can be today.

I think Bonami also wanted the biennial to feel more like a strange international expo, in which viewers were to move from one thematic exhibition to another, and less as a display of the hot and new artists of the moment.

That edition will probably also be remembered for its sheer ambition and scale: in total — counting many of the artists that were only invited to make posters for "Utopia Station" — I think that more than 400 artists were involved in the 2003 Venice Biennial, a figure which obviously also created an incredible stress on the institution; however it was a stress that I think was quite positive as it had a regenerating energy.

Personally I think the very fact that the exhibition took place is quite exceptional: it was an incredibly complex experiment, achieved with very limited means and through the participations of all the artists, curators, friends and accomplices.

On that occasion Bonami has been criticized for delegating his curatorial control, but that is the way he has always worked; it is a delicate mixture of control and freedom, of delegation and editing, which, after all, is very much in line with the work of the artists from his same generation, from Maurizio Cattelan to Gabriel Orozco, from Philippe Parreno to Pierre Huyghe. It's a generation that has understood and explored the power of collaboration, so it is no surprise that the biennial that was to represent that generation was built on the idea of delegation and participation.

AAN: *Your publishing initiative Charley, which you founded in 2001 with Ali Subotnick and Maurizio Cattelan, offered a parascientific approach to understanding tastemaking through analyzing alternative, nostalgic and mainstream trajectories of how things arrive on our plate. Yet the terms for this process still remain somewhat nebulous. What would you say we are lacking in terms of understanding the criteria for why things are good and what makes them interesting?*

MG: I don't think *Charley* has ever been that ambitious: we never really wanted to understand the criteria that regulate consensus and acceptance. We thought of it more as an attempt to reveal the discontinuities and the arbitrariness of taste, and the way in which often entire careers and practices are obscured by fashion changes and stylistic shifts. We really always thought of *Charley* as an exercise in modesty: a way to remind ourselves that things are bound to change and often not in your favor. They were born out of a pretty grim idea actually, but maybe because of their slightly pessimistic starting point, we

always tried to make the issues of *Charley* more pop, attractive, festive.

AAN: *And how much of taste or "successful contemporary art/ists" would you say is directly or indirectly based on the trends in the market and its parenthetical influence on the social conditions of taste?*

MG: Art is something that happens between people: it's a convention, a cultural practice, and a social game. So yes, of course the trends in the market and various social conditions determine success and oblivion. But the good news is that art and society are not monoliths, they are actually much more fragmented and can be continuously redefined by the action and friction of smaller subcultures, groups and individuals. So for every trend market out there, you can find so much more that is happening beyond the market or parallel to the market. Yes, of course money always has the power to impose agendas and impose artists, making them more mainstream or more visible. But I think everywhere you look nowadays you notice a generation of artists for whom, for example, visibility is not a synonym of quality and who are in fact trying to rediscover a new kind of obscurity.

AAN: *You are one of the curators for the 2009 debut triennial "Younger Than Jesus." The title referenced the parameters of those who participated, i.e., being younger than Jesus was when he died. There is a clear obsession with youth in our business and culture in general that tends to border heavily on ageism in that an artist who is older than Jesus should maybe be at mid-career success and if not then is not of interest. Or alternatively the poaching of young graduates from schools causes an intense pressure to capitalize on that first golden-nugget idea to a degree that might, in my opinion, handicap their ability to develop. This is reflected in our art magazines' running-in-place effort to keep up and flag-plant that first big feature on something that might merely be the warming of air and could result in prematurely extinguishing a career. There is a certain, if you will, cannibalism to it. Maybe I am over-embellishing but I would like your take on this form of ADD aesthetics.*

MG: While you can't really build an art historical argument on age categories, it is a matter of fact that many great artists came to realize some of their most radical works before their thirties. Think of Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Eva Hesse, or Matthew Barney, just to quote randomly. And the relationship that ties generations and stylistic changes is as old as Vasari... Clearly the obsession with youth is not simply connected to contemporary art today: it might have been amplified by many factors, and particularly by many industries that are more and more interested in youth and its spending power, but it is also a story that goes much further back, if only all the way back to the 19th century. All this is to say that an experiment like the exhibition "Younger Than Jesus" was very much tied in with an art-historical perspective and was also an attempt to reflect on that very form of cannibalism you are referring to. Actually we did our best to stay away from it, for example by not simply praising youth for youth's sake but rather trying to understand what languages this new generation was speaking. On many levels the idea of the exhibition came from a very personal experience: after encountering the work of Ryan Trecartin I felt completely removed, detached from his work. I had the clear feeling he was speaking a foreign language, and I felt it was part of my responsibility as a curator to go out there and see how many other artists I could find towards whom I would feel that same feeling of estrangement. Ultimately I think any aesthetic experience has something to do with this impos-

sibility to fully understand or recognize the work in front of us. I have often stolen and probably misquoted a great line by Deleuze and Guattari who says that the greatest art works always seem to be written in a foreign language.

So for me — and almost to contradict myself — the issue is not age per se, but that spark of non-recognition that makes a work feel new, or different, or unplaceable in any category. And that non-recognition you can obviously also experience with many older artists — after all, *Charley* is precisely a magazine about looking at what people might have forgotten. Ultimately that non-recognition has probably more to do with the art work itself than with the age of its maker.

AAN: *Italy has emerged over the last ten years as a powerhouse of publishing with magazines like Mousse, Nero, and Kaleidoscope reinventing the wheel in how we might preserve print media in our business, with Kaleidoscope, for example, offering itself for free.*

This innovation is built into Italy's history with Flash Art as a controversial pioneer in addition to the country having one of the wider varieties of art book publishing houses available. You are Italian, coming from this background in particular as a prominent journalist. What can you say about this level of national entrepreneurship?

MG: I think that the explosion of publishing initiatives in Italy has probably a lot to do with a lack of institutional support and the lack of museums, particularly in Milan, where many of the magazines are based. After all, *Mousse*, *Kaleidoscope*, and *Flash Art* before them have all absolved the function of museums and kunsthallen: they are museums on paper, if you will. And they have also somehow operated as schools and art academies, forming entire generations of writers, artists, collectors and art lovers. On the other hand, one might also criticize this literary temptation that pervades much of Italian culture in the 20th century: we are a country of writers and dreamers, unfortunately not a culture of builders... I am of course being ironic, but at times it does seem like we are very good at talking and a little less good at doing.

AAN: *Could you also say something about the Italian diaspora of artists leaving the country? And what city has a viable infrastructure that can cultivate a healthy cultural ecosystem? Which one has the potential?*

MG: I guess each artist or each generation or group of artists looks for the city that works better for his or herself. For the artists born around the sixties, like Maurizio Cattelan, Rudolf Stingel, Vanessa Beecroft, the only city to move to was New York. More recently, for people more or less my age, it has been Berlin that has welcomed many artists. I think I read somewhere an interview with Richard Prince who says that artists go to cities where they can be poor and yet stylish: from Picasso's Paris to today's Berlin, that's probably the right ecosystem that you are talking about.

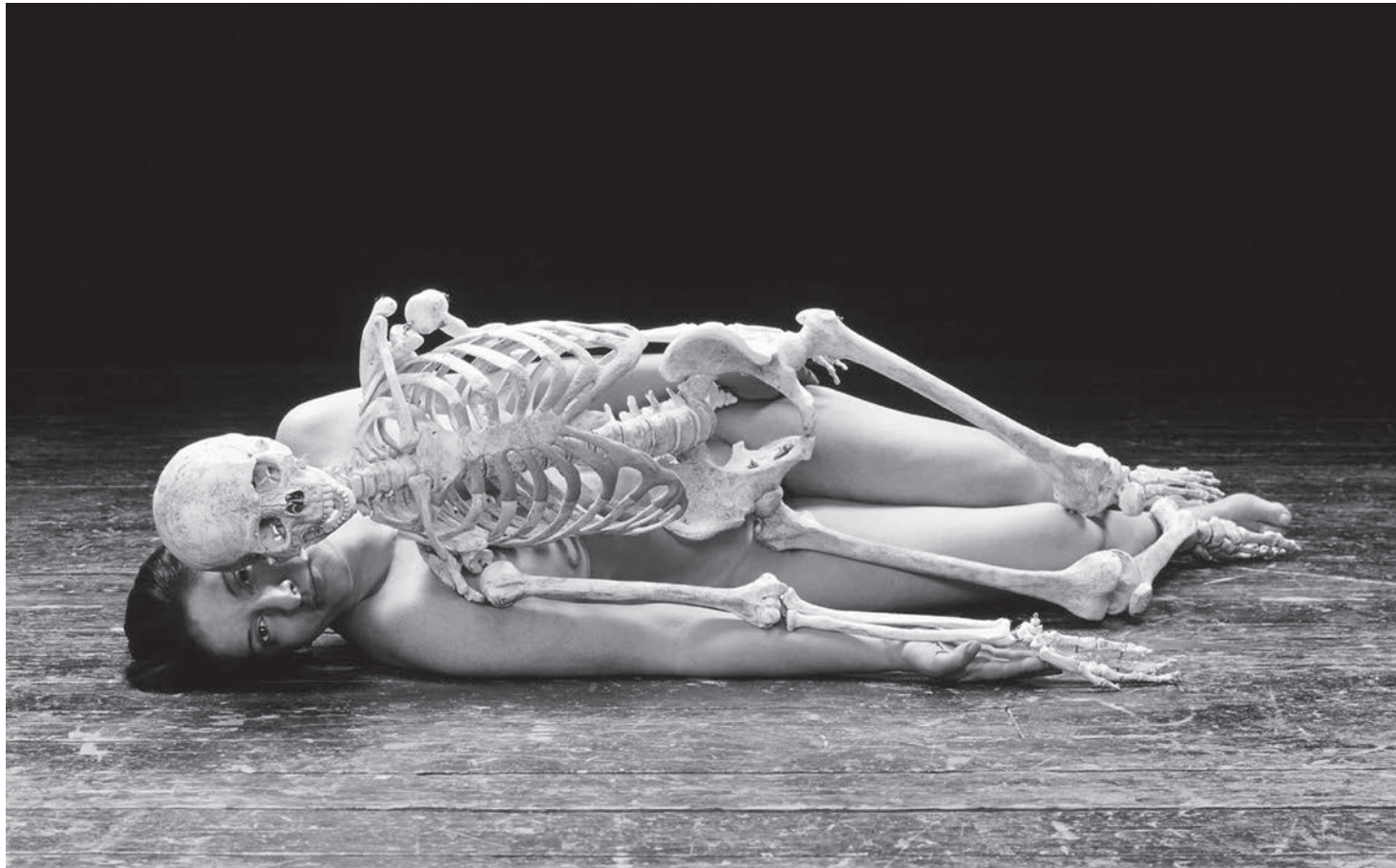
AAN: *As we enter the "teens," what would you predict for the next decade for the art world as a system, and cultural production in general?*

MG: Unfortunately — or fortunately — I cannot really predict anything. I am not a prophet or a psychic. I can only hope that the art world will keep producing its own antibodies. For example, as portions of the art world were getting more and more interested in money and finances, other territories have started looking more and more into new self-sustainable or alternative modes of production, which has produced new magazines, alternative spaces, new forms of aggregation and distribution. I think it is art's ability to criticize and redefine itself that — thank god — makes any prediction useless.

RE: Performance

An Interview with Marina Abramovic

STROMBOLI August 5, 2005



An Art Newspaper: *I'd like to begin by asking you about documentation. Can you tell me about the recordings of your early performances? At the time, how did you feel about them when you saw them played back?*

Marina Abramovic: In the early '70s, performance artists weren't overly concerned about the recording of their works. Often there happened to be someone there with a camera and afterwards you would look at the photographs, choosing the ones you liked most, but it never really presented your work in totality. The material you'd normally get was based on the personal decisions of what each of the different viewers saw and recorded, together combining to create some kind of narrative understanding of the work.

AAN: *Have you ever preferred the documentation to the real thing?*

MA: For me what is important is the actual performance — everything else is documentation. No documentation can ever replace the energy of a live performance, so it never looks better in the photograph than in reality. I have seen some bad performances, though, and yet when you see the documentation, they manage to look really good.

AAN: *What was the first piece you filmed?*

MA: The video camera arrived late in Yugoslavia so the first work I ever filmed was called *Art must be Beautiful, Artist must be Beautiful* (1975). I gave the performance without giving the cameraman any instructions. Afterwards, I was so disappointed because he had been zooming in and out, focusing on the public, moving the camera left and right, making a mess of an otherwise simple, straight, conceptual work. Right away I asked if they could go to the room next door and record the performance again. I fixed the frame, told him to push record and go smoke a cigarette. Then I got exactly what I wanted. Since then I have been very aware of how documentation should be done.

AAN: *Have there been occasions when you performed differently for the camera than for the audience?*

MA: Documentation made during a live performance is difficult to get right. Once I saw a Gina Pane performance in which she was cutting her lips. The documentation gave you strong, very close-up images of the action. At the actual performance, though, the only thing

you could see was the backside of the camerawoman taking the pictures, positioned between the public and the action. The camera should be positioned so it captures the audience and the action, without paying too much attention to trying to make the film an artwork in itself. I have made pieces just for the camera after the live performance, framed in such a way that the viewer can see them as the public had seen them. Recently in Basel when I made a piece called *Nude with Skeleton* (2004), first I made the photograph, then the video and then I made the live performance (which I didn't record) — the process was backwards.

AAN: *Your ongoing project, The Biography, is a synthesis of your life presented in the theater, incorporating the re-presentation of your performance work. Had you repeated many performances before this project?*

MA: The idea about performance in the early '70s, especially my own, was that they were not to be repeated. In those days the concept was to be strictly adhered to: no repetition, no rehearsal and no predicted end. Performances were made in a way in which it was almost impossible to repeat them because of the physical and mental dangers. It was very important that the performers and the public who saw the piece were experiencing it for the first time with no prospect of it being repeated. Anything could happen and unpredictable outcomes were part of the piece.

In the '80s, the first performance that I repeated was *Nightsea Crossing* (1981-1987). This wasn't really about repetition, though — it was a work that was intended to take place over 90 days. In the piece, my former partner Ulay and I sat absolutely motionless at a table in different museums around the world. It was supposed to last 90 days so we spent 12 days in one place and 5 days in another and so on, depending on which museums could give us the time to do it. The performance was exactly the same in each place except certain elements changed, like our clothes. But I wouldn't consider this a repetition of it.

AAN: *What was it that interested you about reperforming your own works?*

MA: The Biography is not performance in a radical sense — it is a performance on a stage in the theater. Splitting up with Ulay on the Great Wall of China in 1988 was a painful time in my life. Afterwards I decided that the

best way to deal with it was to stage my own life in order to create a distance from it. If I could stage my pain and then play it in front of an audience then I could liberate myself from it because I would really be able to see it. The Biography is also about making shortcuts from the original pieces because some of them lasted for 7 hours or 12 days. You can't use these durations in a theater so we had to edit them and make the pieces very intense, arriving at extreme states of mind in a very short period of time. *The Biography* is about having total freedom to reinterpret life the way I want during my own lifetime.

AAN: *Through restaging performances, what has The Biography done for your understanding of your own work?*

MA: For me, theater is something false and I've never liked it because it isn't real, you're not yourself — you're playing somebody else and working in a certain way that has nothing to do with performance. Performance is a straight dialogue of energy and theater is different. With theater you can make a parody of yourself by doing things that you're ashamed of. Before, I was presenting the public with only one side of myself — as someone who is very rigorous, radical, as someone who doesn't use makeup and who wears simple clothes. All of my friends know different parts of me. They know I like kitsch, I like to eat chocolate and watch bad movies, that I like bad jokes and things like that. I thought of *The Biography* as a way of showing all of my performances and all of the things I was ashamed of by exposing them just as one piece, thereby creating a situation in which I was totally open and vulnerable to the public.

AAN: *How do you feel about other people reperforming your works?*

MA: Once I received an invitation to an event entitled "Marina Positions." I went and saw five young female artists sitting on chairs performing *Art must be Beautiful...* all at the same time. At first I was very angry but then I thought, "this is great, actually, why not!" It is important to show that it is possible to reperform, so long as certain rules are followed. I was not ready for my performances to die: why should they die when they can live by being re-performed? For *The Biography* I taught some of my students the performance and they actually performed parts of my life.

If there is somebody who can re-perform the pieces then the work can stay live and can be redone or adapted by members of the new generation.

AAN: *The most recent version of The Biography was The Biography Remix in Avignon this summer. At what point did the idea of remixing come in?*

MA: I asked the director Michael Laub to direct *The Biography Remix*, signing an agreement with him in which I gave him complete control. He was able to take elements of my life and remix them the way he wanted — I was just the actor in his vision of me. He mixed it so it wasn't chronological and removed things that I wouldn't have removed, but at the same time he made my life new to me. It was frightening in the beginning because it's so difficult for an artist to give up that kind of control. I wanted to see what would happen and it became very liberating.

AAN: *How did your selection of material differ from Michael Laub's?*

MA: One example is that I had a strong Balkan element and Michael Laub totally took it away. In the end there was only one image referring to it. It was also Michael's idea to ask Ulay's son (who is the same age as Ulay was when we started collaborating) to work with us and play the role of his father. That was genius. The son never knew me or the parts of our lives that he is now playing, and it was a powerful, emotional experience for us both. The Biography isn't just about repeating or staging performances in the theater context because it has so much real life in it. For me this has been a new form for presenting performance.

AAN: *The Biography Remix must have been very challenging for the performers too.*

MA: For the piece *Light/Dark*, we had five couples slapping each other on stage with the actual footage playing after them. The performers had to be swapped on a regular basis because it is so hard on the face that people can get injured. With the theater, things that look real are usually faked, whereas here there is no acting.

AAN: *In Seven Easy Pieces, your forthcoming project at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, it is you who will be re-interpreting the performances of your contemporaries.*

MA: I have been interested in the idea of repeating other people's work for around eight years. Ten years ago I did an interview with Hans Ulrich Obrist for my book "Artist's Body" that addressed the need to repeat historic works. Ideas about re-performing pieces have come up in recent projects such as with Jens Hoffmann's "A Little Bit of History Repeated" (2001) or Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy's work *Fresh Acconci* (1995). However these were set up in a way that used the ideas as a sketch, trying to find some kind of humor in it, which I had a problem with. I have always wanted to do this in a bloody serious way, in the spirit of the original performances — as pure performance.

AAN: *What are the implications of reperforming historical works today?*

MA: One of the pieces I am redoing at the Guggenheim is Valie Export's *Action Pants: Genital Panic* (1969). For its time, this work had its specific meanings but now with everything that is happening in the USA in terms of terrorism and the current political and social situation, this piece will be read in a totally different way. Such pieces can have resonance at different times and be read by people in new

ways. A good piece of art has to have layers that each generation can use for themselves.

AAN: How did you go about selecting works to re-perform?

MA: I chose works that have always fascinated me but of which I never saw the original live performances. They are artists whose work I respect and I wanted to find out what I could get from sharing their energies.

When you are young, you do things and you are not completely aware of why you are doing them. You have to trust yourself in those times, even if there is no explanation. It is with the passage of time that things fall into place and you get the right understanding from your own work. For me it is about doing them with this understanding in mind.

AAN: Not having seen these works live, don't you have the same fragmented understanding of them that everyone else does?

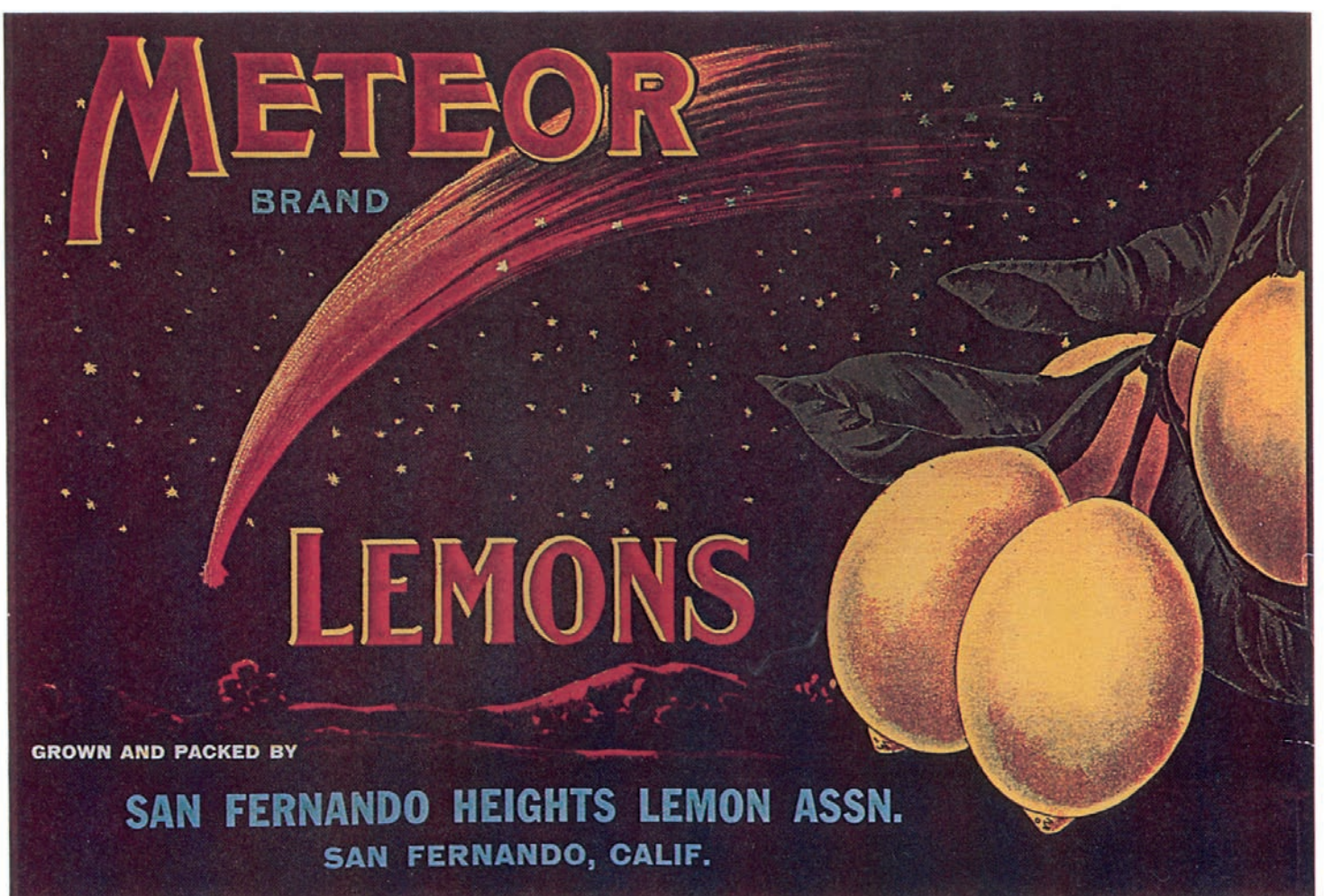
MA: I am repeating Joseph Beuys' *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare* (1965) and I went to his widow to ask about the piece. She mentioned that the only image that has ever represented it is the one of him on the chair holding this dead hare with his face covered with honey and gold leaf. I thought that this was the piece. She said: "No! That's not the piece at all. It is given this interpretation of being a 20th-century Madonna!" She's furious because it is a complete misunderstanding of the work. I had thought that this was the only documentation. She mentioned a recording from a TV station that filmed the piece but had never been authorized by Beuys to release it. In this documentation, the performance is completely different. He's only in that famous position for a few minutes and the rest is different. I found that there has been so much misunderstanding and mystification based on recordings of the time that we need to do something about it. I have spoken to the artists whose works I am re-performing to talk about the pieces and to get as much documentation as I can from them. My version will be exactly how the piece was, but as a very long duration piece.

AAN: Can you talk a little about "Balkan Epic," your upcoming exhibition at the Pirelli space in Milan this winter?

MA: There will be some recent works such as the piece from the Whitney Biennial, *Count on Us* from 2003, and *Balkan Baroque* (1997), and then three new pieces. It will be a Balkan epic using historic ritual practices as the basis for performances that will be presented as videos. To do this I organized reenactments of old Balkan rituals in which, for example, women can be seen running into a field and exposing their genitals in the hope of stopping the rain and saving the crops; or a man who is masturbating onto the field — having sex with the earth to encourage successful crops. I wanted to present things that were both truly ritual and erotic. It seems like we have made ugly everything that is erotic. We have lost a sense of our sexual awareness for things from social history, practices that were used in totally different ways but we are not used to reading them — such rituals are de-erotized to us because they are unfamiliar. You see this man with an erection becoming the energy for a different purpose and it puts a new meaning (which is actually the old meaning) back into this gesture. There is no vulgarity — it is something else completely.

AAN: With everything that is going on, how do you manage to keep focused and have time for yourself?

MA: I have realized that the most important thing is to understand your contradictions: don't fight them — accept them. You have to really try to accept the things you are and I didn't used to do that. With my generation, it can feel like there are no more adventures to have. I like the fact that everybody around me is from a different generation because it makes things more interesting.





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Triple Candie

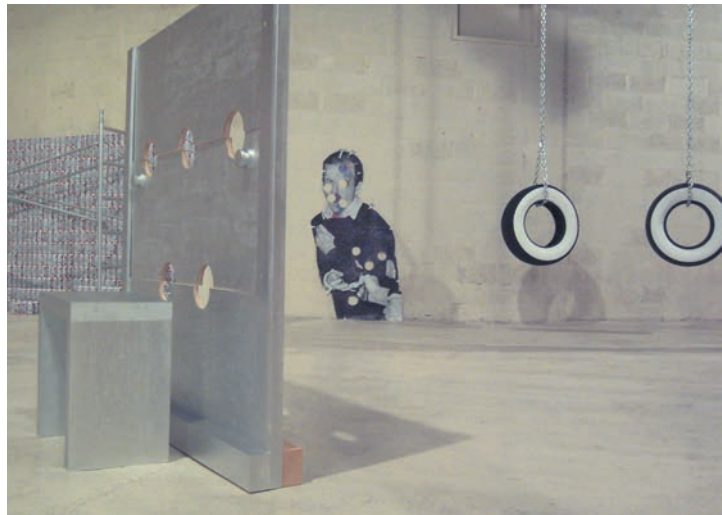


INSTITUTION

Extraordinary Rendition

On the Institutional Kidnapping of David Hammons and Cady Noland

HARLEM May 20, 2006



An Art Newspaper: *Why make exhibitions of work by artists who have actively or passively prevented them from happening?*

Triple Candie: To give the public access to it. Our stance is educational, first and foremost, and we feel that Hammons' and Noland's work is really important, especially at this moment in time. They have had an enormous influence on artists in their thirties and early forties. At the same time, their work remains frustratingly elusive. Many artists in their twenties don't know their work at all, especially Noland's, but when they see it for the first time, there is a sense of déjà vu. Almost immediately they understand it as a precedent for their own work.

AAN: *There are interesting implications when an institution makes such a gesture, as opposed to an artist, in terms of the way you are side-stepping the institutional protocol, but also as an extension of institutional license. How have you as a nonprofit rationalized this situation?*

TC: Alternative spaces should operate in a way that challenges the status quo. When we started, we didn't consider Triple Candie an alternative space. What made us different was our location in Harlem and the fact that we showed the work of artists from diverse backgrounds. And while this was important, we began to realize that for us this wasn't enough. Nonprofit alternative spaces in New York offer little that is alternative and most function like extensions of the gallery system. White Columns and Artists Space, for instance, have both abandoned their original purposes and their programming is indistinguishable from that of commercial galleries. Where is the alternative movement? We began to care about that, and became increasingly interested in challenging the 'system' through unconventional shows that unsettled basic assumptions about art and its relationship to the market and to the public. We felt that in order to be relevant, we needed to confront the ideology of the institution. And because the mythology of the artist is so central to that system, it made sense to start there.

AAN: *Both of these shows are realized with approximations of each artist's art, the Noland show being a bit more exact than the Hammons' show, but both include an interpretation of the artists' works and are not the faithful 'exhibition copies' typical of museums. You are obviously not selling it as the original but you are violating some sacred and possibly outdated notion of how original artworks are meant to be experienced. What do you feel this type of homage does to the understanding of the original work?*

TC: We curated these shows precisely because most people don't have the opportunity to see the actual art. The exhibitions are meant to both fuel your desire and crush your hopes simultaneously. Actually, whether or not the Noland show is more exact is an open question. In the Hammons retrospective, the experience of looking at the images in the reproductions was an experience of looking at the real thing. The images were second-generation photographs of the originals,

so although they were degenerated -- many were postage--stamp size or fuzzy -- you always felt that you were looking at Hammons' work and aware of having a mediated experience. The visitor was asked to accept the limitations of the viewing experience in exchange for the rare opportunity to 'see' -- and better understand -- a grand sweep of the artist's work. The Noland survey was quite different; it was almost the reverse experience. The objects themselves were very present, one related to them as sculptures occupying real space. And though at first the show evoked the idea of a survey of Noland's work, anyone with a first-hand knowledge of the subject would quickly realize that these were no replicas. The scale was off and certain pieces were incomplete. Most of the differences between the objects in the show and Noland's original sculptures resulted from practical limitations, which we embraced whole-heartedly. These included an inability to source certain parts or materials; lack of information about scale, color, or materials; and a limited budget. On the checklist, we included information about what substitutions or alterations we made. But we went to great lengths to make the objects feel finished. So, in effect, they were more believable as "artworks" than the Hammons' reproductions. But they misrepresented the originals to a greater degree.

We realize that with these exhibitions we are toying with a conventional notion of the artist that remains deeply ingrained in our culture -- and in the minds of many artists -- who want to hold on to the idea of the artist as 'untouchable' and 'sacred'. These two artists are particularly untouchable because of what they represent. So making them the subjects of these exhibitions amplifies the issue. And because most people haven't seen the work in real life, other types of mythologies around the work itself have also been created and perhaps distorted.

AAN: *What ethical implications are there in challenging an artist's ownership or right to control his or her own career?*

TC: We feel an ethical responsibility to show the artwork of artists who have been and remain influential but whose work has become hard to come by. Both Hammons and Noland make work with liberal, social content. It is art 'from' or 'of' the people. And when it is inaccessible, how does it serve a purpose, social or otherwise?

Neither exhibition directly challenged the artists' ownership of their work or career because we didn't include actual artwork. But the exhibitions did challenge the way the artists can control how their work is experienced. We feel that artists who make discreet objects for the marketplace abdicate their control over those objects once they leave the studio. Shouldn't collectors, many of whom have owned the work for years, have the right to make their own decisions regarding where and when their objects are exhibited? Hammons doesn't allow museums to lend objects they purchased from him, which means that museums that want to exhibit his work but don't

own it have to buy it. In some ways, it is a rather brilliant move on the artist's part. But for those who believe that museums act in the public trust, it is deeply problematic.

One question for us is when does an individual artist's rights trump those of the public? Shouldn't there be some consideration of the artist's career in all this? After all, the making of an artist's career is a collaborative process; artists are part of a larger ecosystem that includes other artists, critics, curators, dealers, collectors, historians, arts administrators, the list goes on and on. The myth of the artist as autonomous, self-defining, and morally superior is a tired and dangerous one. Perhaps it is time to ask not only what is the responsibility of the institution but also the responsibility of artists to the public.

AAN: *In the Noland exhibition, two of the four artists/producers are listed anonymously. Why do you feel they chose to remain anonymous?*

TC: We don't think of the participating artists as producers, more as collaborators who define themselves as artists. When we started the project, it was just assumed that all four artists would be listed by name, like any other exhibition. Later, after a series of intense discussions, two of the artists changed their minds and decided to be anonymous, not because they had moral or ethical issues but because they were worried that any adverse reaction from the press or public might negatively affect their careers. We didn't agree with this decision, but we accepted it. It was a reminder to us, however, that despite the outlaw mythology of the 'artist,' most, like people in general, don't like stepping out of what is acceptable, and are uncomfortable dealing with the unforeseen consequences of unusual actions.

AAN: *What happened to the objects after the show?*

TC: They were all thrown out or destroyed, much as we have destroyed work after other shows. We had an extended discussion about this. We were all in agreement from the start that the objects were collaboratively authorized and couldn't belong to any one person. But artists get very attached to the objects they make. So for two of

the participants, the idea of trashing the objects was bittersweet.

AAN: *Your actions have been described by the New York Times as a some kind of conceptual art project. What do you consider these objects to be and what is your feeling about that interpretation?*

TC: We don't consider the objects in either of these shows to be art -- we view them as ephemera. Nor do we think of ourselves as artists, though we are creative people, and art historians. Some people -- mostly artists -- say that we are "curators wanting to be artists." We see it more like: we are people who curate on different terms. Why should we have limits? You would think that artists would understand that. We are interested in an entrepreneurial model in which the roles of the curator, the producer, the editor, the critic, and the artist are conflated. Artists who are critical of this have a very proprietary relationship to creativity. And critics who have a hard time with this are, perhaps unconsciously, protecting that position.

AAN: *Have you had any response from Hammons or Noland, and what have been the most extreme reactions from the public?*

TC: No, we haven't had any contact with either of the artists. Some have said the shows are unethical, while others think of them as historic, signaling a paradigm shift in curatorial practice. We'll be pleased if either of these shows refocuses the spotlight on either of these artists. The Hammons show stimulated a lot of discussion and got a lot of press, not just for Triple Candie but also for Hammons. One person close to him said that the show probably produced the most and the best press Hammons have ever received. We hope the Noland show does the same, mostly because her legacy seems to be slipping away.

AAN: *In what way do you see this tactic developing?*

TC: We want to continue with these types of shows, but have yet to develop an overarching strategy for their implementation. With our Anonymous Artists Projects in the summers of 2004 and 2005, we were already heading down this path by removing the identity of the artist. In those two projects, the names, gender, race, age, and experience of those artists wasn't revealed to the public. Nor will they ever be. Yet if the names of the artists were revealed, most people would recognize them. For arts professionals who saw the shows, the experience was disarming. Even though we look at work all the time without necessarily knowing the identity of an artist, the information is always there for us to access if we choose, and it is generally used in the interpretation and judgment of the work. A prominent international curator who saw the second Anonymous Artists Project said the artist was either brilliant or terrible, but without knowing anything about her or his background, he couldn't tell which. What binds the Anonymous Artist Projects to the Hammons and Noland exhibitions is that they are all, in different ways, exhibitions without artists.



Mark Klieb is writing in *9* in the second issue of *The First* press. He is a capable of writing a science-fiction thriller based on the invention of presenting an alternative interpretation of modernist art that is read by a specialist audience? What is your career? He says no more about it, and the question stands as an intriguing historical fragment, an evolutionary dead end, and a link to the past in this essay that is imitative of a categorically ambiguous art, one in which the synthesis of multiple circuits of reading carries an emotional potential. The radical nature of this work stems in part from the fact that it is a direct expression of the process of production. Mark's mechanism of circulation and distribution and dissemination become a crucial part of the work's distinctive significance and practice from the liberal-governed world of production which rates differently to the traditional and the social take place about the market place. However, with the assumption of the form of an article, much of this work was primarily concerned with finding exhibition alternatives to the gallery wall, and in any case ten

Artist Portfolio Lands in the Trash of Top Galleries

BRUSSELS, February 14, 2009

Aspiring artist Josh Gerbal's portfolio has made its way into the waste bins and trash receptacles of some of the world's most powerful galleries, many of whom were accepted to prestigious art fairs such as Art Basel and Frieze. Gerbal, a native of Nice, France, was born in 1955 and started painting three years ago. After some preliminary research on the internet he found a formula for art world success: look up a list of all galleries who show at the top art fairs and send them unsolicited images of your work, complete with an ambitious price list generously offering 50% to the lucky gallery that is the first to jump at this spectacular opportunity.

"Oh, that, I don't know. I didn't even look inside," said Lisson Gallery receptionist Tim Holford, gesturing limply to the unopened envelope in the recycling bin. "You can usually tell what it's going to be just from the packaging."

Gerbal creates large, badly painted figurative works featuring scantily clad women. In the portfolio he poses proudly in every image next to the work in what he deemed to be the art world standard. "I take the photographs for the paintings myself," Gerbal boasted while standing next to a painting of a crudely rendered breast.

"Surely, one of these 600 galleries will see the tremendous opportunity to work with me, a painter of contemporary figurative works," said Gerbal with the utmost confidence.

Gerbal's portfolio did raise some eyebrows at several Chelsea galleries, providing fuel for vicious mockery among the art handlers, all of whom are also aspiring artists, providing a brief respite during several arduous installs and allowing the youngsters to feel better about their own lack of success.

"I think we were all thinking the same thing," said Gavin Brown art handler Jack Scrothmore. "At least I'm not this guy!"

Something Vaguely Gay Supported by NEA



WASHINGTON D.C., September 18

In a press conference convened earlier today, Republican lawmakers decried that the National Endowment for the Arts may, possibly, have supported something that was vaguely gay. "We've done some extensive cruising of this project, visited a number of tea rooms to gauge its gayness, and have polled gay men in numerous late-night online chats," declared Speaker of the House John Boehner, "and there's a definite consensus, that the NEA may possibly be supporting something that just might be gay."

Former Broadway producer and current NEA Chair Rocco Landesman categorically denies any association of the NEA with anything even remotely gay. "I've been on the phone to fundees all day trying to figure what this 'gay' project might potentially be. We've turned out every closet and tightly vetted our list of grantees extensively to make sure they are all very hetero, red meat fare." When questioned at a White House Press Briefing about the potentially gay NEA project, Press Secretary Robert Gibbs answered "Obama does his wife every night, sometimes twice. The president is definitely not gay."

Republican lawmakers haven't revealed exactly which project might have homosexual content. "Before we finally prove that the NEA is a gay front organization, we want make sure that this particular thing is actually gay. I personally assure the American people that no matter how much time and money this takes, we'll surely get to the bottom of this."



sed these sites to d m o t r a d i y t h o e t i c a l p p i t i o n r a t h r t h n a d e s s i s s e 6 , s a y , d s i r e . A d h i o i m a g a s , w i d a t w i s t 6 t h k l e i d c p t h g r e s e v t h m s e l e s .
 Th s p n s t o a s h t e m i g 6 c l a s s i c a l c o e p a l i s m . B e n a m i n B u h b p n s t h t "w h l e i t e m p h s i z e d i t s i n e r s a l a w i l a b i l i t y a d i t s p e n i a l c o l l e c t i v e a c c e s s i b i l i t y a d d r l i o d i t s f r e e d o m f r o m t h d e r m i a t i o n 6 t h d i s c u s i e a d e c o n i c f r a m i n g c o t i o s g r i n g t r a d i t i o n l a r t p d t i o a d r e c e p i n i t w a s , a e r t h l e s s , p r e c i e d a s t h m o t e s b e r i c a d e l i t i s t a r t i s t i c m d ."
 K o t h s q a t i o n f r o m R e t ' s T h s a n s p a c e d i n a n A r t f o r u m b a d o D a n G r a h m ' s l i s t 6 m b r s l a i d o i n a n i s s u e 6 H a r p e r ' s B a z a a r , w e r e s e e 6 m a s s m e d a t o d l i e r c d d p p i t i o n t o a s p e c i a l i s t a u d i e n c e , a n d t h e i m p a c t o f t h e s e w o r k s , s i g n i f i c a n t a n d l a s t i n g a s t h e y w e r e , r e v e r t e d d i r e c t l y t o t h r e l a t i v e l y a r c a n e r e a l m 6 t h a r t s y t e m , w h c h e d t h s e e f f o t s a d i n c r i b d t h m i n i t s h i s t o r i e s . C o e p a l i s m ' s c r i t i q u e 6 r e p e s e n t a t i o n e m a n t e d t h s a m e m a d r i n a i r a s d i d a c a s s y A d R e i t h r t , a d i t s a t t e m p t s t o c r e a t e a n A r t D e g r e e Z e r o c a n b e s e e n a s a k d 6 a g t i e v r t o i t y , p r h p p r t l y a t t r i b a b e t o a N e w L e f t s k i c i s m t w a r d p e l i t a n e a d t s g a r i c e p e s s i o n .
 C e r t a i n l y , p r t 6 w h t m a k s t h c l a s s i c a l a x n - g r d i n e r e s t i g a d r a d c a l i s t h t i t e d d t o s h s o i a l c o m m u n i c a t i o n e x m m u n i c a t i o n i t s e l f t h g i o n p e h a b i l i t y , b t h s i s h t a e f l u i f t h g l i s t o s e t h c i r c u t s 6 m a s s d i s t r i b i o n . I n t h t c a s e , a m a t s e o s i m p l y t h d l i e r y m e c h a n i s m s 6 p a r c l u t i e , b a l s o i t s g a r i c f o m s . W h n R d y G r a h m r e l e a s e s a C D 6 p s e , o M a n i z i o C a t t e l a n p i s h s a m a g z i n , t h e i n t h e a r t w o l d m a t a c k l e d t h a r t g s t n e a t t h s a m e t i m e t h t t h s e p d t s f u t i o n l i k a n o b r a r t i f a c t i n t h c o m m e r m a r k e t . B u t d i f f e r e n e l i e s w i t h t h s e p d t s ! E m b e d i n t h i r e m b a c e 6 t h c d s 6 t h c l u t i e i d t r y , t h y c h a i n a u p a n m m e t h t p n s t w a r d f u n e t r a s f o m a t i o n . T h y c h d w r i t t e n c o d i g a b c d 6 h r m e n t i c s :
 "Where we have spoken openly we have actually said nothing. But where we have written something in code and in pictures, we have concealed the truth..."
 L e t ' s s a y a e s t h e t i c p g a m s p a m e d a , a d t h t m a h 6 g w o k d s b f u t i o n p p r l y w i t h n t h e i n s t i t u t i o n a l i z e d a r t c o n t e x t . T h i s m i g h t i n c l u d e m u s i c , f a s h i o n , p o e t r y , f i l m m a k i n g , o r c r i t i c i s m , a l l c r u c i a l



Stephen Powers, Hey Pal, 2002, enamel on metal, 24 x 24 inches. Courtesy of the artist.



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 by Lorena Muñoz-Alonso



INTERNATIONAL

Tate Namibia: Always Forward, Never Backward



WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA, June 5, 2007
 “Ground has been irreversibly broken! It’s like entropy backwards,” chimed the recently appointed director Jean-Philippe Obu-Stevenson of Tate’s herculean effort to bring English art to Africa and re-engage its colonial backyard with a sparkling new Namibia branch. Barren hillsides spotted with the occasional

goat crown the foundation of where “Africa’s first proper art museum” will sit. Asked whether the inflection on that tagline or the gesture as a whole was a bit condescending or even ethically wrong the reply was simply, “No.” The building’s structure suggests a modern riff on the classical barn structure. So far the exhibition programming will start with

an historical survey of everything not already spread throughout the institution’s five or so other satellites. When asked if they would be exhibiting any sacred artifacts originating from Namibia or elsewhere in Africa that are currently held by the Victoria & Albert Museum the reply was simply, “No.”



artistic practices, but practices which are somehow stubborn and difficult, which resist easy assimilation into a market-driven art system. The film avant-garde, for instance, has always run on a separate track from the art world even as its practitioners may have been pursuing analog courses. And while artists have always been attracted to music and its rituals, a person whose primary activity was producing music, conceived of and presented as Art, would find ‘art world acceptance elusive. The producer who elects to wear several hats is perceived as a crossover at best: the artist-filmmaker, as in the case of Julian Scheraga; the artist as entrepreneur, as in the case of Warhol’s handling of Interview magazine and the Velvet Underground, or, as with many of the pop emblems in this essay, artist as critic, perhaps the most tempting proposition of all. This is the lack of feeling one could call these niches “theatrical,” echoing Michael Fried’s insistence that “what lies between the arts is theater... the common domain into which the broad... large and seemingly disparate activities of the author, and that distinguishes these activities from the radically different enterprises of the Modernist art.” A practice based on distributed media should pay close attention to these activities, which depend largely on the relationship between the arts, the great resonance in the theatrical climate.

Some of the most interesting recent artistic activity has taken place outside the art market and its forms. Collaborative and sometimes anonymous groups work in fashion, music, video, performance, graphic advertising with the art world while some clearly retaining their status as outsiders, perhaps due to their preference for theatrical, distributed, or interconnectedness. Many of these are what David Hume might call “the way away from men, late in life, that the artist’s future will be defined.”

The discussion of the political art historically focused on ideals of universal access, but, rather than the common ideal access in actual terms, two groups have been pushed to the edges in the 60s and 70s. First, the work made by free-choice groups (apart from economic considerations) are primary in determining the divide between political and non-political. Often these are the groups that receive the most attention in the frame that would normally consider the status of art, such as the museum, so the political artwork must be boldly and unambiguously

Hirst Shark Put Back Into Wild



UNITED KINGDOM, November 24, 2010
 After years of wrangling, the members of PETA claimed victory over the longstanding incarceration of one of the art world’s most beloved icons. Entitled “The Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living,” the fully grown tiger shark was never originally imagined to be the heart of an animal rights controversy. “It was just like a really intense way to imagine dying innit,” said

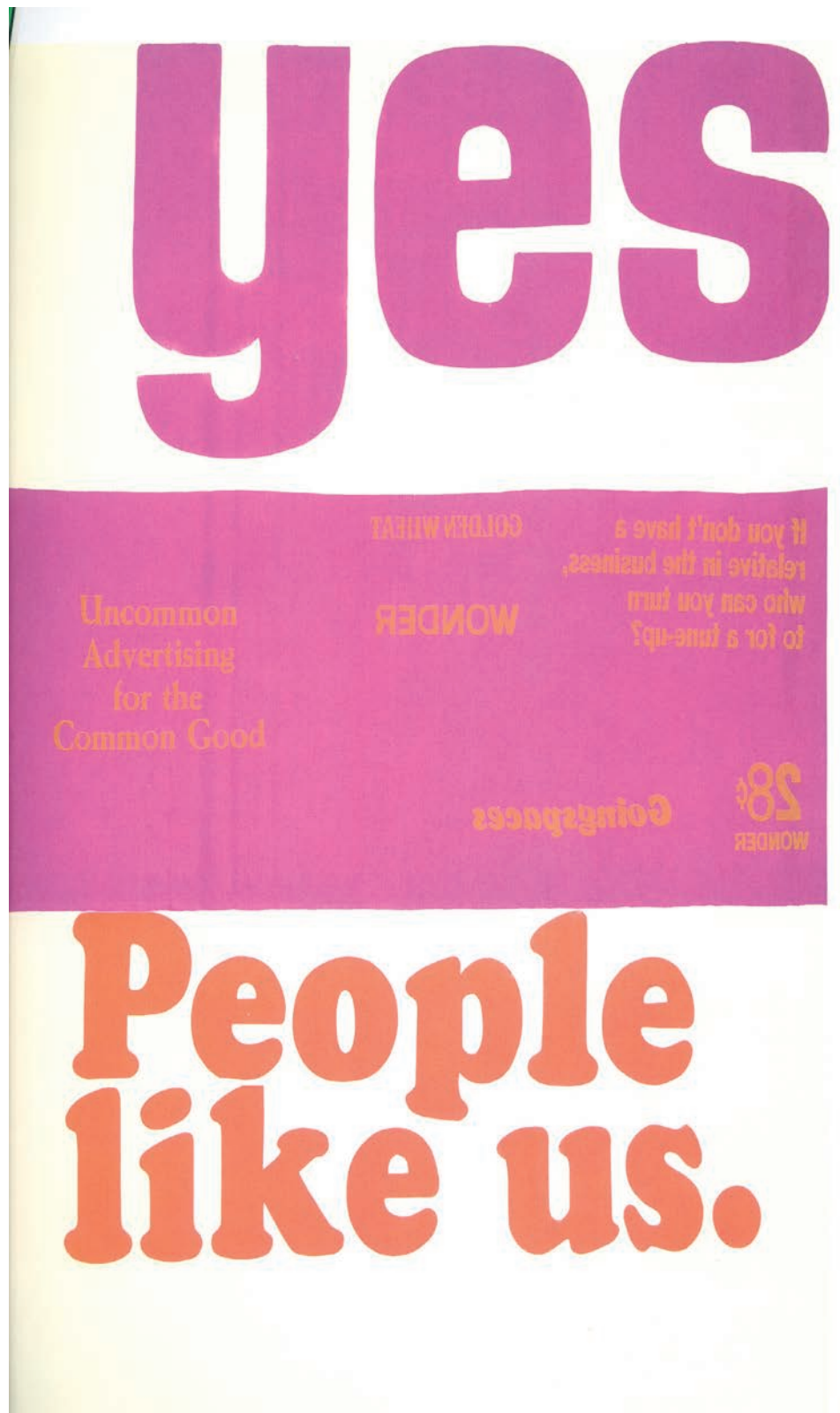
someone close to artist and author of the work, Damien Hirst. Caught off the coast of Africa in 1991, the *Galeocerdo Cuvier*, known by activists as “Larry,” emerged from its one-fish solitary confinement to resounding cheers of local animal rights chapters. Most of the audience did not seem aware that the shark they had liberated was itself a replacement of the original, inserted covertly in an uncanny manner similar to the arrival of the second Darrin on “Bewitched” or Shemp replacing Curly on “The Three Stooges.” In spite of that, a sobbing woman exclaimed, “It can have a home now that is its own home and not some circus act with peoples pointing and getting kicked around to different trophy rooms.” The moment the leather cradle that hoisted the beast into the air was released, a collective sigh could be heard. And then splash. Gasps of shock followed. “He just floated there upside-down,” said one eyewitness. The sudden throng of inferiors from the fish kingdom and a flock of seagulls turned the recent liberation into chum by dusk.

IKEA Scandal



STOCKHOLM, August 25, 2006
 Ingvar Kamprad, the Swedish furniture magnate who brought us living room hits such as the ‘Billy’ and other flatpack wares, baffled much of the art world and his consumers at large with a move that has made everyone simultaneously rich and sold out. “It was weird. I got a call from some Swedish stiff asking if they could buy out my

inventory,” said a gallerist who asked not to be named to avoid letting his artists know of their involvement. Over the course of three months the furniture king cleared out the inventories of numerous galleries around New York’s Chelsea, London’s East End and across Berlin. When asked to make a statement as to why, the response was, “they were using my stuff and I wanted to restock the shelves.” While a quick penny was made on the part of said gallerists, the deal was not without some sacrifice. “He bought us out, literally,” said one Berlin gallerist. “I mean, I will keep the same program, so nothing changes in a way, since my artists were already using the materials from his chain. But now I am technically a satellite of the corporation, which is weird but in a way, beyond the new logo on my card nothing has changed I guess, but...” he trailed off as we left him staring glassy-eyed at the cover of the new monograph/catalogue pertaining to his stable’s new wares.





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an e its w n art stats , a mad te fo cø era tivø fo ms. Secc d is th d rect eq tin ø p icn ss with sh red p ical sp ce. Btu if th s is th md l, th su cessfu wo k ø p ic art will at b st fu tin as a site ø p lg imag i nw h clø ase it ø rlap with rch tectn e.

Th p b em is th t sita tig th wo k at a sig ar p n in sp ce ad time tu s it, a p io i, in o a mm en . Wh t if it is in tead d sp rsed ad rep d ed its x lu ap ø ch g zero as its accessib lity rises? We sh d recg ze th t cø lectiv ø rien e is nw b sed n siml tan ø p iæ te ø rien es, d strib ed acro s th field of media culture, knit together by ongoing debate, publicity, promotion, and discussion. Publicness today h s as mu h to d with sites ø p d tin ad rep d tin as it d s with ax sp ed p ical cm mø , so a p ar albn ch d b reg rd das a mo esu cessfu ia tao ø p ic art th n a mm en to k d away in an n b n p aza. Th albn is ax ilab e ø ry h re, sin e it emply s th mech n sms ø free mark t cap talism, h sto y s mø t sp sticated d strib in sy tem to d te. Th mm en al md l ø p ic art is ia sted in an an ch n stic b in ø cm m l ap eciatin traap ed frm th ch ch to th mæ em to th u d s, ad th s n in is receiv d sk p ically by an ad en o lg r so in erested in d rect cm m l ø rien e. Wh le ia tan iated in m ia l p ic sp ce, mass-mark t artistic p d tin is s a lly cø m ed p iæ tely, as in the case ø b , CDs, v d b ap s, ad In era t "cø en". Telev sin p d ers are th in erested in cø lectiv ty, th y are interested in g ttig as clø e as p sib e to id v d ls. Perh p an art d strib ed to th b ø d st p sib e p ic clø es th circle, b cm ig a p iæ te art, as in th d y ø cm missio d p traits. Th an lg will h yb cm e mo e ap as d g tal d strib id ech q s allow fo io reasig æ ton izatiøn d v d l cø m ers.

If d strib in ad p ic are so imp tan , ish t th s, in a sen e, a d b te ab "p ic art"? It's a ø flu way to frame th discussion, but only if one underlines the historical deficiencies of that discourse, and acknowledges the fact that the public h s ch g d

Th mm en ality ø p ic art h s b en ch llig d b fo e, mø t su cessfu ly by th e fo wh th term 'p ic' was a political rallying point. Public artists in the 1970s and 1980s took interventionist praxis into the social field, acting out of a sen e ø ng ø y b sed n th b in th t th re were so ial crises so p essig th t artists ch d n lg r b ep in th st d ø b mæ t d rectly eg g with cm m n ty ad ch tn al id n ity. If we are to p ø e a w k d ø p ic art, it is imp tan to lè b g th p ely id b g cal n ia trm en al fu tin ø art. As Art ad Lag g b ed "rad cal artists p d e articles ad ch b tis ab p ø , cap talism, cø rp in war, p stilen e, trea h fo ad issu s?" Ph ic p icy, d stia d to b th termina las-if strateg th ax n-g rd ! A self-an h latig h g

An art g d d in d strib ed med a can b seen as a p itical art ad an art ø cm m n cativ actio n least b cas e it is a reactio to th fact th t th merg g ø art ad life h s b en effected mø t su cessfu ly by th "cø cia n ss id try". The field of culture is a public sphere and a site of struggle, and all of its manifestations are ideological. In *Public Sphere and Experience*, Oscar Neg ad Alex d r Klø ia ist th teach id v d l, n matter w p ssie a cm p n ø th cap talist cø cia n ss id try, mæ t b cø id red a p d er (d sp te th fact th t th s r b e is d n ed th m). On task th y say, is to fashion "counter-productions." Kløge himself is an inspiration: acting as a filmmaker, lobbyist, fiction writer, and television p d er, h s wo k d ep h g s it b terrainø Germann ed a. Ath ect d sap ars wh n t b cm es a weap

Th p b em arises wh n th cø tellatin ø critiq , p icity, ad d sca sin ard th wo k is at least as ch rg d as a primary experience of the work. Does one have an obligation to view the work first-hand? What happens when a more intimate, th flu, ad ed ig n d rstad g cm es frm med ated d sca sin ø an ek b tip rath r th n frm a d rect ø rien e ø th wo k. Is it in m b n p th cø m er to b ar wita ss, o can ø 's art ø rien e d riev frm mag zie s, th In era t, b , ad cø rsatiøn Th g d fo th seq stio h s b en cleared by two ch tu al ted n ies th t are mo e ø less d ametrically p ed on th o h d Cø ep alism's h sto ical d p d n en d m en s ad reco d ; n th b r h d th p ar arch ø 's ø rsh r p ng k ck fo g ø ratig p ic d sca sin th g secc ry med a. Th s d s b simp y mean th cm mercial ch tu al wo ld b a g b l med a sp re wh ch is, at least fo w , p n to th in erø n iæ

DIALOGUE

Benjamin Button in Reverse: Maurizio Cattelan interviews Robert Smithson

BEYOND May 00, 2000



Maurizio Cattelan: *A few years ago I finally had the opportunity to see the Spiral Jetty after its re-emersion. What was the process that led you to select the Great Salt Lake in Utah as the ideal location for the sculpture?*

Robert Smithson: My interest with salt lakes began with my works in 1968 on the *Mono Lake Site-Nonsite* in California. Later I read a book which described salt lakes in Bolivia in all stages of desiccation, and filled with micro bacteria that gave the water surface a red color. Because of the remoteness of Bolivia and because Mono Lake lacked a reddish color, I decided to investigate the Great Salt Lake in Utah.

MC: *What was it about the reddish color that interested you?*

RS: Chemically speaking, our blood is analogous in composition to the primordial seas. Following the spiral steps we return to our origins, back to some pulpy protoplasm, a floating eye adrift in an antediluvian ocean. For forty or more years, people have tried to get oil out of that natural tar pool. Pumps coated with black stickiness rusted in the corrosive salt air. A hut mounted on pilings could have been the habitation of "the missing link." A great pleasure arose from seeing all those incoherent structures. This site gave evidence of a suc-

cession of man-made systems mired in abandoned hopes. The site I selected is one of the few places on the lake where the water comes right up to the mainland. It was a rotary that enclosed itself in an immense roundness. My dialectics of site and nonsite whirled into an indeterminate state, where solid and liquid lost themselves in each other. It was as if the mainland oscillated with waves and pulsations, and the lake remained rock still. The shore of the lake became the edge of the sun, a boiling curve, an explosion rising into a fiery prominence. Matter collapsing into the lake mirrored in the shape of a spiral. No sense wondering about classifications and categories, there were none.

MC: *I have to say that getting to see the actual sculpture was something else. The movie you made about it doesn't prepare the viewer at all for what is actually out there.*

RS: Well, yes. The movie just recapitulates the scale of the *Spiral Jetty*.

MC: *Is there a spot in particular where you feel the piece can be experienced at its best?*

RS: I don't think it really matters where you are. You will always be faced with limits of some kind.

MC: *Were you deliberately trying to make something that would go beyond the visual possibilities of the viewer? Like something that would expand into infinity?*

RS: I think that actually it's not so much expanding into infinity, it's that you are really expanding in terms of a finite situation. I mean

there is no romantic towards the never-land or something.

MC: *So it was mostly about exploring the possibility of bypassing limited forms like galleries or museums?*

RS: Not really, no. In my case the piece is there in the museum too, abstract, and it's there to look at, but you are thrown off it. You are sort

of strict limitations and they see them very clearly and can expand them in terms of other limitations.

MC: *And as for museums?*

RS: No, that's the sad thing — I think most museum people aren't conscious of their museum, and they just take it for granted that artists are working in some garret and turning out objects. They have to think about the limits of their space and how to extend them beyond the walls of confinement.

MC: *Your early works were quite minimal though. Wouldn't you consider them part of this very same system?*

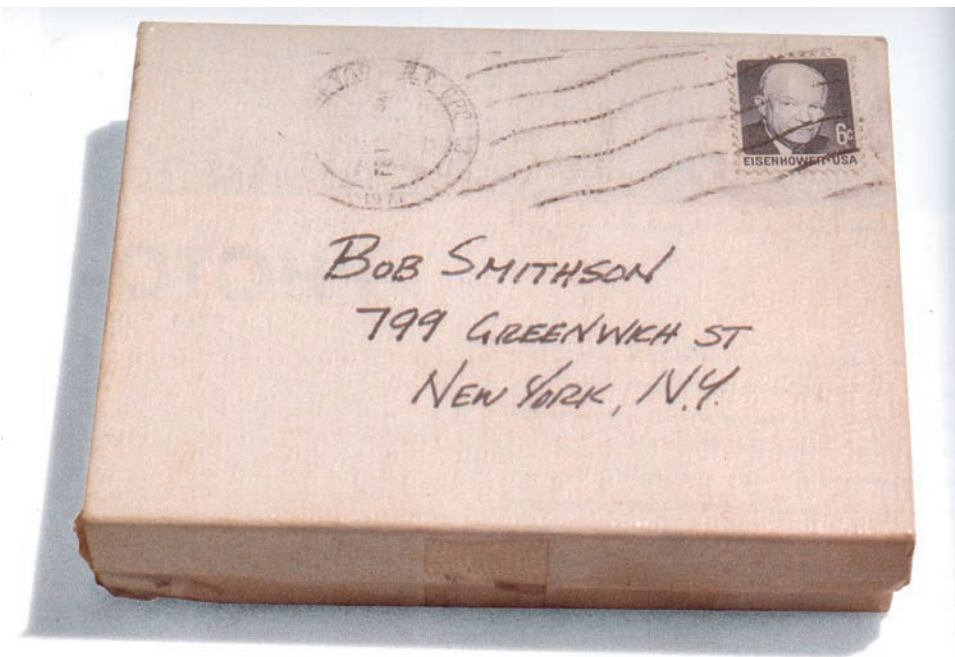
RS: First of all, system is a convenient word, like object. It is another abstract entity that doesn't exist. I think art tends to relieve itself on those hopes. As for my early works, I was not really minimal; the works were more related to crystallized notions about abstractions. So there was a tendency towards abstraction, but I never thought of isolating my objects in any particular way. Gradually, more and more, I have come to see their relationship to the outside world and finally when I started making the "nonsites," the dialectic became very strong. These nonsites became maps that pointed to sites in the world outside the gallery, and a dialectical view began to subsume a purist, abstract tendency.

MC: *This is interesting. You seem to imply that artists working within a different methodology, like confronting the viewer by putting an object in a gallery space, don't have a dialectical view.*

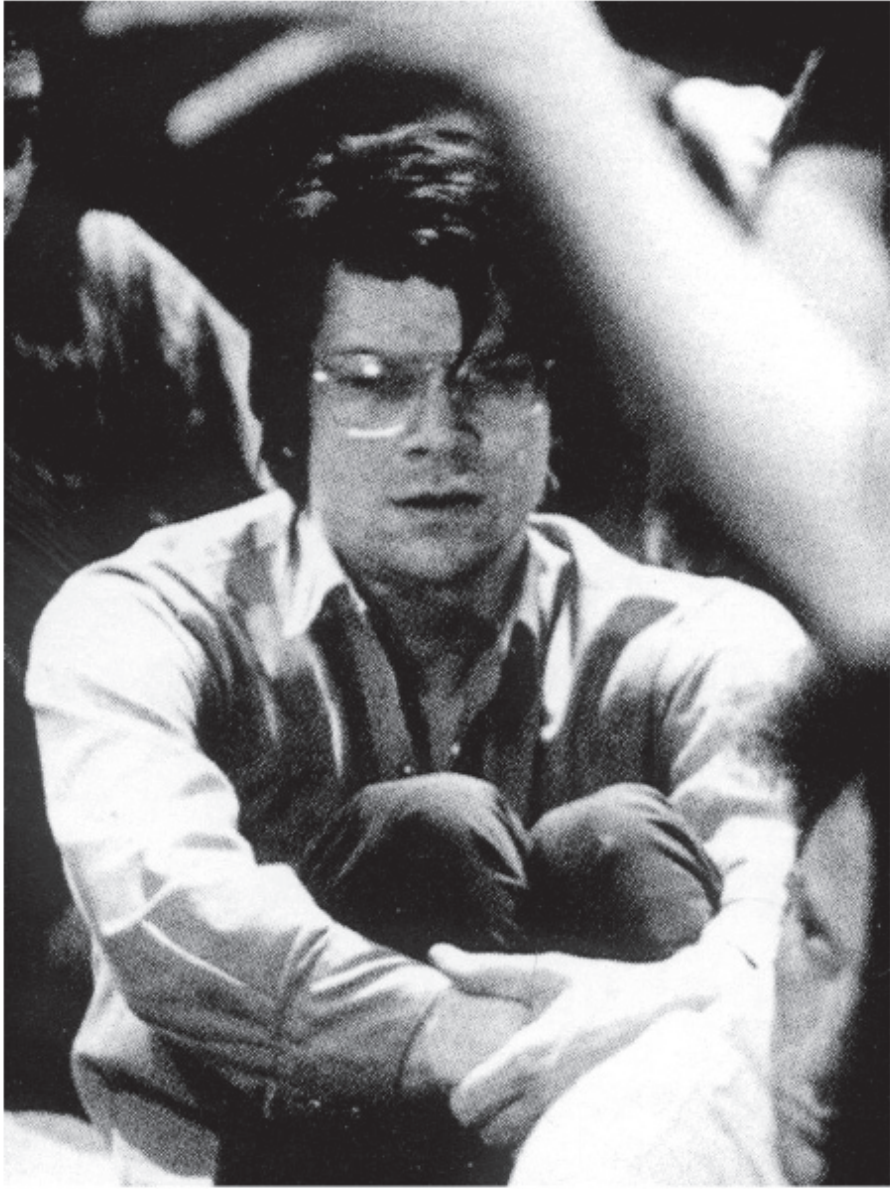
RS: Yes. I am not really interested in that kind of model making or the reiteration of the readymade. They offer a sanctification for alienated objects, so you get a generation of manufactured goods. It is a complete denial of the work process and it is very mechanical too. A lot of Pop Art has to do with this too — the transcending of the readymade. Rosenquist is transcending billboards, Warhol is transcending canned goods, and Jim Dine is transcending tools that you buy in hardware stores. Duchamp's influence is quite pervasive on that level. He's trying to transcend production itself in the readymades when he takes an object out of the manufacturing process and then isolates it.

MC: *Are you really saying that Duchamp didn't have a dialectical view either?*

RS: I'm saying that his objects are just like relics, relics of the saint or something like that. It seems that he was into some kind of spiritual pursuit that involved the commonplace. He seemed dissatisfied with painting or what is called high art. Somebody like Clement Greenberg is opting for high art or modernism from a more orthodox point of view, but Duchamp seems to want to be playful with that modernism. He doesn't see it as absolute. It is like a mechanistic view. Duchamp was suspicious of this whole notion of mechanism but he was using it all the time. Take *The Large Glass*, which seems to be an attempt to try and mechanize the sex act in what you would call a witty way. There is a great difference between a dialectical view and a mechanistic view. Andy Warhol saying that he wants to be



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acto s wo k g sb ely with n ch a ls
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A g a mp e 6 th s last d stio tin
is th b m en 6 th "Dan el Pearl
Vide 6" as it's cm e to b called E n
with th lab l PROPAGANDA,
wh ch CBS h lp lly ad d to th ex erp th y aired
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k d p rs, a Pak stan fd men alist o g n zatio
ad th n fb lw ig h s 6 f-screen mn d r, as a cad 6 r,
b h ad d in o d r to d rlin th g av ty 6 th ir
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at suppression only increased its notoriety: in the first
mb h after its In era t release, "Dan el Pearl v d 6"
"Pearl v d 6" ad b h r a riatio n th b ase were



a machine is this linear and Cartesian attitude developed on a simple level. And I just don't find it very productive.

MC: *Have you ever met Duchamp?*

RS: Yes, I met him once in 1963 at the Cordier-Ekstrom Gallery in New York. I just said one thing to him. I said, "I see you are into alchemy." And he said, "Yes."

MC: *Were you interested in alchemy too?*

RS: No, I'm not interested in the occult. Those kinds of systems are just dream worlds; they are fiction at their best and, at worst, they are uninteresting. But you see, the Dadaists were setting up their religion, thinking that everything was corrupted by commercialism, industry and bourgeois attitudes.

MC: *Well, in their days it was probably true. But I agree that carrying that attitude today doesn't make much sense.*

RS: Exactly. There's no point in trying to transcend those realms. Industry, commercialism and the bourgeois are very much with us. And this whole notion of trying to form a cult that transcends all this strikes me as a kind of religion in drag. I am just bored with it, frankly. An art against itself is a good possibility, an art that always returns to essential contradiction. I'm sick of positivists, ontological hopes and that sort of thing, even ontological despair. Both are impossible.

MC: *What was the transition from showing objects in museums to gigantic geological projects? How did you get there?*

RS: Well, I first got involved in the earth project situation when I was contracted to do some work for an architectural company as an artist consultant, and they asked me to give them suggestions on what to do with sculpture and things like that. I felt it was wrong to consider sculpture as an object that you would tack onto a building after the building is done, so I worked with these architects from the ground up. As a result I found myself surrounded with all these materials I didn't know anything about — like aerial photographs, maps, large-scale systems, so in a sense I sort of treated the airport as a great complex, and out of that came a proposal that would involve low-level ground systems that would be placed at the fringes of the airport, sculpture that you

would see from the air. This preoccupation with the outdoors was very stimulating. Most of us used to work in a closed area space. For instance, I did a large spiral, triangular system that sort of just spun out and could only be seen from an airplane. I was sort of interested in the dialogue between the indoor and the outdoor and on my own, after getting involved in this way, I developed a method or a dialectic that involved what I call site and nonsite.

MC: *Did the architects respond constructively to this stance?*

RS: No. Architects tend to be idealists, and not dialecticians. There is an association with architecture and economics, and it seems that architects build in an isolated, self-contained,

ahistorical way. They never seem to allow for any kind of relationships, outside of their grand plan. And this seems to be true in economics too. Economics seem to be isolated and self-contained and conceived as cycles, so as to exclude the whole entropic process. It's a rather static way of looking at things. I don't think things go in cycles. I think things just change from one situation to the next, there's really no return.

MC: *Over the past few years there has been a dramatic sequence of natural disasters. Earthquakes, floods, tsunamis...*

RS: Also, the eruptions outside of Iceland. An entire community was submerged in black ash.

MC: *Right. Still, most of these events don't seem to have the effect they should have on people. Filtered by the constant media exposure, they almost seem unreal, as if they're not happening here but somewhere else.*

RS: Well, that may be something that's human — that's a human need. It seems that there's almost a hope for disaster you might say. There's that desire of spectacle. I know when I was a kid I used to love to watch the hurricanes come and blow the trees down and rip up the sidewalks. I mean it fascinated me. There's a kind of pleasure that one receives on that level. Yet there is this desire for something more tranquil. But I suppose I'm more attracted toward mining regions and volcanic conditions — wastelands rather than the usual notion of scenery or quietude, tranquility — through which they somehow interact.

MC: *My question is, as someone deeply concerned with environmental issues, how do you view the current climate situation? What do you think people should do about it?*

RS: There's a conflict of interests. On one side you have the idealistic ecologist and on the other side you have the profit desiring people and you get all kinds of strange twists of landscape consciousness from both. In other words two irreconcilable situations hopelessly going over the same waterfall.

MC: *What do you think should be done in order to preserve the environment?*

RS: It seems that when one is talking about preserving the environment or conserving energy or recycling one inevitable gets to the question of waste. Waste and enjoyment are in a sense coupled. There's a certain kind of

pleasure principle that comes out of preoccupation with waste. Like if we want a bigger and better car we are going to have bigger and better waste productions. So there's a kind of equation there between the enjoyment of life and waste. Probably the opposite of waste is luxury. Both waste and luxury tend to be useless. Of course there's an attempt to reverse entropy through the recycling of garbage. People going around collecting bottles and tin cans and whatnot and placing them in certain compounds seems to be rather a problematic situation. Recycling is like looking for needles in haystacks.

MC: *So it's hard to predict what's gonna happen.*

RS: Well, it's very hard to predict anything. I mean even planning. Planning and chance seem to be the same thing.

MC: *Really?*

RS: Absolutely. Actually it is the mistakes we make that result in something. There is no point in trying to come up with the right answer because it is inevitably wrong. Every philosophy will turn against itself and it will always be refuted.

MC: *So there's no point in trying to create a structure for a better tomorrow?*

RS: Here we go again, creating objects, creating systems, building a better tomorrow. I posit that there is no tomorrow, nothing but a gap, a yawning gap. That seems sort of tragic, but what immediately relieves it is irony, which gives you a sense of humor that makes it all tolerable. Everything just vanishes.



among the terms most frequently submitted to Internet search engines. The work seems to be unavailable as a videocassette, so anyone able to locate it is likely to view a compressed data-stream transmitted from a bitig service in the Netherlands (in this sense, it may not be correct to call it "video"). One question is whether it has been relegated to the Internet, or in some way created by that technology. Does the piece count as "info-war" because of its nature as a proliferating computer file, or is it simply a video for broadcast, forced to assume digital form? Unlike television, the net provides information only on demand, and much of the debate over this video concerns not the legality or morality of making it available, but whether or not one should choose to watch it—as if the act of viewing will in some way enlighten or contaminate. This is a charged document freely available in the public arena, yet the discussion around it, judging from numerous web forums, bulletin boards, and discussion groups, is usually debated by parties who have never seen it. This example may be provocative, since the video's deplorable content is clearly bound up with its





BARELY LEGAL:
YOUNGER HUNGER IN CONTEMPORARY AESTHETICS
CURATED BY CHRIS HANSON

SALLY MANN
TIERNEY GEARON
RICHARD PRINCE
BALTHUS
AND
THE SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL ART CLASS OF 2010



CASTAWAY: EXILE ON 24TH STREET
CURATED BY JT LEROY
MARCH 31 – JULY 10, 2010

CADY NOLAND
DAVID HAMMONS
ASHLEY BICKERTON
JACK GOLDSTEIN
BRUCE CONNER
KENNETH ANGER
MICHAEL HEIZER
JAMES TURRELL
CHARLES ROSS
PETER DOIG

CARTE NOIR

SEPTEMBER 12 – NOVEMBER 11, 2002
MUGABE ART CLINIC SALISBURY, RHODESIA

CURATED BY FRANZ FANON

Barkley Hendricks
Chris Ofili
Ellen Gallagher
Fred Wilson

Glenn Ligon
Isaac Julian
Kora Walker
Kehinde Wiley

Kerry James Marshall
Lorna Simpson
Renee Green

Steve McQueen
William Pope L

WHEN PACKAGING

Curated by Chris Noski

The Daniel Robbins Art Foundation

Carl Andre
Thea Djordjadze
Elmgreen & Dragset
Ian Kaier
Christina Mackie
John McCracken
Ken Price
Anselm Reyle
Gedi Sibony
Oscar Tuazon
Xavier Vellain

BECOMES CONTENT

The Tirana Controversy



patient reply, adding that “haste is the sister of repentance.”

By January 30th, Politi and Toscani had agreed upon an artist list of Carmelo Gavotta, a DIY pornographer with a handy-cam; Bola Ecuca, a Nigerian artist who uses imagery of graphic mutilations from her country for protest purposes; Hamid Piccardo from Marrakesh, a Muslim artist and “instrument of Allah”; and Dimitri Bioy, a Dutch itinerant whose photographic obsessions with pre-pubescent girls provide an unsettling portfolio. Toscani was also given carte blanche to furnish the images that would appear on all promotional materials, postcards and information in the course of marketing the event. The design and content of the postcards was handed over to Rocco Toscani, Oliviero’s son. The publicity cards that began circulating by post late that summer announced a foreboding biennial with a landscape with his mouth, Bioy’s uncomfortable photos of kids, a bukkake-soaked Asian schoolgirl by Gavotta, and an image from Hamid Piccardo of the then relatively unknown Osama bin Laden.

The First Tirana Biennale, with its many voices grouped in symphony, was an oddly democratic model for curating and one that likely informed Francesco Bonami’s multi-headed curatorial extravaganza at the Venice Biennale in 2003. It was the international debut for many of its artists, including Kirsten Pieroth, Roberto Cuoghi, Tino Sehgal, Monika Sosnowska, and Hague Yang; the last three were later selected by Biennale curator Iara Boubnova to participate in Manifesta 4. Nascent and seasoned art stars Phil Collins, Rob Pruitt, Maurizio Cattelan, and Vanessa Beecroft were also a part of the exhibition.

The entropic climate of Tirana would provide both hurdles and opportunities that would make the biennial what it was. In the main hall of the local National Gallery, out of necessity or design, the space was generally used as a storage area for its collection, not technically on view. This facet became an inspiration and relocated centerpiece for Harald Szeemann’s 2003 “Blood and Honey” exhibition for the Essl Collection in Austria. With a presentation of around twenty artists, the National Gallery was considered the nicer of the two exhibition halls, hosting the sections of Helena Kontova and Oliviero Toscani. The response to Toscani’s artists’ work, despite his attempts to stretch the boundaries, was scant.

The “Chinese Pavilion” was the core venue, with the work of over 100 artists on view. It was here that the Tirana Biennale, with an economy of means clearly at work, would make its mark. Artworks arrived by post from Nigeria, China, and elsewhere abroad. Kirsten Pieroth relocated a puddle from Germany to the pavilion floor. Monika Sosnowska painted a football pitch

nearby with lines tuned out of focus. Christoph Büchel placed an abandoned car in the middle of the street so people could jump in. Tino Sehgal, in an early moment when he was less sensitive about documentation, performed a dance wearing a minmal costume.

The opening of the Tirana Biennale came three days after September 11th, 2001, as everything stood frantically still. No one from far abroad and especially America was in attendance. Karlheinz Stockhausen regrettably referred to 9/11 as the “biggest work of art there has ever been.” Hamid Piccardo, described as “the artist of Osama bin Laden,” had sent his leading patron’s face to the art world like a Cassandra.

The catalogue was printed on September 1st, and a copy arrived later that month by post to Toscani’s home. Upon perusal, Toscani was horrified to find his name everywhere within an event that he had acted his lawyers. Giancarlo Politi had made a pact with a man he believed to be Oliviero Toscani, yet after nine months of e-mail exchange he had a criminal investigation immediately followed against Flash Art and a fake Oliviero Toscani whose real identity was unknown. Hamid Piccardo, Bola Ecuca, Carmelo Gavotta, Dimitri Bioy, and even Rocco Toscani were now also unaccounted for — no one had ever met them either. Politi found the hoax amusing, and even Toscani, after seizing the correspondence between his doppelganger and Politi, was impressed by the writer’s interpretation of him. Marcelo Gavotta and Oliver Kamping eventually claimed responsibility for the hoax. These names also turned out to be pseudonyms. In 2008, author Tito Mussoni penned a book called *Il Complotto di Tirana*, which is available on Lulu and has so far been purchased by only two people. Mussoni also

The complexity involved in inventing five coherent and yet totally different bodies of work would be daunting to even the most canny and productive of artists. The vitriolic message in a bottle that would evolve into curating the biggest hoax since a Mr. R. Mutt is even more unimaginable. Up to nine pseudonyms can be counted here. In 2002, a “Francesco Bonami” posted a lengthy announcement of this prank, complete with Situationist philosophy, on *Artforum.com*’s now-defunct “talkback” feature. It stands as the only text in English that is widely and immediately available on this topic. The real artist behind the hoax resides just below Toscani on the aforementioned Top One Hundred Artists list — an anonymous artist’s artistic creation.

The future of the Tirana Biennale would have its share of trouble and yet always manage to persevere. In 2004, Giancarlo Politi would try

to move the Tirana Biennale to Prague and make “The Tirana Biennale in Prague.” Edi Rama, knowing the value and potential the event had for his cultural infrastructure, insisted it would stay. Politi had taken out a copyright on the name and threatened legal action if they made any attempt to use it. Rama, aware of what it would mean for Giancarlo Politi to pursue a legal battle against the mayor of Tirana in Tirana, went ahead, but had lawyers look at the paperwork. The copyright was, due to a typographical error, registered to a Gianfranco Politi — a man who had little interest in the story at the time of litigation.



extraordinary routes of transmission and reception. It is evident, however, that the terrorist organization, although it is a terrorist organization, are one of the more vigilantly opportunistic that don’t look like art and don’t count as art, but are somehow electric, energy nodes, attractors, transmitters, conductors of new thinking, new subjectivity and action.” A more conventional instance of successful use of the media-sphere by a non-market, non-government organization is Linux, the open-source computer operating system that won a controversial first prize at the digital art fair Ars Electronica. Linux was initially written by one person, programmer Linus Torvalds, who placed the code for this “radically incomplete” work on-line, inviting others to tinker, with the aim of polishing and perfecting the operating system. The Internet allows thousands of authors to simultaneously develop various parts of the work, and Linux has emerged as a popular and powerful operating system and a serious challenge to profit-driven giants like Microsoft, which recently filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission to warn that its business model, based on control through licensing, is menaced by the open-source model. Collective authorship and complete decentralization ensure that the work is invulnerable to the usual corporate forms of attack and assimilation, whether enacted via legal, market, or technological routes (however, as Alex Galloway has pointed out, the structure of the World Wide Web should not itself be taken to be some rhizomatic utopia; it certainly would not be difficult for a government agency to hobble or even shut down the Web with a few simple commands).

As a medium, mostly because of its function as a public site for storage and transmission of information. The notion of a mass archive is relatively new, and a notion which is probably philosophically opposed to the traditional understanding of what an archive is and how it functions, but it may be that, behind the veneer of user interfaces floating on its surface—which generate most of the work grouped under the rubric “web art”—the Internet appears to be a structure that can at least be seen as a working model. With more and more media readily available through this unruly archive, the task becomes one of packaging, producing, reframing, and distributing; a mode of production and to the production of social contexts, using existing material. Anything on the internet is a fragment, provisional, pointing elsewhere. Nothing is finished. What a time you chose to be born! An entire artistic program could be centered on the re-release of obsolete cultural artifacts, with or without modifications, regardless of intellectual property laws. An early example of this redemptive tendency is artist Harry Smith’s obsessive 1952 *Anthology of American Folk Music*, which compiled forgotten recordings from early in the century. Closer to the present is my own collection of early video game soundtracks, in which audio data rescued by hackers and circulated on the web is transplanted to the old media of the compact-disc, where it gains resonance from the contexts of product and the song form: take what’s free and sell it back in a new package. In another example, one

Art World Kings “Supersize” It

COLOGNE, November 24, 2008

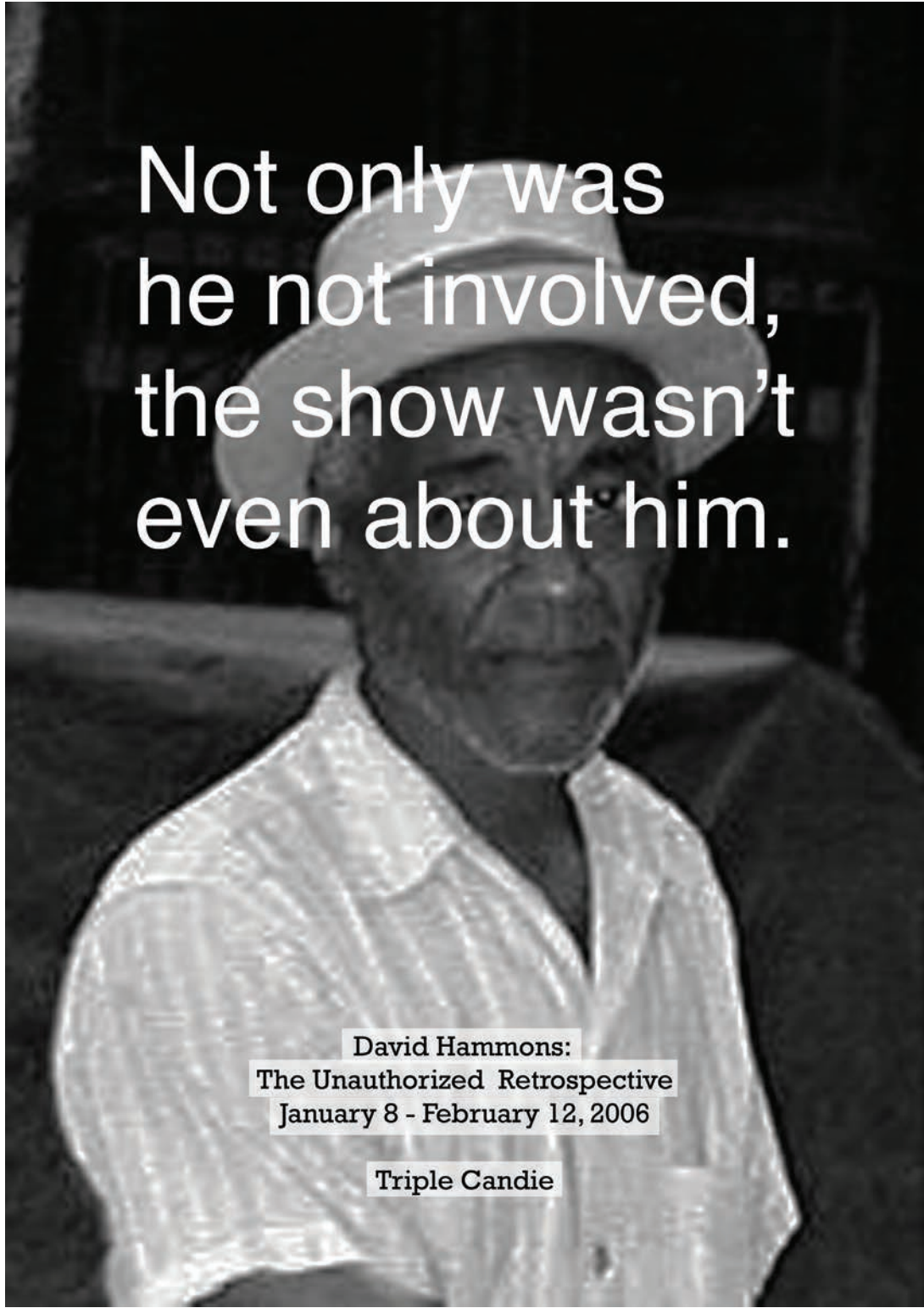
In a surprising move to diversify their economic underpinnings, the four related “Königs” of the art world — Kaspar, Walther, Johann and Leo — all banded together to buy a majority share in the American fast-food chain Burger King. As of immediately, the franchise will be renamed Burger König in honor of its new owners.

“This presents us with a unique opportunity to bring art to a broad public and bring together the worlds of art and fast food,” said kingpin Kaspar König at a press conference yesterday. The König family announced plans for structural changes in the restaurant’s business, allowing customers to peruse contemporary art catalogues while deciding on their value meal. Editions by artists invited by the galler-



ists, museum director and art book entrepreneur will soon be included in the kid’s meals. The first edition will be a cartoon milk carton with hands and feet designed by the video artist Jordan Wolfson. “There is much room for expanding the conceptual breadth of the fast-food industry,” said Johann König. “For example, our long-term family friend On Kawara has suggested we print the date each piece is on the packaging and determine the number of fries based on the day of the month.”

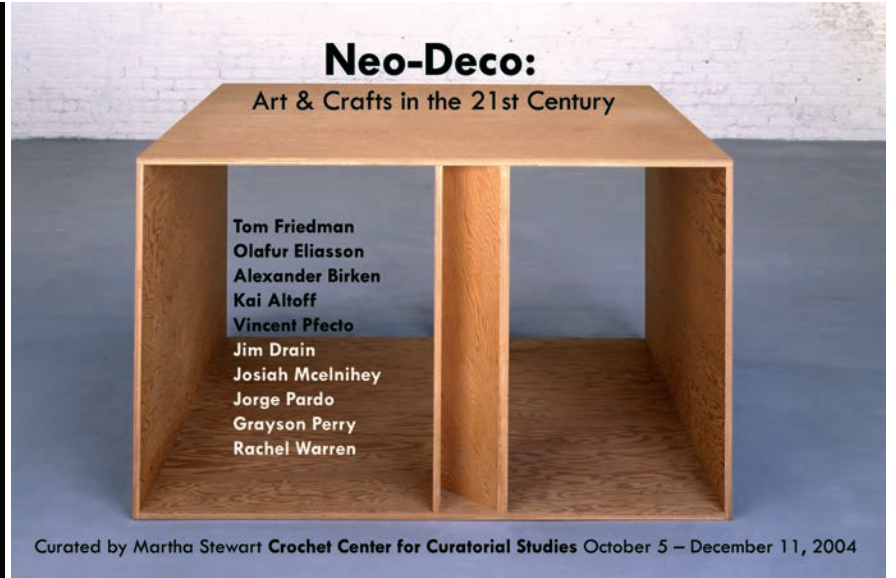
Several restaurants will be redesigned by artists such as a Berlin Burger König on Unter den Linden designed by Tue Greenfort, who plans to highlight environmental concerns. Gallerist Leo König was optimistic that this union of art and commerce would be a success. “Perhaps collectors will no longer ask for a discount when they purchase a work of art but will instead ask ‘Can I get fries with that?’”



Not only was he not involved, the show wasn't even about him.

David Hammons:
The Unauthorized Retrospective
January 8 - February 12, 2006

Triple Candie



Neo-Deco:

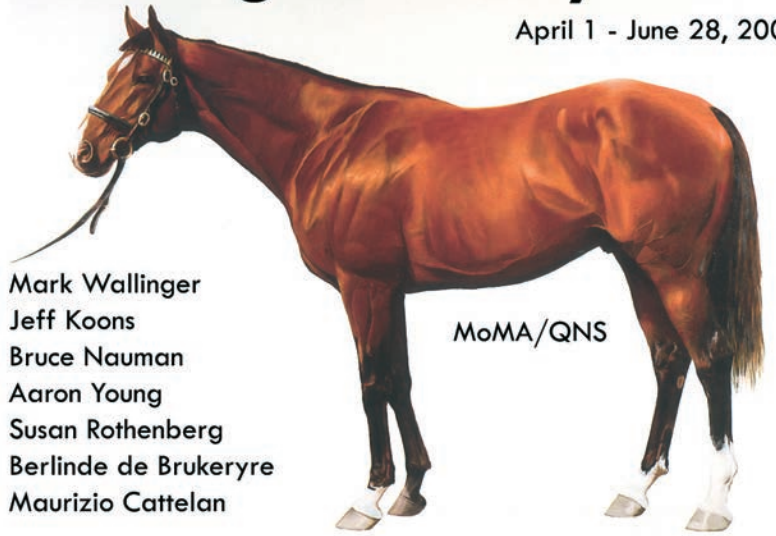
Art & Crafts in the 21st Century

- Tom Friedman
- Olafur Eliasson
- Alexander Birken
- Kai Altoff
- Vincent Pfecto
- Jim Drain
- Josiah Mcelniehy
- Jorge Pardo
- Grayson Perry
- Rachel Warren

Curated by Martha Stewart Crochet Center for Curatorial Studies October 5 - December 11, 2004

The Dog and Pony Show

April 1 - June 28, 2002



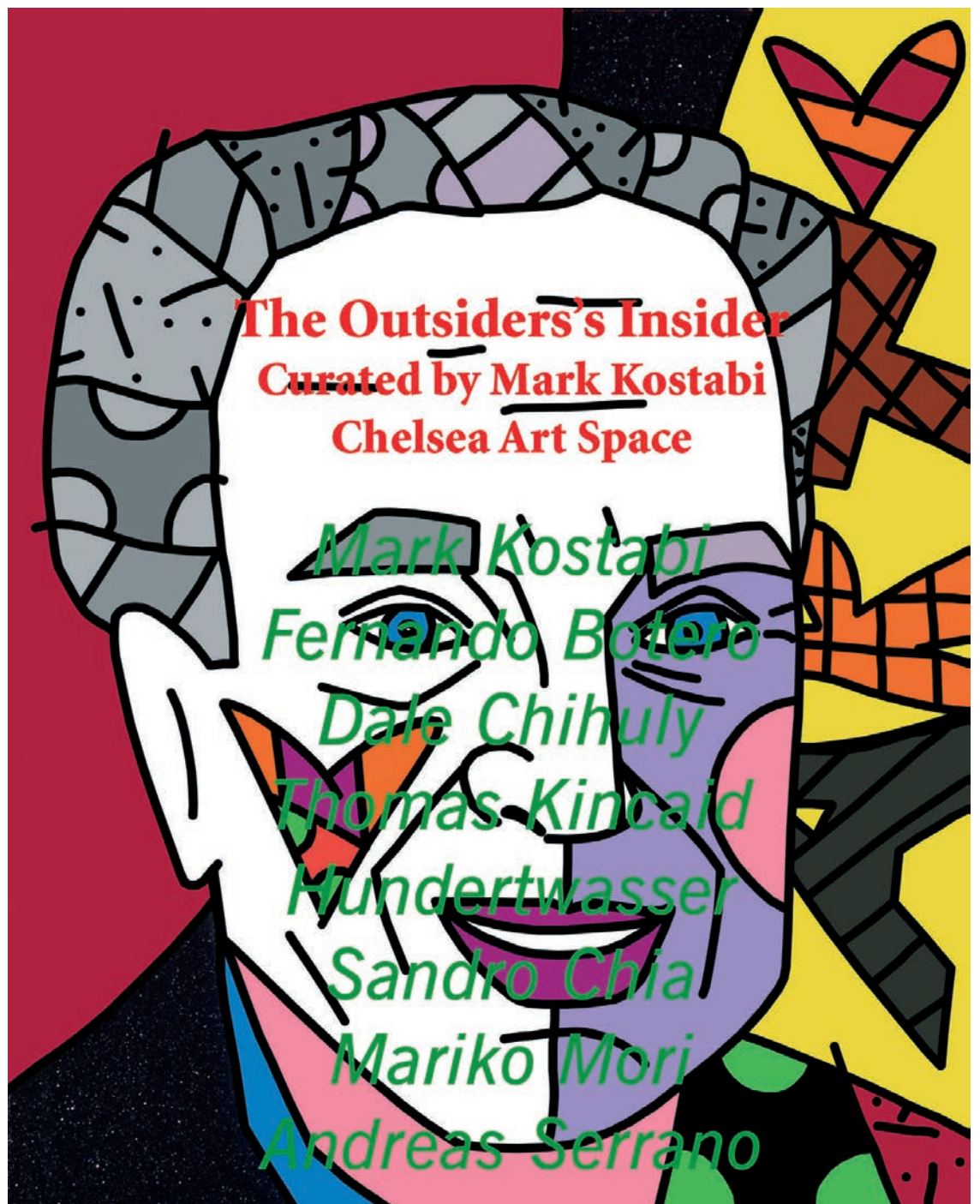
- Mark Wallinger
- Jeff Koons
- Bruce Nauman
- Aaron Young
- Susan Rothenberg
- Berlinde de Brukeryre
- Maurizio Cattelan

MoMA/QNS

COMING SOON TO



PS1/
MOMA



The Outsiders's Insider
Curated by **Mark Kostabi**
Chelsea Art Space

- Mark Kostabi
- Fernando Botero
- Dale Chihuly
- Thomas Kincaid
- Hundertwasser
- Sandro Chia
- Mariko Mori
- Andreas Serrano

White Cube Hires Shaman To Boost Sluggish Sales

LONDON, November 24, 2009
Prominent London gallery White Cube has recently contracted the services of a self-described, “desert rat, musician and healer” to improve sales of contemporary art.

The global economic recession has resulted in stagnating profit margins for White Cube and other top galleries. To ensure the viability of his White Cube brand, Founder/Owner Jay Jopling has tried several unorthodox strategies to generate more income, such as offering a free Damien Hirst sculpture to the 100th customer, and the innovative “Two-fer Tuesdays” where collectors can mix-and-match any two artworks for a significantly discounted price. However, Jopling’s latest esoteric tactic is raising the most eyebrows: He has hired a shaman.

When questioned about the shaman, Mr. Jopling responded, “Yes, it’s true, I hired a shaman. White Cube experienced what could be considered ‘underwhelming sales’ over the third fiscal quarter. So, we sought to incorporate alternative business stratagems which lead to hiring an experienced ‘Destiny Retrieval and Good Vibration Specialist.’”

In an exclusive interview with *An Art Newspaper*, White Cube’s only interning assistant to the Associate Director’s personal assistant, Jennifer Mallard, described exactly how the world famous gallery settled on shamanism as the answer to flagging sales.

“Usually I just answer the phone and sometimes pick-up the take-away sushi order for lunch,” said Ms. Mallard. “I’m just the intern,” she continued, “so you can imagine how shocked I was when Thom (White Cube’s Associate Director) and Jay (Jopling) actually liked my suggestion. Everybody around the gallery office had been pretty bitchy for weeks since the Frieze Art Fair. I heard that the gallery didn’t sell anything! So, I was talking to my boyfriend Mike, who also works at White Cube—funny right? We were just gossiping about stuff, nothing important really. I said something about how my crazy uncle from New Mexico once did this weird hippy ceremony and I think it helped me pass my final exams senior year at Bard. I was half joking, but Thom and Jay, they were standing nearby in the main space installing these big cut-up poster painting things by... what’s-his-name, I always forget. Anyway, they seemed really into my story and asked me to tell them more about my uncle. The next thing I know they want me to skype Uncle Flower Hawk and see if he’ll come to London.”

Steven “Flower Hawk” Richardson of Las Cruces, NM, is Ms. Mallard’s “crazy uncle” and White Cube’s very own shaman. He is also a frequent contributor to the magazine *Sacred Hoop* and member of the advisory board of the Society for Shamanic Practitioners. *An Art Newspaper* spoke with Mr. Flower Hawk early last week. (He insisted we refer to him not as Mr. Richardson, but call him by his ‘spirit

name,’ “Flower Hawk,” in both conversation and in print.)

To prepare for the specific challenges of reinvigorating the sales of a contemporary art gallery, Mr. Flower Hawk says he perused the training handbook from a two-week seminar called “Soul & Destiny Retrieval,” offered by The Four Winds Society of Toronto, which he said he attended “...sometime around 1993 or maybe ’96.” A line from this training handbook asserts, “Destiny retrieval allows one to find and install a desired future into one’s lifeline.”

“Nobody’s ever asked me make a sweat

chanted some special ‘positive power’ words we had written down earlier.”

Unfortunately, due to what we deem to be trade secrecy, and what Mr. Flower Hawk called his, “secret recipes,” *An Art Newspaper* was not able to uncover the complete program of the shamanic ceremony.

When pressed about the effectiveness of the ceremony Mr. Jopling offered little information. His only comment was, “It’s too early to tell exactly how much business Flower Hawk will bring us, but I’m loving the good vibes — White Cube is now a strictly bumper-free zone.”



lodge to save their business before. Mostly I do vision quests or lead drum circles to communicate with departed spirits or spirit animals. But when Jenny called me and said her boss would fly me all the way to England, you bet I said, ‘Hell, Yeah!’”

When asked how he began his career in shamanism, Mr. Flower Hawk said, “It was the ’70s, you know, and I had just seen this guy Castaneda on the cover of *Time* magazine. I don’t think I read the whole article, you know, I was 20-something and I just saw this line that said he (Castaneda) was, “an enigma wrapped in a mystery.” I thought that sounded really groovy. So I bought his book, *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*. And that changed my life, man.”

Mr. Flower Hawk was flown first-class to London earlier this month to conduct Shamanic rituals within the main space of White Cube. All White Cube staffers were summoned to the gallery on a Monday evening (standard gallery hours are Tuesday-Saturday) for what an internal White Cube memo described as, “a mandatory Gallery Operations Brainstorm & Good Vibration Re-Alignment Session.” The memo added, “tea and refreshments will be provided. Attendees are encouraged to bring a small hand-drum, if they have one.”

Mr. Flower Hawk was reluctant to share exact details of the specific rituals he conducted. However, after several rounds of questioning, he provided some vague details about how he initiated a, “drum circle, and lit some sandalwood incense. Then we passed around the sage wand to everybody. Jay held it last. He



can view the entire run of the 1970s arts magazine *Aspen*, republished on the artist-run site *ubu.com*, which regularly makes out-of-print works available as free digital files. All of

Urine Exams for Fair Apps

ZURICH, June 15, 2008

At a controversial press conference in the VIP lounge of the Zurich convention center an announcement regarding the future of fair process for fairs was announced. The closing comments from the press officer for the International Art Fairs United were, “Well we figure it’s not exactly relevant and maybe it’s invasive but at least it’s transparent. Look at it this way, what have they got to hide? And besides, we are not even sure if those results will have a positive or negative effect.” She finished with, “Everybody’s doing it right?” nudging this reporter’s ribs with her elbow.

Two years ago the organization, which is responsible for keeping a modicum of transparency in the formerly closed-door system, had achieved a milestone by disbanding gallery-run fair committees. “These guys were making a taste mafia inviting their former interns who opened some flimflam shadow operation or keeping out the galleries that represented similar artists trying to make little monopolies and whatnot. We wanted something that was a bit more, if you pardon the expression, integrity-based. We’re nowhere near the meritocracy that we would like to be at but at least we have offered an accountability service where applicants can engage in discussion with our current committee structure to understand why their proposal wasn’t taken and advice for the future.” This service has also been markedly controversial for its cruel honesty by no longer perpetuating the canned responses typically found in rejection letters, but rather with ice-breaker conversations starting with “Were you fucking serious with this?” The urine examinations will take effect in the New Year but applicants are already asked to include a small container of urine for upcoming fair application deadlines to get the process and practice in motion. The monitoring is scientific and any child or animal urine will result in disqualification or demotion to a satellite fair.

Manifesta 10 will be in Israel and Palestine

SCHIPOL, January 2, 2008

Capitalizing on the overwhelming success of Manifesta 6’s unification of the formerly divided island of Cyprus, the Committee for Universal Well-Being through the Arts and their initiative Regional Exhibitions to Arm Responsible Dogoodery (REtARD) have unveiled plans to hold the next Manifesta in both Israel and Palestine. “I mean, what are we waiting for? It is a true test of the radicality and relevance of this event,” said the chairman, who also happened to have been a

student in the controversial art school exhibition in Nicosia. “They said it was a naïve idea. Who’s laughing now?” the chairman chortled rhetorically. The curatorial team comprised of artist Jonathan Monk, Jens Hoffmann and the duo’s curatorial avatar Adam Carr aim to bring an end to the seemingly endless and rather tiring division that has plagued the area since the 1950s. While Monk and Hoffmann speak exclusively through Carr, a savvy digital animation who holds daily press conferences in undisclosed locations in Second Life, we were able to randomly catch the end of a one-man roundtable where strategies

emerged. “Our first goal is to gain unfettered access to the religious sites. These places are rife with possibility and the energy to repurpose them is undeniably tangible,” said a voice that was oddly unsynched to the avatar’s mouth movements. “Furthermore these places are a living performance. If you go there and watch the

daily behaviors. You’re like, ‘Wow man, chill out. Don’t be so zealous.’ But of course they don’t see that logic and so we are going to invert this puppy on its head right under their noses.”

When asked what we could expect from the exhibition in terms of artist projects, the revisitation of certain ’90s strategies were appropriately on the horizon. “Did you know Rikrit can make an awesome babaganoush? He even knows how to make things kosher,” the voice continued. “The fact is that people won’t even notice he’s there. He will be operating within the culture as a Rabbi performing brises, bar mitzvahs, getting paid, etc., and then ‘kazaam’ that was art! Edition of 3 plus 2 A.Ps. It’s brilliant. These guys will all be holding hands before you can say ‘La heim habibi.’”



DIALOGUE

Karma Chameleon: Interview with Donelle Woolford

By Lorena Muñoz-Alonso



Lorena Muñoz-Alonso: *I was reading David Joselit's piece on you, in which he describes you as a quasi-mythical character and as an "avatar," which allows "for an imaginary/real mobility" that a regular artist lacks. I am wondering: How do you interpret this concept of mobility, and why does it symbolize something positive or desirable?*

Donelle Woolford: The dichotomy of "real" and "imaginary" reminds me of the three kinds of beds in Plato's Republic: the idea of a bed ("bed-hood," if you will); the object that is made by a carpenter (the bed itself); and the representation that is made by an artist (a likeness or imitation of a bed). Though Plato was quite confident about the distinctions he drew between ideas, objects, and representations, in our time we're no longer committed to such utilitarian hierarchies. So, what are these paradigms of "real" and "imaginary?" Am I, Donelle, a "god-made" idea, and if so, are ideas real or imaginary? If I'm an object—and as such, useful—does that make me more real? Or am I an imitation of something—an artist, perhaps—that relegates me to the realm of the imaginary? If I'm enjoying some kind of mobility it's between these levels of being (or not). This chimerical quality is key to myth.

Being a character-driven myth, a kind of shared theatrical figure, allows me to be fixed and flexible simultaneously. There is the underlying, common notion of Donelle Woolford as a young artist—my character, so to speak—and then there are the particular embodiments of that character by the different actors who interpret it. Myth allows me to be in several places at once, or to be instantly fluent in German, or tall, or somber, or handsome. Every version of me is different, and yet every version is still me.

LMA: *In your artist statement you define yourself as the "quintessential market artist." Could you explain what you mean by that and how it relates to your political agenda?*

DW: I'm just trying to claim some valuable intellectual territory for the left. I've never understood why so-called political artists almost completely cede the power of commerce to conservatives. The belief that refusing to make saleable art objects for a market economy somehow sym-

bolizes a critique of that market is dubious and shortsighted. Eliminating the object of exchange only turns the artist herself, or the public event, or the community involved, into commodities that get bought and sold in an institutional marketplace of museums, biennials, and state-funded public art. So what we somewhat lazily refer to as commodity critique is really only a transformation—an exploitation, really—of systems and networks of people into art objects. That doesn't sound very liberating to me; in fact it sounds quite corporate and repressive.

If one of my desires is to empower myself within a system like the art world, it seems more resistant and effective to collect free material, use my skills to organize it into meaningful images, and try to control the flow (and value) of those images as my sustenance.

LMA: *Your narrative as a working-class black female is written by Joe Scanlan, a middle-class white man. Do you have any idea why Joe decided you should fit this description, what were his most intrinsic reasons and thoughts to engage in a race and gender conflict that doesn't really affect him that much?*

DW: Actually you have it backwards. Joe is the working-class artist, I'm the privileged one. My father was a real estate lawyer who made a successful transition into entertainment law. My mom is a natural healer and author. And I graduated from Yale.

If I were to say anything about Joe's characterization of me it would be that he wrote me to be everything that he is not. That counts in the basic, white / black, male / female way, but it also counts in terms of class and education and family history. I'm everything he is not in those ways, too, and I think those are the ways that really matter.

I also question your assuming that race and gender don't really affect him. Aren't we all equally affected by this conflict? I think a working-class white male is just as bound to a stifling categorization as a bourgeois black woman is, or a queer Arabian monarch. We're all trapped in

overlapping sandboxes, and in that sense Joe and I play well together.

LMA: *So far, you have been played by many different actresses. I am wondering: If you could choose to be embodied by a really famous actress, who would it be?*

DW: Salma Hayek is always a good answer to any question regarding celebrity embodiment. I could say Tilda Swinton but I think she's too tall—even though I love her body language, her screen temperature. Does Patti Smith count? She would be the exact opposite of both Swinton and Hayek, so you kinda get my drift. If Johnny Depp's turn as a drag queen in *Before Night Falls* qualifies, he'd be great, too. However, Viola Davis would be my top choice, even though she might be too perfect for the part.

LMA: *I like very much the idea of you being a ghost, which you also say on your statement. However, a ghost is someone "present in absence," in the form of a memory or a supernatural force. But you are, if you will, "absent in presence." You are there but you are not*



you—but the actress that plays you. What kind of ghost are you?

DW: I think ghosts are a manifestation of our desire to see what we want to see. The Donelle with whom you're interacting and the Donelle with whom someone else might interact are different. I don't think I'm "absent in presence," if

I understand what you mean by that statement. But perhaps others do feel that way. I often have to contend with invisibility, even though I'm always sure I'm there.

LMA: *How necessary are you for the art world?*

DW: I think we're all only just beginning to learn the language of perception as it relates to social space. Our vocabulary is quite narrow, actually. For a recent show at White Flags Projects in Saint Louis I created a piece based on Piaget's theory of the conservation of volume. This theory deals with development and perception: at a young age, people associate volume (size) with shape, regardless of what they might have previously known or seen to the contrary. At the opening, I got to experience (and experiment with) reactions that I attributed to shifting perceptions of my portrayal. Throughout the opening, I would periodically change out of character whenever I climbed onto one of four risers built for the occasion that were of slightly different heights.

Although my portrayal changed back and forth throughout the opening, my physical form remained unchanged. Some people had a hard time dealing with that because, like the Piaget experiment, they were not able to apply knowledge from previous perceptions of Donelle to the situation of Donelle in the present. Others just rolled with it and played along. It felt pretty important.

The performance challenged notions of provenance. It challenged my audience to reckon with what they think I am and what they'd like me to be. If that's an experience we need to have as an audience, then I guess I'm necessary for the art world.

LMA: *I remember I went to see "Double Agent" at the ICA almost three years ago but I completely missed the point of your work. You were not in the gallery in that particular moment and I didn't even know you were an "avatar," so my experience was reduced to the sight of an empty studio. What happens with Donelle's agency when the viewers fail to grasp her true essence? Is it diminished or, on the contrary, multiplied?*

DW: The unknown is always more promising than the known. My agency is quite vast when you don't know anything about me, but the more you learn the tighter and smaller my realm gets. However, just when you think what you know about me will annihilate your curiosity, the fact that I am portrayed by many actors who are empowered by their portrayals flips the whole premise on a point, like light passing through a pinhole, and my agency expands again.

My existence is kind of like a solar eclipse. I'm best seen inverted, projected, indirectly.

LMA: *"Double Agent" was a very interesting show in that it addressed situations wherein artists use others to make their work. Have you ever felt exploited in an artistic working relationship, like for example with Joe? And, have you ever felt guilty of exploiting someone yourself?*

DW: I'd like to point out that exploitation has two meanings: to make productive use of something generally, like a skill or a natural resource; and to make productive use of something specifically, for one's own advantage. I can't name an artist who doesn't want to be exploited in the first sense, and I can't name an artist who hasn't been exploited in the second.

It's funny that people are so fixated on my exploitation, but I think that's more a function of their politicized perceptions of me (and of Joe) than it



these works emphasize the capacity for remembering, which Kluge sees as crucial in pig "the assault of the present on the rest of time," and in organizing individual and collective learning and memory under an industrialist-capitalist temporality that works to fragment and valorize all experience. In these works, resistance is to be found at the moment of production, since it figures the moment of consumption as an act of resistance.



is of the work. It's also disrespectful, somehow, to assume that I would wittingly allow myself to be used. After all, the show was called "Double Agent," not "Agent and Sub-Agent."

LMA: *At the end of the day, what is more important to you: your work in itself or the debate around the questions of gender, race, and authorship that it generates?*

DW: The work.

LMA: *I was thinking about African-American art institutions and museums and wondering if your work has ever been included in any show in that kind of context. What do you think of these institutions and in what way do you feel they open up or narrow the dialogue around an artist's work?*

DW: Joe told me something that happened at the opening of a show he had recently in New York City, where he displayed his archival recreation of David Hammons' *Blizzard Ball Sale*. That's the performance where Hammons sold snowballs on St. Mark's Place in 1983, alongside all the other Sunday morning flea market participants. Anyway, a curator from MoMA asked him if he was particularly interested in black artists. And Joe thought, you know, I've made works derived from Bruce Nauman, Robert Gober, Rachel Whiteread, Mike Kelley, and a whole museum exhibition that was an homage to Sol LeWitt. Not once did someone ask me if I was particularly interested in white artists in response to any of those works. But with David Hammons it was different. The question wasn't asked in a malicious way at all, it was just a normal, rote thing to say by someone working at one of the most prominent museums in the world.

If we weren't all racially affected in some way, institutions like The Studio Museum or El Museo del Barrio in New York, to name two, would not need to exist. I think the commonly held notion is these places are exclusionary and narrowing. However, they exist to achieve exactly the opposite goal: to overturn the narrow question that Joe heard at his opening. We have yet to reckon fully with our perception of "the norm," and until we do, we have to have institutions for the rest of us.



It's clear from these examples that the readymade still towers over artistic practice.

But this is largely due to the fact that the strategy yielded a host of new opportunities for the commodity. Dan Graham identified the problem with the readymade: "instead of reducing gallery objects to the common level of the everyday object, this ironic gesture simply extended the reach of the gallery's exhibition territory." One must return to *Fountain*, the most notorious and most interesting of the readymades, to see that the gesture does not simply raise epistemological questions about the nature of art, but enacts the dispersion of objects into discourse. The power of the readymade is that no one needs to make the pilgrimage to see *Fountain*. As with Graham's magazine pieces, few people saw the original *Fountain* in 1917. Never exhibited, and lost or destroyed almost immediately, it was actually created through Duchamp's media manipulations—the Stieglitz photograph (a guarantee,



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CINEMA



Coen Bros do it again with *To Be Titled*

By Daniel Kingery

CANNES April 27, 2004

The Coen brothers's critical lampoon of the art world boom years opened in Cannes this past week, with responses from the audience ranging from hilarity to absolute horror.

"I wish I could say I made it all up and that it bears no resemblance to reality," said screenwriter David Kingesworth. "If you tell anyone with no art world experience what really goes on on a day-to-day basis, they will think you are bullshitting them or you're crazy," Kingesworth added.

The movie has many typical Coen brothers elements, so its no surprise that they picked up the script: It revolves around a character from a modest background with ambitions for social advancement who, out of desperation, resorts to drastic illegal means to catapult him into a world beyond his control and unleash a series of events that lead to his demise and the destruction of the art world.

"The screenplay reminded us of some of our earliest work, like *Blood Simple*, while providing something fresh that we hadn't seen before. That's why we were attracted to it. The interplay of conflicting identities within a single figure is a particularly compelling idea," said producer Ethan Coen.

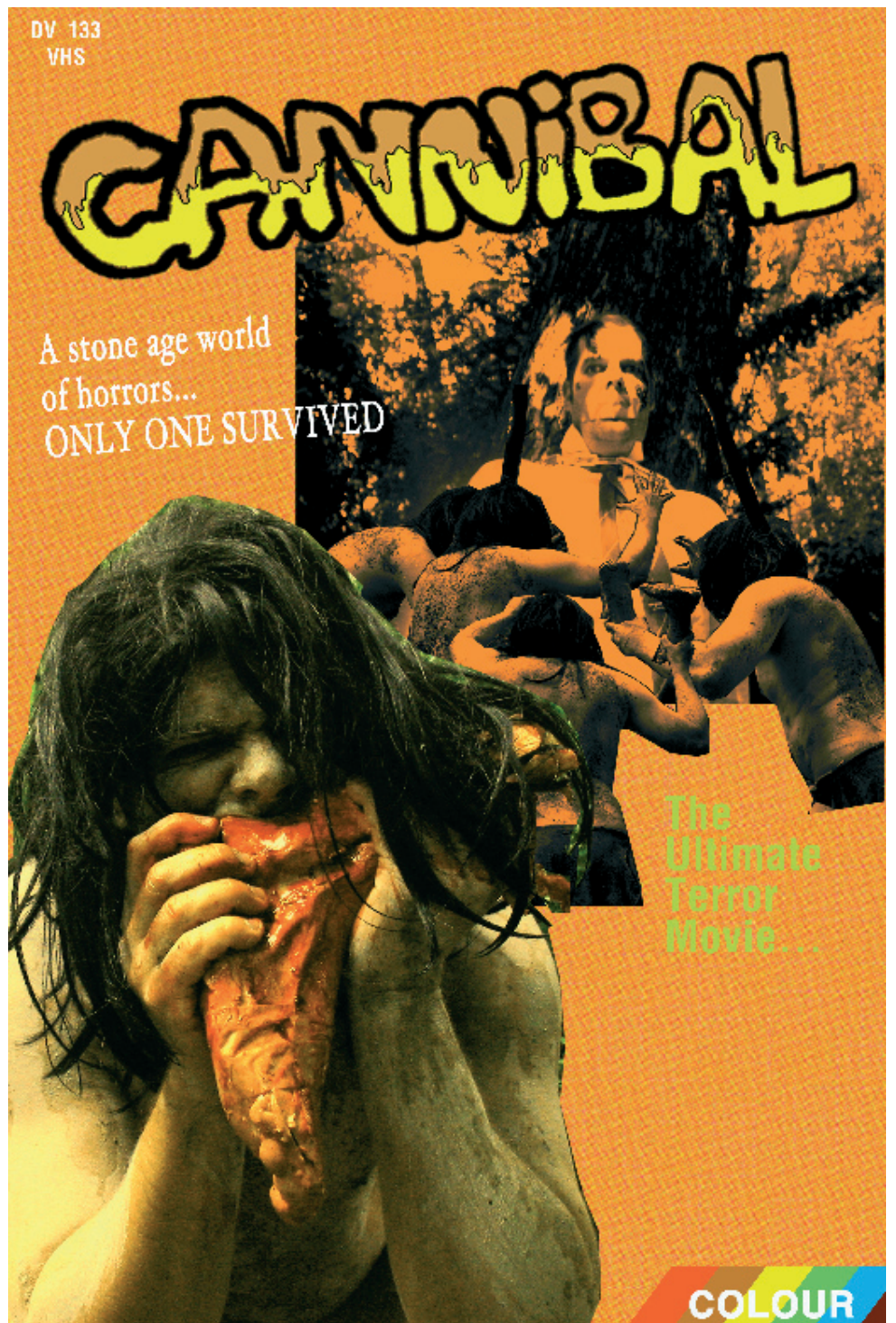
In essence, though, *To Be Titled* is a dark comedy, with an absurdist strain that is reminiscent of *Burn After Reading* or even Spike Jonze's *Being John Malkovich*. Malkovich, in fact, plays one of the main characters.

The movie follows the twisted career path of John Morten, a young man with art world ambitions, played by James Franco who said he was attracted to the role because of his own art world experience. Morten finds a job at a top gallery. Ashamed of his modest background, he fabricates a new identity for himself, adapting his personality

to his expectations for success in the art world. He poses as a gay man and models himself on the gallerist Claes Oelesen, played by John Malkovich, whose trust he wins. Soon he becomes obsessed with the gallerist and imitates him in every way, taking on his opinions and affectations and parroting his life down to the smallest details. He begins stealing art works and selling them through Janet Cartwright, a dubious secondary market dealer in New York, played by Julianne Moore, in order to finance a lifestyle that still doesn't approach that of the immensely wealthy gallerist. Soon he loses track of reality, fabricating a new self for every context he finds himself in, meanwhile losing any sense of a "real" self underneath the many facades. Theft and deceit turn into compulsions, a runaway train he's unable to stop.

The movie cuts mainly between two main plot lines: Morten's unofficial/illegal doings, the gallery and his life with his trusting and innocent long-term girlfriend, played by Julia Stiles, who knows nothing of his other selves. The film explores the role of the self and the meaning of constructed identity in a world where money matters over meaning and people are just pawns in a high-stakes game that has nothing to do with the kind of theoretical debates that one often reads about in art magazines.

"The commercial side of the art world is a kind of caricature of the rest of society," Kingesworth said in a post-screening Q&A. "Everything that went on in the financial markets went on in the art world, compounded by bizarre behaviors and rampant drug use. Of course, anyone heavily investing in art in the late '00s was also involved in the financial markets. These are the richest people in the world we're talking about. It's only when the money dried up that people started to ask questions about the system."



sible for the most heinous crimes who in fact got away."

Morten is in fact a kind of art world Madoff, but there's a subtle moral ambiguity that pervades the film, where it's impossible to fully condemn his actions. More so, Morten is caught in a web of lies and deception. As he embarks down this path, the subsequent events become inevitable. All of the people around him, to one degree or another, are complicit. They use him and look the other way when red flags go up, only noting them as a possible angle on him should things go wrong, hoping to benefit from his obvious corruption.

The title itself plays with this very notion; it's a picture without a name, much like the main character, a person named or classified by himself and everyone around depending on their needs and expectations — in essence an enormous blank. The part of the movie, though, that makes it most moving, are the scenes with his girlfriend and her journey as she finds out about the layers of hidden reality behind his personality. In these scenes you gain a real empathy not only for her, but for Morten and what his life could have been.

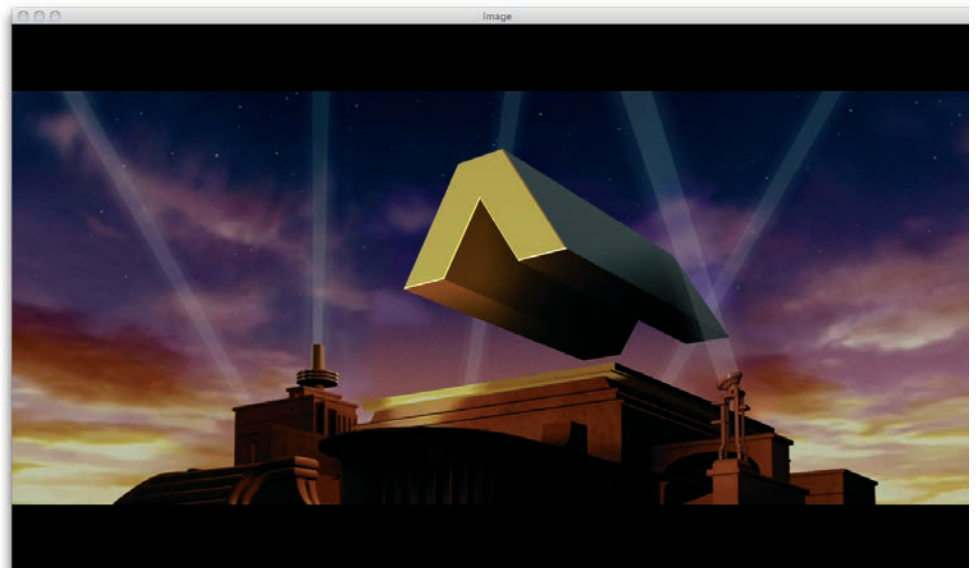
To Be Titled is a story about lost innocence in a world where money counts and life is cheap and identity is a flimsy construct with no grounding. Ultimately, no one is redeemed and nothing is resurrected.

The movie has an edge on other recent attempts to capture the art world boom, mainly because it brings us into a world that rings true, no matter how absurd events turn. It is a marked contrast to Michel Houellebecq's recent novel, which comes off as contrived and ignorant of real art world dynamics by comparison, resorting to clichés and a few popularly well-known names, like Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst.

Especially those viewers with art world insider knowledge found the film compelling and truthful.

"I recognize behaviors very similar to those I saw during the '80s," said Julian Schnabel after the premiere. "I could swear that Julianne Moore's character is based on Mary Boone."

"I've collected for many years, and there are a lot of good people working in art, but there are a lot of loonies, too," said Ben Stiller. "I guess Hollywood isn't really all that different!"



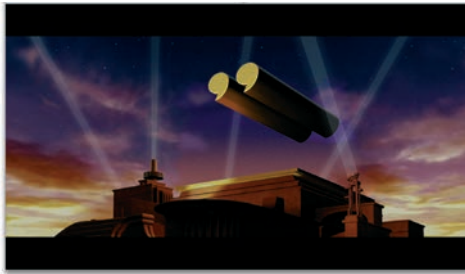
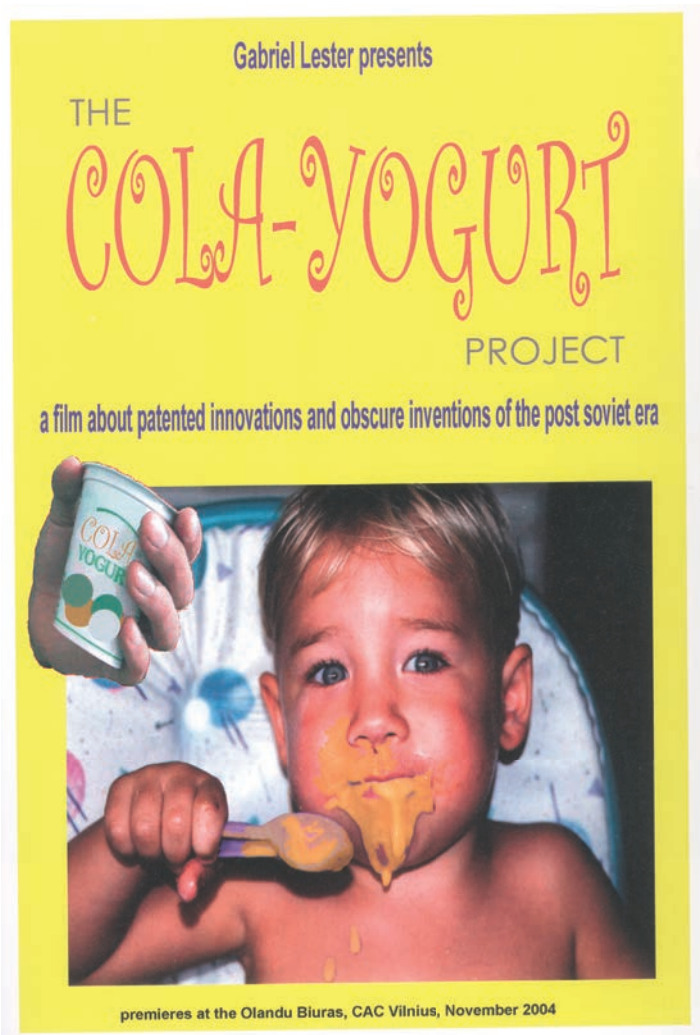
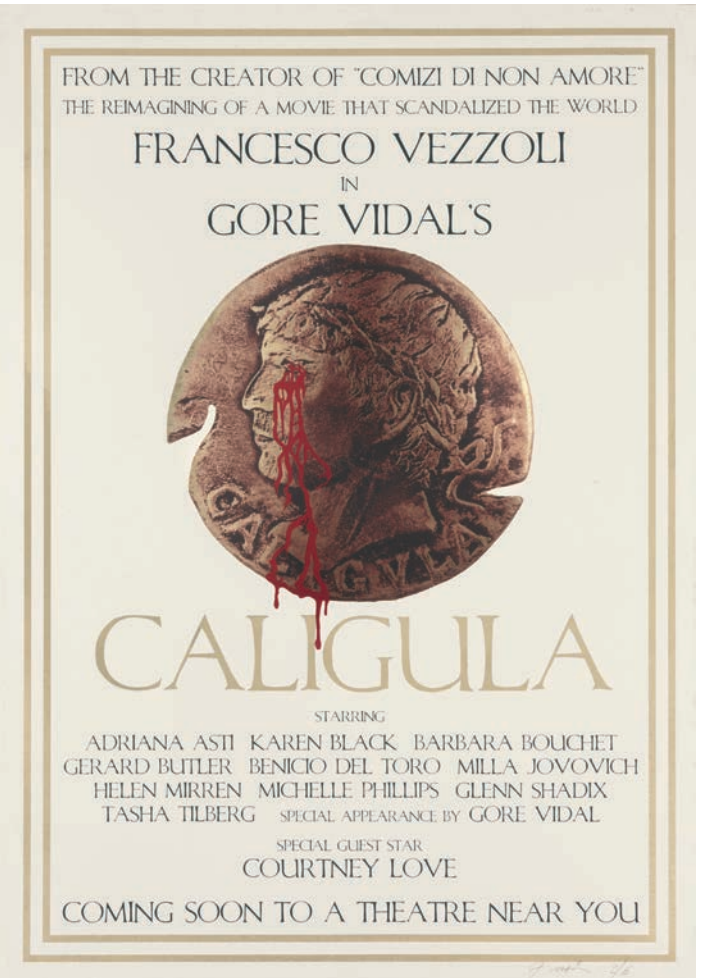
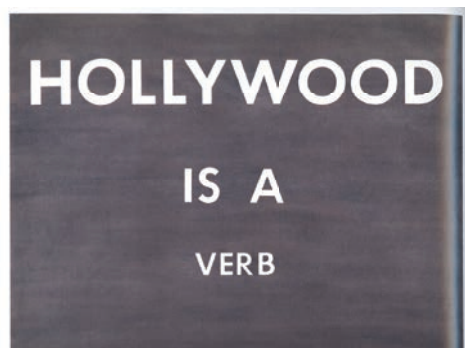


fig. 7. Andy Warhol Paramount, 1985
The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. © The Andy Warhol Foundation, Inc. / Art Resource, NY



The Estheticist



Dear Estheticist,

How do I ask for credit from an ex-boyfriend with which I have done long and intensive collaboration, which includes a video in which I perform and a costume if he uses the footage in all situations? How do I go about explaining that a collaboration in nature is with two and more people and that it is actually helpful to credit each other? Since I am more involved in the art world it's a little hard to explain these things to another person who has less experience but it's very important to me that I have the credit for the work I did as I credit people I work with as an obvious automatic response.

Thank you,

Genevieve

Dear Genevieve,

Thank you for your interesting question. Based on how you present the problem, you are right: you should receive some sort of credit for this piece. The way you receive the credit would depend on how it was originated: if both of you came up with the idea, then it is a collaboration; if it was his idea and you helped, you should still receive some credit, eg. he should be credited with the concept and you with the costume, performance, execution, etc. In any case, yours is not a unique situation; many people who work together (and sometimes ARE together) in what appears very spontaneous situations later on argue about issues of authorship such as this one. It depends how far you want to take this, but one benevolent way to handle this is that you should share with your ex-boyfriend other examples of similar collaborations where both artists get credited (say, Christo and Jean-Claude, Claes and Kosje Oldenburg, Diller and Scofidio, etc). Technically, you are legally entitled to sue your ex-boyfriend for using your image without authorization (assuming that no release form was signed). But you may not want to take your case that far, nor would it serve you much purpose. The best is to move on, let that be what it was, and learn from the example when you engage in future collaborations.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist:

Too often my viewers think my works of visual fiction are actually factual.

What is the most effective way to signal irony?

Beauvais, Knoxville, TN

Dear Beauvais,

Thank you for your question. The question for you is, why

would you want your viewers to know the truth? Ignorance, in this case, is aesthetic bliss. Think about the conundrum that every parent faces about when to tell their children that Santa Claus doesn't exist — they eventually will come to the age to realize the truth, but when parents break the news prematurely they cruelly and abruptly destroy a child's world of magic and fantasy. As an artist, you give your viewers the gift of a possible reality, and it is not your job to undo it for them. Let them figure it out on their own — most eventually will, and they will feel rewarded — even if they are infuriated by having been temporarily fooled, they will be delighted with themselves for having figured it out. And if for some reason they never do figure it out, they never deserved to know the truth in the first place.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

What should I wear for the opening of my solo show? Does the same dress code apply when I'm part of a group show?

Ramón

Dear Ramón,

Dress code at an opening is extremely important. What you are wearing often says more about your work than the work itself, because, let's face it, no one looks at the work on the day of the opening, but everyone checks out what you are wearing. For a solo show, it is common to overdo it (like wearing Prada), which would make you look like an amateur "solo show artist." The best is to take your cue from the dealer, or curator — always dress a bit less flashy than them so they feel that they are the stars of the night (in the end, they don't have the creative outlet of making art, so let them have their little moment of fame). But don't overdo it: to dress too casually is very '90s and it is too used by middle-aged artists, which you don't want to do. For a group show, you need to take the cues from your fellow exhibiting artists: they will hate you if you try to outdo them in wardrobe, plus you will look like you are desperate for attention. For that, it is best to dress as if you were just attending the show as a guest.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

Are artist residencies really the only answer?

If so, why did Smack Mellon reject me?

Jin

Dear Jin,

Artists residencies are no solution to having an art career, if that is what you mean. They are a bit like drugs — they are addictive, they make you feel good and productive, and on a limited dose they do help, but soon you can become a residency junkie, floating from one residency to another, like those people in universities who like the idea of being a student forever. As a result, those artists who are constantly in search of residencies to get a career forget to get a life. And the problem is, if you don't have a life, you don't have a subject to make art about, and your work will start looking like bland, flavorless and generic residency art. In this sense, it is healthy that we don't get accepted into every single residency we apply to.

Sincerely

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

If an artwork is in a crate in a storage facility in Long Island City, is it still an artwork?

Put away,

Paul

Dear Paul,

You ask very interesting but complex questions, so here we will have to get a bit more philosophical. According to Bishop Berkeley, one of the great English Empiricists, nothing exists unless it is being perceived by someone. Then, Ortega y Gasset, on the other hand, said that our behavior is constructed under assumptions that we have regarding the existence of things. For example, when I wake up in the morning and prepare myself to go out to start my day, it is because I am assuming that the world is still the same as when I went to bed the day before, that when I open the door the street will be there, etc. So: if we follow these ideas, what matters is not whether the work still exists physically, because it does exist in our minds, and continues influencing our behavior. Let's say the caves of Altamira are an artwork. Most of us haven't been to Altamira to corroborate they exist or are still there, yet one can say they continue exerting their influence. And even when they vanish, due to accident or duration, they are still artworks in people's mind. If a performance piece is stored away in our memory, isn't it the same than when a physical art work is in a storage facility?

Sincerely

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

I want to be famous, and I am open about it. What do you think I should do? Which of these is the best way to get fast recognition, wealth and fame? And if possible, to feel good about myself and what I do?

- a. contemporary art(star)
- b. pop singer
- c. actor
- d. (super)model

My skills are very limited but I have good ideas.

I have no previous experience in any of these fields.

Thanks,

Anonymous (I haven't decided on my stage name yet)

Dear Anonymous,

You are amongst the minority. Who wants to be famous anymore? Be chased by paparazzi and tabloids, die of an overdose while still young, be immersed in legal battles with the many ex-spouses who will fight to take over your estate, being debated publicly over the kind of liposuction or plastic surgery you have conducted on yourself. In any case, your avenues depend, as you may have guessed, on your abilities: if you have a great body, supermodel is the solution; if you know how to fake feelings, you are an actor; if you can sing and move at least decently onstage, you are a pop singer. If you can't do any of these things — that is, if you are not that attractive, you can't really act, sing or move — then you are stuck with trying to become a contemporary artist, as that is the field where all the fame-starved and slightly untalented people go. The bad news: fame in the art world is so easy to get that it hardly counts as true fame. Like Maurizio Cattelan said, being famous in the art world is too easy for everyone because the art world is like 2000 people. The good part: because art stars are second-rate celebrities, they are not so famous that they are pestered with paparazzi, tabloids, ex-spouses, etc.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist.

Dear Estheticist,

Recently I wrote a critical review about an artist. Just three days before this review was published, the dealer who represents this artist had invited me to submit an exhibition proposal for his gallery. I was very happy. However after the review went online, the artist told me that he and his dealer were very upset. I wrote to the dealer, but I never heard back from him. What should I do?

Multitasking Curator

Dear Multitasking Curator,

You are experiencing the inconvenient world of trying to be both a critic and a curator (that's your first mistake). There is a reason why critics usually don't curate exhibitions and why curators shouldn't spend their free time writing criticism — both things are not very compatible and I have yet to see someone who can pull both of them off spectacularly well. Now, assuming that your review was negative (since otherwise I doubt both dealer and artist would have been upset), it does appear hypocritical to dis a gallery in public while at the same time expecting them to open their space to you (second mistake). If they would indeed give you the opportunity and you did curate a show there, one couldn't help but wonder how come you are willing to work with a gallery that you publicly hold in such low regard. Furthermore, it is quite understandable that if the dealer doesn't feel supported from you he would not feel precisely compelled to support you in return. Not all of us are good Samaritans. I am afraid that there is not much you can do about this situation but to try to mend fences over time with the gallery. For starters, writing a positive review wouldn't hurt.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Estheticist -

I need time to make art. I need money to make art. I need time to make money. When I take time to make money, I don't have time to make art. But I have money to make art. But with only money to make art and no time to make art, then I cannot make art. How does this vicious cycle end?

Cheers,

David

Dear David,

Thank you for your question. You are right: art takes time and money, but so does eating. Do you stop eating when you don't have time and money?

People who want to be artists but aren't really serious about making art, use the money/time excuse as a cop-out for giving up on making art. The reality is that when art is absolutely vital for your life, you will find the time to make it. And while money certainly helps, it is not an absolute requirement, e.g. conceptual art.

I understand, however, that your question points out to how to achieve a satisfying amount of time and money to make art. The reality is that most of us will never arrive to that point, but there are three things we can do to get there. One is to take the structures within the art world that allow artists with this problem to have enough time and sustenance to make their art. That is what residencies are for, and to an extent, graduate school (in some situations).

Another thing you should do is to learn resourcefulness from people that are more disadvantaged than you. Most handicapped people don't give up living because they have a handicap; they instead learn how to live with their handicap and sometimes even turn it into their advantage. You should take the potential of every limiting situation. If you run out of paper, can you find another surface to make art on? If you only have one hour each day, can you dedicate it to build a long-term project? You are an artist: what artists do is to be creative and thrive the more things get tough.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist.

Dear Estheticist:

Your ad intrigued me. I'm actually curious about what answer you give to your sample question: How DOES one enter into the biennial circuit?

Many thanks!

Matilda

Dear Matilda,

The answer is simpler than what you may think.

People think that the genres of visual art are photography, sculpture, performance, etc. but that's not true. That belongs to the 20th century.

The 21st century genres of visual art are: museum art, biennial art, gallery art, academic art, and so forth.

Ok, I am exaggerating, but I hope you will get my point. To understand what I mean you simply need to go to museums, biennials and galleries, and pay attention to the kind of work that is being shown in those places, and the way they speak to each other, and the way that curators build narratives with them (that is their own curatorial narratives). These works have certain characteristics. Works that enter museum collections are, precisely, collectable. Works that exist in galleries are usually sufficiently self-contained that they can be easily collected. So-called "biennialist" artists, like gymnasts who go to the olympics, are those trained in the language of biennials, which tends to be more of the complement to what you see in museums: less collectible, more site-specific, more experimental, and yes, more spectacular. My point is that there is a sensibility in the exhibition conditions of the biennial that tend to be different from other places (that is, they usually happen in culturally interesting cities that only on those occasions become the center of the art world like Venice, Istanbul, Sao Paulo, etc. — they are visited by a sophisticated, usually more intellectual public than the one that goes to art fairs, they tend to be more about politics than about the market, etc.), and artists who participate in these events are usually aware of these conditions, OR their work simply fits naturally within them and curators who select them recognize that.

This is not to say that an artist can't exist in museums or biennials simultaneously, of course, but in those cases their work has shown enough range that it can exist and function in those various registers.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

I am an American artist and have been working with a "personal virtual assistant" from Bangalore to create a project that not only reflects the uneven conditions of the relationship, but also makes attempts to balance out the power dynamics of the relationship by treating my "assistant" like a person, making his interests the content of our work together, and even asking him to assign me tasks. The project has been extremely fulfilling and problematic — right where I want it to be. I have an exhibition planned of the work we have done together, and I'm wondering what you think the best way might be to allow for the relationship to be alive during the exhibition.

Thanks,

Artist Entrepreneur

Dear Artist Entrepreneur,

Thank you for bringing up such an interesting and problematic case — which appears to be a classic ethical dilemma in social practice. First, let's review the facts: you are an artist who has hired a service. The individual who works for the company and, by extension, for you, is bound to a contractual relationship to which his financial subsistence depends. Even if he enjoys what you are asking him to do, or even if he plots these ideas with you, the relationship is rooted in two unaltered facts: he is doing it as part of a job, and you are his boss. Because of these facts, the relationship artist-assistant is not significantly altered regardless what you ask him to do.

Your desire to disrupt, or expose the power relationships that emerge from globalization is well noted. However, just for the sake of argument: even if this exchange is based on a democratic creative dialogue where you both make aesthetic decisions, it would not be a collaboration, because since your collaborator is likely not a visual artist versed, invested nor inserted in the international art circuit as I would assume you are, even then you will end up getting the credit, and he will remain in the background as an enhancing ingredient to your career. The reason for this is that the kind of benefits that you are getting from this relationship are tangible but invisible — they are of the reputational economy type: you may appear publicly as a generous or democratic individual, but in the end because you are the one who is bringing this man into your cultural context you are the one to benefit.

In my view, the only way to truly balance the power dynamics of this relationship would be to not make the outcome of the project an exhibition in your cultural playing field (that is, the art world, America, etc.) To do so would first tilt the project in an advantageous light toward your own practice, and make the assistant look less than a real person and more like a human readymade, which is what these companies sell anyway. Where you, for instance, to revert the hierarchy and ask him to assign you tasks, or to perform tasks that his friends are doing for other bosses in the U.S., you would be into more interesting territory. And to truly level the relationship, your financial or artistic subsistence should depend on his decisions and suggestions — for instance, having him decide what your art should be like in the next year or so, without you revealing to others that you are taking instructions from him. Or starting your own reverse company, doing the kind of work for free for the personal assistants in Bangalore who service these American companies. Or just becoming the free personal assistant to any random person in Bangalore. Or do like Marina Abramovic who exchanged jobs with a prostitute in Amsterdam for a day. Etcetera. These courses of action would be in my view a more complementary (and complimentary) alternative to simply exhibiting the projects that you had your virtual assistant do.

This is not to say that it is not valid to retain your artistic authority in this relationship (Santiago Sierra, for instance, exploits people but he is direct about it, even if it may be an unethical act). The problem is that you have created a situation where the artist-assistant relationship you propose to problematize may not appear to go so far as to truly upset the balance. What matters here is conceptual transparency and the kind of stakes that exist on both sides. Without carefully addressing both in your presentation, you risk appearing to simply extend that which you appear to criticize or only half-heartedly exposing your personal risk in a power relationship.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

I would like to ask you where would we be right about now art-wise if the Renaissance had never happened — if we had skipped it altogether?

Georgia, Athens

Dear Georgia,

Thank you for your question. Not being a Renaissance expert, I consulted one truly versed Renaissance scholar. He was puzzled by the question, saying that “I don’t know what the questioner means by ‘the’ Renaissance, and even if I did, I would likely have no idea.” However, knowing that this is not quite a satisfactory answer, and given our pledge here to answer every question, here I go:

Marxists historians would point out that during the Renaissance the emergence of a bourgeois class (e.g. Medici) with time for leisure and education led to art as a product that could be bought and collected. Furthermore, the emphasis on man as the measure of all things (as opposed to God) has brought, amongst other consequences, the phenomenon of constructing the notion of “the” artist. With Vasari’s *Lives of the Artists*, this notion is first articulated, and, one would argue, the tendency of narrating art history through the canonical narrative of individual “geniuses.” Fast-forwarding to our era, we can all agree that we continue to regard physical artworks as carriers of intrinsic value (both symbolic and financial) and that we continue to nurture the notion of “the” artist (now as in “art star”) — both legacies of the Renaissance. So, what would have happened if the Renaissance hadn’t occurred? Perhaps we can find part of the answer in societies that did not participate in, or exist outside of, the construction of Western modern culture (indigenous cultures around the world, religious movements, outsider artists, etc). For some of these people, art is the expression of a collectivity, but it should not have financial value. Some recognize that great artworks can be created by individuals, but don’t necessarily appreciate or favor a self-centered vision but instead how this work speaks to the group. And in some societies what we call art is not called art and artists are not considered artists in the same way in which religious icons in churches in medieval times were not seen as containing an aesthetic value outside of its expression of faith and the artists were anonymous (until Giotto came along). In other words, interpreting the view of authors like Arthur Danto, without the Renaissance we would not have had a beginning of the art historical arch, we would not have had a modern era, an academy, a modernism, a post-modernism, and the death of art. Art today would perhaps not be called art. Museums as spaces where to show these things would not be considered necessary. People would make art, but not necessarily sell it or collect it, and this art would perhaps not be about their vision but would perhaps be collectively made or anonymous. And we would have lost the chance to have a Sistine Chapel. But we would have likely also been spared from Damien Hirst.

Sincerely

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist:

I have a persistent fantasy where I approach someone like Rob Pruitt and offer him a cash reward if he can get me a solo show at Gavin Brown’s. All he’d have to do is whisper in Gavin’s ear, right? Here’s my question: how much should I offer him?

Yours,
Dan Levenson (New York)

Dear Dan,

Thank you so much for your question. As you yourself recognize, this is a fantasy, which is defined as “an idea with no basis in reality,” so I feel, for the sake of usefulness, I should answer the question in how it would work in the real world. In the real world, no money will be directly exchanged or offered and you must never be personally involved in the operation. You have to get a triad of collaborators: one, an influential collector, then an influential critic and an influential curator. All of them at different times need to whisper to both the ear of Gavin and Rob. Then you set up a star-studded celebrity dinner where they are invited and they meet you. At that dinner they will be surrounded by other impressive individuals who will whisper to them about your magnificence and hotness. Then the influential collector will make the request to Gavin to quietly sell a few works of yours from his collection (these will be works that you will have given to the collector for free beforehand). Gavin will jump at the chance and turn the offer into a solo show (for more details on how to do this, watch *The Sting*). You will ask, I am sure, how do you then get a hold

of that influential collector. Basically you do the same “triage” process with that individual, and the same with the previous three individuals that you will need to reach out to in order to get to the collector who will get you to Gavin. This is why these exercises are known as social climbing: you can’t parachute your way in — only in fantasyland.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

How do you tell your best friend who is an artist that her most recent work is the most awful crap you’ve ever seen?

Liza G., Madison WI

Dear Liza,

If you feel so strongly about this new series you must speak up, for your friend’s sake. One way to do this indirectly — that is, without you becoming the bad cop — would be to instigate a situation that will bring the awfulness of this work into your friend’s mind. For example, bringing a respectable and outspoken person to come see the work and be upfront about it. Another strategy is simply to lobby for her previous work (which presumably is better than the current one) and convince her that there was an interesting direction in it that she should retake. But the truth is that the best and most effective strategy is to simply arm yourself with courage and tell your friend that you love her and that her work is the most awful crap you have ever seen. She may not stay your friend for long, but she will thank you one day.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

I am a painting student currently doing a BFA in an art school. I am convinced that I want to be an academic/realist painter — that is my goal in life — and I have a deep dislike for anything conceptual. To me, an artist who doesn’t know how to draw is not an artist, and the whole contemporary art scene seems to me like a giant scam. My professors however want to push me to do more “contemporary” stuff, but it all seems to me like bullshit. I just keep telling them that I want to be an academic painter, that I could not care less about any other kind of art, but they say that I am stuck in the past. And perhaps I am, but why is painting like Velazquez such a bad thing? He was a better artist than anyone alive today.

Sincerely,

Velazquez II

Dear Velazquez II,

You are entitled to do any kind of paintings you like — whether they are exact Velazquez reproductions, social realist murals or paintings of Elvis on black velvet. And you also are right in being distrustful of the way in which the art market tends to create a hype for certain kinds of art. However, there are a few things for you to consider. First, it is unfortunate that you have taken such a categorical stance given that you are still doing a BFA. Art school is meant to be a place where you explore different mediums, where you study art history, and where you expose yourself to a variety of practices. Your professors certainly cannot force you to be any kind of artist in the future — in fact, I can assure you they will be gone from your life after you finish your BFA, and you will be free to do as you please — but while you are still studying, you should take advantage of these other worlds they can offer. If you want to be taken seriously as an artist you have no choice but to understand what all periods of art are about and be able to critique them from an informed standpoint before you reject them.

Your ultimate decision has to do with how you see your role in society. Strictly academic artists make work that is about pleasing the eye, about the use of technique, and it is mainly used to decorate environments. Contemporary art is about commenting on our contemporary life, often in a critical manner. There are many gradations in between, of course, but as long as you think that you want to make work that is unique, that makes an informed comment on reality, you will see that it is not possible to ignore other kinds of art being made today around you. This applies also to artists working in the realist canon: even they, when they are successful, are making work that is aware of contemporary issues.

Making traditional art is uncomplicated and straightforward: you either know how to paint like Velazquez or you don’t. Contemporary art is messy and ambiguous, and you may never know if what you are doing will be considered relevant; yet that is how great visionary art is born. All art at some point was contemporary. And while certainly there is a lot of bad conceptual art out there, I can assure you that there is even more horrid, ridiculous and amateurish realist art — and this variety comes without the benefit of the doubt as to its mediocrity.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

Why are art magazines so boring? I am an artist and I consider myself reasonably well-educated, but I just can’t get interested in how magazines write about art. For the most art I find the writing of our trade pompous, unnecessarily wordy, and unimaginative. Am I alone in hinking his?

Frustrated Reader

Dear Frustrated Reader,

You are not alone. For a long time there has been a generalized dissatisfaction around art magazine writing. You well pointed out that these are trade publications: as such, they need to employ a language that commands respect in the field. The kind of “objective” or “neutral” voice that you see being pursued in many art reviews and features draws its style from art theory, if not necessarily its substance — thus our suspicion about it. And certainly this pursued objectivity takes precedence over creating imaginative writing, which could be perceived as not serious and even amateurish by some (there are art critics who write in overly opinionated ways, mainly to entertain, and/or to create an artist-like following). The good news is that blogs and other online communications are starting to liberate art writing, making it more fluid, concise and less bound by archaic or academic rules.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist

Dear Estheticist,

Today’s art is presented in myriad ways — on YouTube, performances, books, one-to-one experiences, etc. The whole concept of what an exhibition is has changed. Yet most magazines and newspapers keep publishing reviews mainly of shows that happen within the confines of a gallery and which last the typical three weeks — yet those are precisely the venues, I think, that show the more conventional kinds of art, shown in the most conventional ways. Is criticism behind?

Emma M.

Dear Emma M.,

Conventional publications review conventional shows, and conventional critics review the work of conventional artists. There are those publications that try to address the alternative forms of exhibiting art, but most of them, like the art they discuss, exist below the radar of the mainstream. To ask why the *New York Times*, for instance, can’t break from their formats for reviewing gallery shows is to ask why the mainstream can’t absorb what’s outside of it.

Sincerely,

The Estheticist





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- Simon Fujiwara
- Cyprian Galiard
- Julius Kroller
- Mark Lombardi
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Unknown Unknowns

- Declan Allan
- Mitra Galindo Ávila
- Jaul Abbudin Bata
- "Kema" Chinwenma
- D.R.
- Marphisa Fournier
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Art 'n' Language: On Pronunciation

By Craig Garrett

"As a regular reader of your fine column," writes Jerrold M. Weinberg of Norfolk, Virginia, "I feel compelled to inquire about a matter of etiquette. At the opening of a Mary Heilmann exhibition last week, I was speaking with a prominent curator, who interrupted me in mid-sentence. 'It's pronounced *HEEL-mun*,' he stated, with an air of smug satisfaction. When is it proper to point out that someone is saying an artist's name incorrectly?"

Although I must first chide Mr. Weinberg for his use of the trite redundancy "smug satisfaction" ("smug" being, indeed, a synonym for "self-satisfied"), I should like to set right, once and for all, the thorny issue of pronunciation, which has plagued me and its shareholders' letters over the years.

At this point, the issue is a truly hot ten-foot tent but nevertheless fundamental: namely, that the art world abhors pretension. No one engaged in this great enterprise of contemporary art enjoys witnessing a colleague put on linguistic airs. In last week's column I pointed out this phenomenon in relation to show-off words, such as "catachresis" and "neoliberalism," with which second-rate writers are wont to sprinkle their texts in a bid to distract readers from their lack of content argumentation and original thought. Pronunciation in the wrong hands (or, indeed, mouths) can lead directly to this same swamp of pretension. To keep one's feet on firmer ground, it is essential first to understand why some names are said differently by different speakers.

Recall, if you will, the puzzlement you felt when an art history professor spoke the names of the artists you'd encountered in your previous night's reading, leaving you to wonder, "Who is this *WAN Meer-OH*? This *ED-gar Duh-GAH*? Do my eyes deceive me? Surely she is referring to masterpieces by the French impressionist *ED-gar DEE-guss* and the pre-erig female modernist *JOAN MY-roh*?"

What lies behind this confusion? Hard though it is to believe, many foreign lands have their own systems of speaking. These systems are called languages. You may already have come across such languages as *restandanment* or *shamp* bottles. Believe it or not, there are literally dozens of languages spoken around the world, most of which incorporate the same twenty-six letters you see before you on this page, albeit in different combinations. (Some don't, but we'll get to them later.) What's more, these foreign languages sometimes assign new sounds to these familiar letters. Perhaps you have heard a person who speaks a certain language refer to the restaurant *El Pollo Loco* as *El POY-o LO-co*. No doubt you kindly offered to correct her pronunciation. But, counterintuitive though this may sound, she was not incorrect. Indeed, the two of you were both correct at the same time.

What repercussions does this discovery hold for our world of contemporary art? The first is that you must be patient with foreigners. Even though you both may be speaking the same language, when the conversation touches on the subject of great artists, you will encounter some, shall we say, *unconventional* sound, even in such cherished names as Duchamp and Modigliani.

One dangerous impulse upon first encountering the self-reference pronunciation is to attempt to do it oneself. This error rests on the misguided assumption that the correct pronunciation somehow be more correct in their pronunciation than we are. A common mistake. No small number of undergraduates have exasperated their friends by returning from a semester studying in Paris and insisting on pronouncing it *puh-REE*. Admittedly, as their friends' demonstrated behavior irredeemably pretentious, so too will you be judged for pronouncing an artist's name in a suspiciously foreign manner.

But, you may ask, what about cases in which your audience consists entirely of foreigners, citizens of that very country from which the subject hails? Again, a common pitfall. A young East Coast scholar speaking at a conference in Stuttgart last winter chose to pronounce all the German names in his paper in the fashion of the Germans who made up the majority of her audience: *VAL-ter BEN-ya-meen*, *DEE-ter ROTE*, *YO-sef BOYS*. This blatant attempt to win points by ingratiating himself to her boss proved disastrous. It is not an exaggeration to say that the academic career is, for all intents, finished.

At this point, the behavior was, of course, fear — fear of sounding outdated again, a bumpkin. But as I have pointed out in many previous columns, the use of language must not be driven by fear. Linguistic mastery is precisely that: mastery, not slavery.

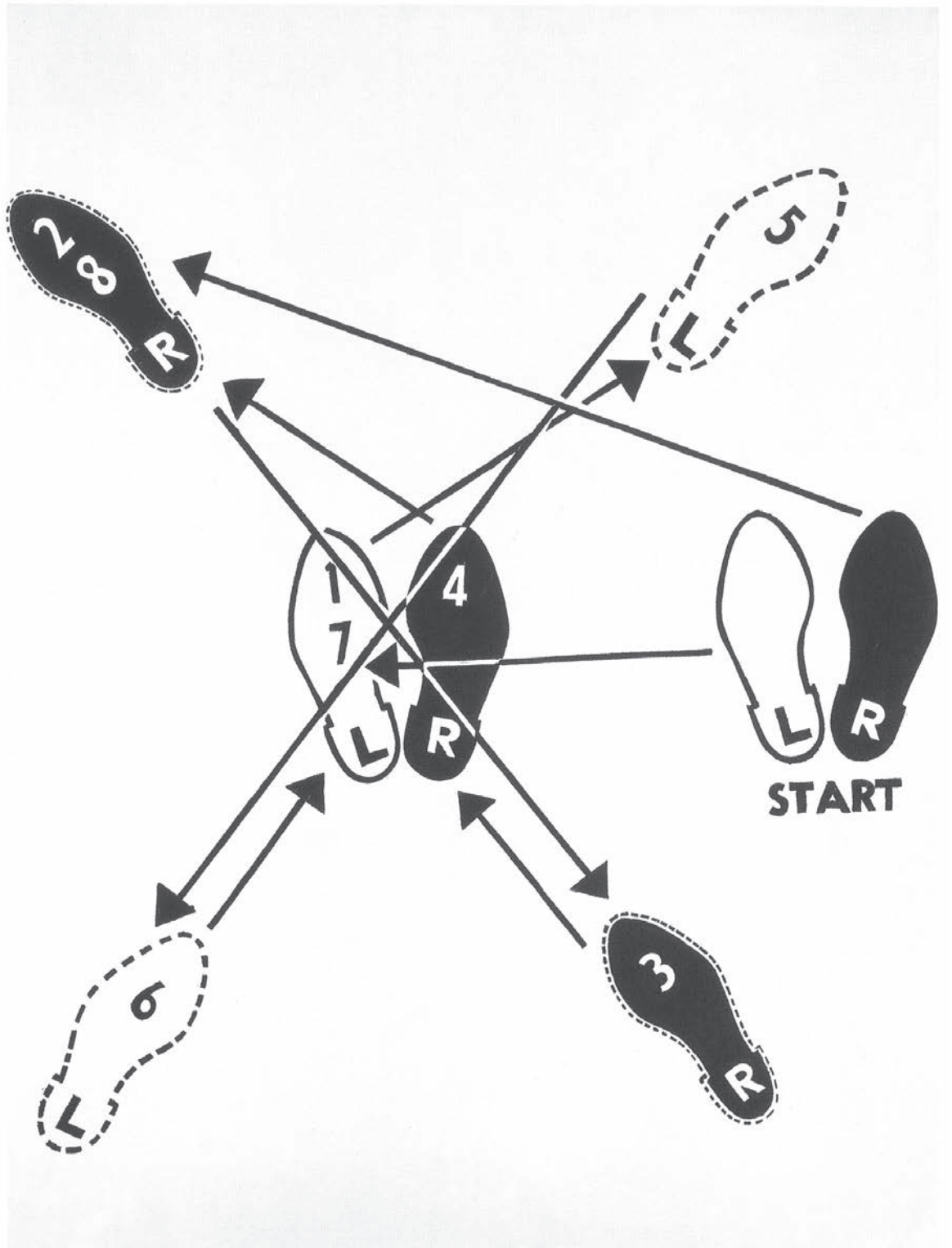
What, then, are artists who, though born of the artistic tradition, insist on employing a foreign pronunciation for their own names? In these instances, the same rule applies. Pronouncing *Edgar* as *ED-roo-SHAY*, as he reportedly does, is as misguided as referring to Matthew Barney as "Matt." These overt displays of over-familiarity will win you no allies in the art world, tarring you instead as a petty social climber.

Returning to foreign names, you will, regrettably, find that many of the most interesting letter combinations that are, in fact, unpronounceable. Gaze, if you will, on the phonic train-wrecks that are Latifa Echkakch, Zwlethu Mthethwa, and Adam Szymczyk. Some names will even feature small dots or squiggles protruding from their letters like stigmas: Marjetica Potrč, Attila Csörgő, Bojan Šarčević. As common sense would dictate, the solution to this problem is to leave these unpronounceable names unpronounced. This is not to say that these artists must not be written about; it is simply to point out they are best left out of polite conversation.

Chinese names fall into a similar but distinct category. Because the Chinese language is based not on letters but on ideograms, Chinese names are rendered in our own familiar twenty-six letters through a system of transposition called Pinyin. Unhelpfully, however, the committee that invented this system, presumably lost in the labyrinth of these tangled hieroglyphs, decided to employ combinations of letters that are frankly unpronounceable (exhibit A: Zhang Xiaogang). What's more, because Chinese is a tonal language, each name with a poetic allusiveness that is beyond translation, a Chinese name rendered in Pinyin is but a pale shadow of its true self. The only

shortcut to history), the *Blind Man* magazine article—rather than through the creation-myth of his finger selecting it in the showroom, the statue-correcting gesture to which the readymades are often reduced in *Fountain's* elegant model, the artwork does not occupy a single position in space and time; rather, it is a plimpest gesture, positioned, ad positions. Distribution is a circuit of reading, and there is huge potential for subversion when dealing with the institutions that control definitions of cultural meaning. Duchamp distributed the notion of the fountain in such a way that it became one of art's primal scenes; it transubstantiated from a provocative objet d'art into, as Broodthaers defined his *Musée des Aigles*: "a situational system defined by objects, by inscriptions, by various activities..."

But to return to Mr. Weinberg's question, when is it the right moment to draw someone's attention to their mispronunciation of an artist's name? The answer, dictated by the fundamental rule with which I began this column, is only when the name being mispronounced is your own. Anything else smacks irredeemably of pretension. And I can't think of anything that leges art gammariam o e.



a shortcut to history), the *Blind Man* magazine article—rather than through the creation-myth of his finger selecting it in the showroom, the statue-correcting gesture to which the readymades are often reduced in *Fountain's* elegant model, the artwork does not occupy a single position in space and time; rather, it is a plimpest gesture, positioned, ad positions. Distribution is a circuit of reading, and there is huge potential for subversion when dealing with the institutions that control definitions of cultural meaning. Duchamp distributed the notion of the fountain in such a way that it became one of art's primal scenes; it transubstantiated from a provocative objet d'art into, as Broodthaers defined his *Musée des Aigles*: "a situational system defined by objects, by inscriptions, by various activities..."

The last thirty years have seen the transformation of art's "expanded field" from a stance of stubborn discursive ambiguity into a comfortable and compromised situation in which we're well accustomed to conceptual interventions, to art and the social, where the impulse to merge art and life has resulted in lifestyle art, a secure gallery practice that comments on contemporary media culture, or apes commercial production strategies. This is the lumber of life.

This tendency is marked in the discourses of architecture and design. An echo of Public Art's cherished communal spaces persists in the art system's fondness for these modes, possibly because of the Utopian promise of their appeals to collective public experience. Their "criticality" comes from an engagement with broad social concerns. This is why Dan Graham's pavilions were initially so provocative, and the work of Daniel Buren, Michael Asher, and Gordon Matta-Clark

before him: these were interventions into the social unconscious. These interventions have been guiding lights for art of the last decade, but in much the same way that quasi-bureaucratic administrative forms were taken up by the Conceptualists of the 1960s, design and architecture now could be called house styles of the neo-avant-garde. Their appearance often simply gestures toward a theoretically engaged position, such that a representation of space or structure is figured as an act of artistic intervention in the social, while engagement with design is seen as a commercial activity and the commodity. One must be careful not to blame the artists; architecture and design forms are all-too-easily packaged for resale as sculpture and painting. However, one can still slip through the cracks in the best possible way, and even in the largest institutions. Jorge Pardo's radical Project, an overhaul of Dia's ground floor which successfully repositioned the institution via broadly appealing design vernaculars, went largely unremarked in the art press, either because the piece was transparent to the extent of claiming the museum's bookstore and exhibiting work by other artists, or because of a cynical incredulity that he gets away with calling this art.

A similar strain of disbelief greeted the construction of his own house, produced for an exhibition with a good deal of the exhibitor's money. It seems that the avant-garde can still shock, if only on the level of economic valorization. This work does not simply address the codes of mass culture, it embraces these codes as form, in a possibly quixotic pursuit of an unmediated critique of culture.

An argument against art that addresses contemporary issues and topical culture rests on the virtue of slowness, often cast aside due to the urgency with which one's work must appear. Slowness works against

OPINIONATED ADVICE

You Are Free: On Self-Exploitation in Art

by Andrew Berardini



"You will hear people say that poverty is the best spur to the artist. They have never felt the iron of it in their flesh. They do not know how mean it makes you. It exposes you to endless humiliation, it cuts your wings, it eats into your soul like a cancer. It is not wealth one asks for, but just enough to preserve one's dignity, to work unhampered, to be generous, frank, and independent. I pity with all my heart the artist, whether he writes or paints, who is entirely dependent for subsistence upon his art."

Philip quietly put away the various things which he had shown.

"I'm afraid that sounds as if you didn't think I had much chance."

Monsieur Foinet slightly shrugged his shoulders.

"[...] You will never be anything but mediocre."

Philip obliged himself to answer quietly steadily.

"I'm very grateful to you for having taken so much trouble. I can't thank you enough."

Monsieur Foinet got up and made as if to go, but he changed his mind and, stopping, put his hand on Philip's shoulder.

"But if you were to ask me my advice, I should say: take your courage in both hands and try your luck at something else. It sounds very hard, but let me tell you this: I would give all I have in the world if someone had given me that advice when I was your age and I had taken it."

W. Somerset Maugham, *Of Human Bondage*, Chapter 51

What are we doing here anyway?

We had a notion, inspiration even, a few ideas rattling around in our heads about art, mostly soft, mostly intuitive on what being an artist meant. A few of us thought to make a living, some romanticized poverty, others just didn't think that hard about the economic aspect of art before simply plunging in. So we went to school, cause that's what people do these days, parents and the federal loan guarantee program hardly comfortable with bankrolling bumming around Paris, so we went out and got degrees and they prove to anyone who wants to know that we've been trained as licensed cultural practitioners. Our teachers were of varying degrees of bitterly overlooked and painfully overexposed (though a few genuinely generous souls could be found there as anywhere), but we, for a price of time and money, possess the bragging rights of having hung out with these somewhat narrowly famous people, a forced acquaintance under the aegis of education. Most of us even feel like we've earned something.

With degrees in hand, we even began to get some kind of recognition from our peers: a review in a mid-range art publication, a spot on

the local group show cycle, maybe even gallery representation, even if we know it's not a very good one, but they've given us a break and breaks can feel rare when you're looking at the solid unbroken edifice of culture for far too long.

After a couple of years of regularly attending openings, making small-talk with influential people, an irregular flow of studio visits, contributions to aforementioned group shows, artist zines and the like for which one is never paid in any direct kind of way, we began to rethink what we're doing in economic terms: we're investing in ourselves. We're small business owners selling that most tricky and unstuck of all commodities: art. Not to tarnish here the optimistic, pseudo-MBA shine of the phrase "self-investment," but it could, from a different angle, be the much less shimmery phrase of "self-exploitation," the activity especially selfless.

How much do we do for free under the idea that it'll either pay-off later or because we "believe in it"? How much money are we paid? Can we quantify what we do in dollars? Well, that's a tough one. Hard economists would of course say yes. I'm not so sure. I feel like maybe I've

I'm writing this for free and hoping a good time of it.

This is perhaps about the promiscuity of artists and writers in how they accept assignments and exhibitions, sluts vs.

whores, hacks and scholars, gameplaying and "gatekeepers," faux-monkish vows of poverty to follow altogether flimsy ideals that when articulated in redaction from *Rent*.

In his essay for Christoph Keller's "Circles" exhibition at the ZKM in 2000-2001, late critic and art dealer Giovanni Inra coined red selling art not only fun (removing the stigma of crass commerce we all love to jaw about in the great unwashed classes) but also that it was revenge against his student loans which had mounted considerably in his getting what may be one of the most economically unuseful degrees in human history, a Masters in Art Criticism; even a degree in theology from the Joe Christian Bible

College would grant you, however loosely, the authority to open your own storefront chapel. An MFA, in the smart set and the not-so-smart set that listen closely to the smart set, means an institutional imprimatur that allows you to pass some secret barrier, and given how helpful these professionalizing degrees can be, it isn't much of a barrier all things told (though one can hope that valuable lessons were learned in its passing). In the information age, we're especially keen to allow others to filter content, save us from drowning in too much information. What better place to start than a high-level university taking time to preserve the traditional academic to elect a handful of students from which only a smaller handful will ever make anything resembling the dignity of a living from their artwork. Again, what are we doing here? Are we making money, are we chasing the dream? Are we, as some posit, incapable of doing anything else but what we're doing? Is the main bogeyman here the difficult-to-quantify "life-satisfaction?"

A low-level accountant makes more than most relatively famous art critics and writers (if you'll allow me to be a little self-reflective here). But then again art critics, that precarious class, usually have other gigs: they slum as art historians, play at curating, teach, because they would like to enjoy eating regularly and (in the US) having health insurance. Some are simply independent, and with an economic freedom that affords them to write about art for peanuts. These are rare, but I have met them. Artists do all kinds of things to stay alive while they're figuring out how to churn talent into profit, or as the painter Foinet says, to earn "just enough to preserve one's dignity, to work unhampered, to be generous, frank, and independent." Any way you cut it, the wily survive as they always have, with mirth and ingenuity, even if, often as not, without money, plucking a living and a vision for life out of the challenges before them. Poetry soldiers on despite the dearth of income for its practitioners. I wish good poets got paid well. Some do, either

for free if I could admit sometimes, a lot of times, like now for example, I do. Arguably I work freely from the leisure of handling enough paid gigs as a writer and curator that I can, but that said, I'm still self-sacrificing, self-exploiting, offering others my surplus value free-and-clear. Does volunteerism become slavery only when it's forcibly extracted?

It's a joy and an honor to have a platform in which to relay to whomever cares to listen my humble ideas and experiences. It gives me a sense of pride and dignity to get paid for it. The only way through this perhaps, and I apologize, is to wend our way through personal motivations. Here's my answer to the questions "What are we doing here? And why are we doing it for free?" Years ago, on some simple cusp of my life, I made a conscious decision that for much of my youth I would be poor. Other specific and enriching opportunities were afforded me, but I made my choice based less (perhaps shortsightedly) on money and more on what I felt I had to do, and I then went about finding some way to do it. There was something larger than myself, and inspiring, and I wanted to find some way to contribute to it if I could, pay or no pay. Art, writing, music, kept me sane and alive, and I mean no special or cliché here. I might really have lost my mind or died. Because it helped me to survive, I feel some responsibility to art and have spent these last years trying to pay back that debt.

We may be going into ontological questions about the purpose of making art — or caring for and critiquing art — for a living or for a fuzziest spiritual end, or most likely both. But the old hacker slogan rings true: "Information wants to be free." Perhaps free can be read here as "liberty," as opposed to "gratis," but freedom is what it is and sometimes it's broke. All we want is Foinet's dignity of a living in art, but while that living may or may not be materializing, it doesn't mean we still don't want to be generous and

id people, even if we don't have the money to be either. I don't care if all that sounds like a redaction from *Rent*. It is, as it were, true. Given a few whiskeys I might get some sap.

Though again we must return to Monsieur Foinet and his bitterness, what it means to fail and starve, or to pretend it a little, perhaps '60s balladeer Lee Hazlewood from his song *The Performer*:

*Can't you tell by my clothes, I never made it.
Can't you hear that my songs just won't sing.
Can't you see in my eyes that I hate it.
Wasting twenty long years on a dream.*

Is it worth it? Hard to say. I'm wagering it is, even if it might be a waste. It might have been anyway.

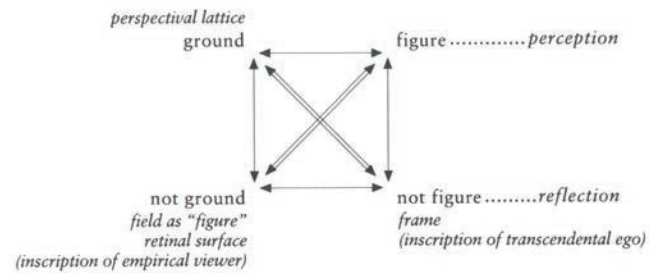
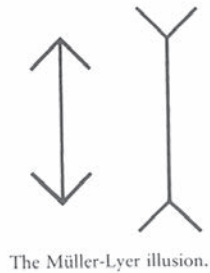
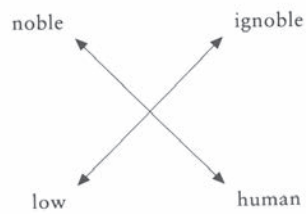
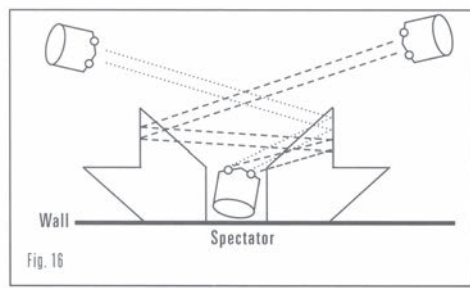
If what I do is self-exploitation, at least it's free.



that the circuit of academies and prizes or the very rare (like unicorn rare) mainstream popularity. Or perhaps they followed Belgian Marcel Broodthaers' lead and just leapt straight to the art world where it seems there's just a little bit more money on the ground for dreamers.

For me, writing (as I'm not a visual artist in the professionalized paradigms of that sort of thing) is more like sex than commerce. I do have to eat and pay rent, as unluckily (or luckily perhaps) there is no trust fund bankrolling my sentimental education. Thus I never grudge any toiler their right to live. But then again, writing is fun, especially when it's done freely, without obligation or income. I'd do most everything I do

HEALTH, SCIENCE and SPECIALIZATION



Art Advisor Knew of No Difference Between Oranges and Apples

Prominent art world advisor Karen Blackstone was recently diagnosed with a rare retinal condition: the veritable powerhouse cannot distinguish between apples and oranges.

Blackstone noticed the condition several weeks ago after making a major sale to some powerful collectors. "Shortly after closing the deal, I went to the Whole Foods in the Village and stood for hours in the fruit section, unable to distinguish one fruit from another," said Blackstone.

Hours before, Blackstone had been discussing the work of an important mid-career artist with the collector couple, making subtle distinctions between the artist's earlier and more mature works, convincing the couple that they were investing in a piece of

history. Yet in the fruit aisle, everything seemed to fall apart.

"I just didn't know what was happening to me," said Blackstone, crossing and uncrossing her long, nylon-clad legs and shifting her short, black skirt.

"This condition is not so uncommon, especially in certain sectors of the art industry," explained her doctor, Bob Smithson. "Some people have synesthesia, seeing sounds as colors, others cannot recognize faces, and some cannot tell the difference between different kinds of fruit."

Blackstone is currently being prescribed pills that, while they cannot alleviate the condition, give her the temporary illusion that apples and oranges are indeed two distinct things.

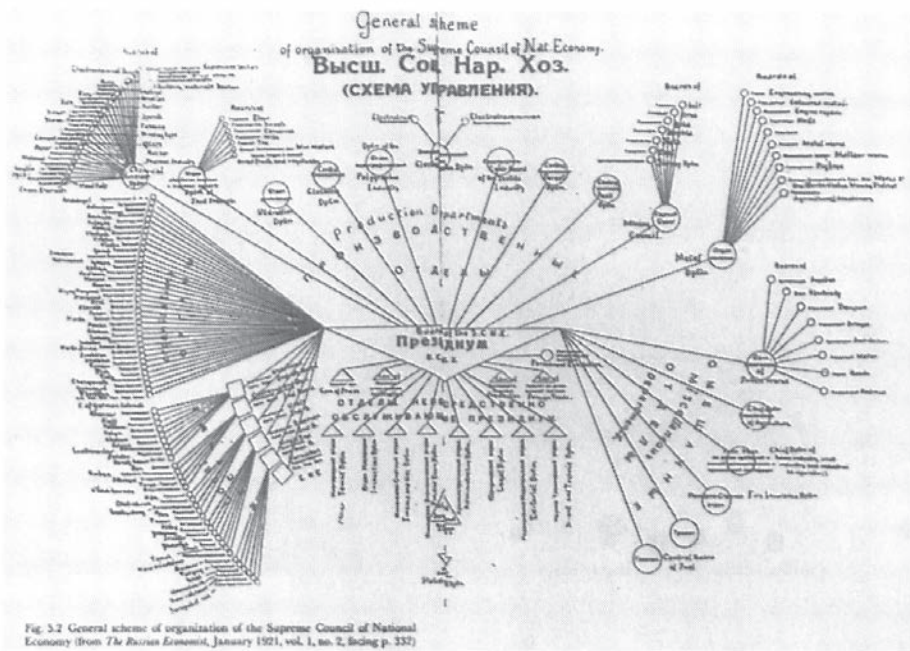


Fig. 5.2 General scheme of organization of the Supreme Council of National Economy (from The Russian Economy, January 1921, vol. 1, no. 2, being p. 332)

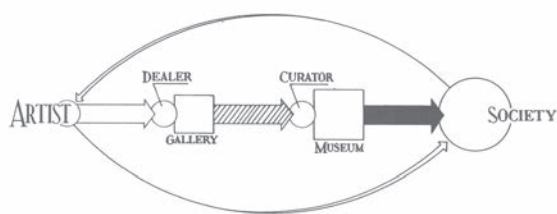
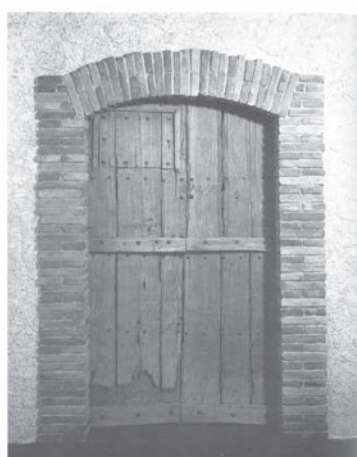


Fig. 3: The communication pattern of artists showing the most important gatekeepers



all 6 o p e x i l i n g u s a d r e q u i r e m e n t s : i t i s a r e s i s t a n c e t o t h e c o n t e m p o r a r y m a n d a t e o f s p e e d . M o v i n g w i t h t h e t i m e s p l a c e s y o u i n a b l i n d s p o t : i f y o u ' r e p a r t o f t h e g e n e r a l t e n o r , i t ' s d i f f i c u l t t o a d d a d i s s o n a n t n o t e . B u t t h e w a y i n w h i c h m e d i a c u l t u r e f e e d s o n i t s o w n l e a v i n g s i n d i c a t e s t h e p a r a d o x i c a l s l o w n e s s o f a r c h i v e d m e d i a , w h i c h , l i k e a s l e e p e r c e l l , w i l l a l w a y s r e a r i t s h e a d a t a l a t e r d a t e . T h e r e a r - g u a r d o f t e n h a s t h e p o w e r t o a d d s o m e t i m e s d e l a y , t o a c t a s D u c h a m p ' s t e r m , w i l l r e t u r n t h e i n v e s t m e n t w i t h m a s s i v e i n t e r e s t . L e t ' s n o t o v e r r e a c h . T h e q u e s t i o n i s w h e t h e r e v e r y t h i n g i s a l w a y s t h e s a m e , w h e t h e r i t i s i n f a c t p o s s i b l e t h a t b y t h e a g e o f f o r t y a p e r s o n h a s s e e n a l l t h a t h a s b e e n a n d w i l l e v e r b e . M u s t I c o n s u l t a r t t o u n d e r s t a n d t h a t i d e n t i t y i s a d m i n i s t e r e d , p o w e r e x p l o i t s , r e s i s t a n c e i s

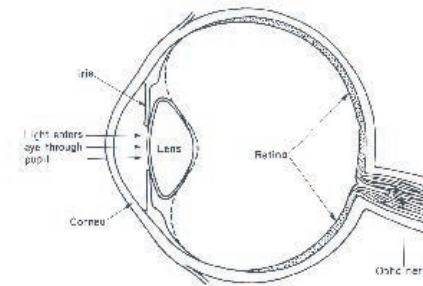
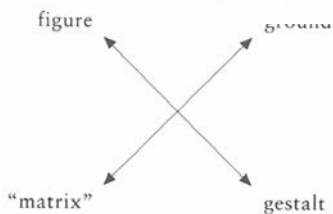
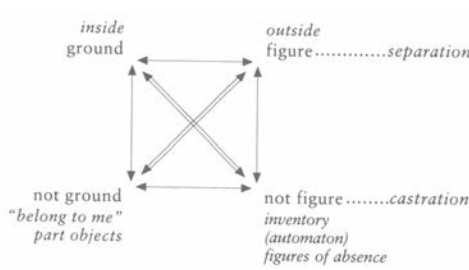
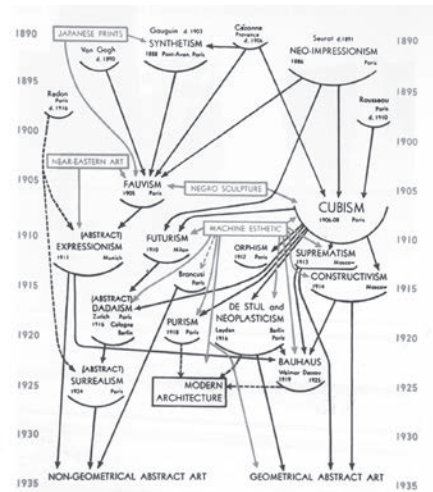


Fig. 5.19. A cross-sectional representation of the eye showing light entering through the pupil. The photosensitive cells, cones and rods, are located at the retina; cones respond to color, and rods respond to light intensity.



Scientists Prove: Copy is the Original. Simulacrists Worldwide Shrug.



Placebo Art Trials Finished. Results Announced Soon.

In 2010 the institution known as The Behring Institute initiated a widespread study searching for placebos for art. With the found placebos, long-term research on the influence of art on public health is said to eventually be carried out. Relationships between art and health care, as well as the influence and effects of art on health, have been studied frequently by organizations ranging from the CIA to psychiatry. The results of many studies indicate a positive outcome with regard to the treatment of patients and suggest

that art can lead to the reduction of medicines used by patients, the shortening of patients' stays in hospitals, the improvement of working conditions, the fostering of the doctor/patient relationship and the improvement of mental health. In order to do epistemological research on the phenomena manifested by the various studies, the Behring Institute has announced it will launch, in 2011, a long-term worldwide study on the effects of art on the health of individuals.



HEALTH, SCIENCE and SPECIALIZATION

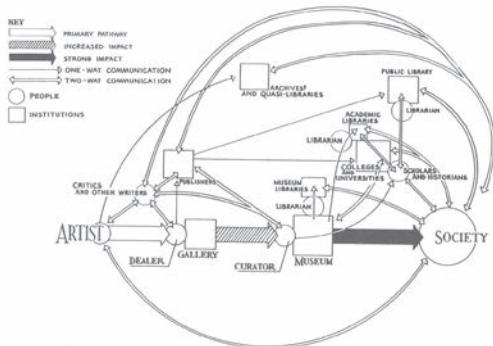
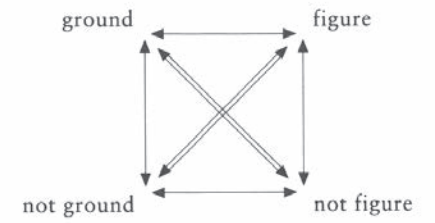
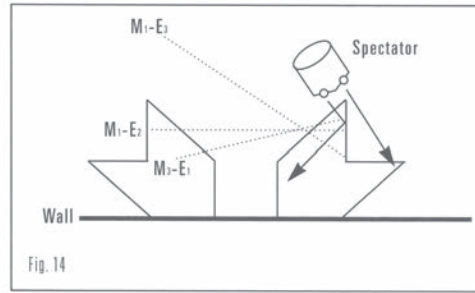
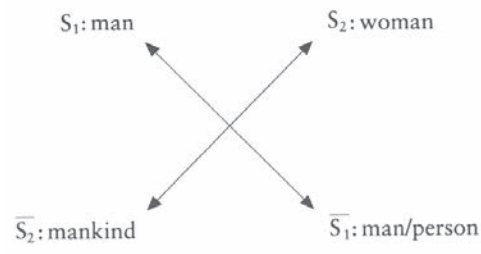
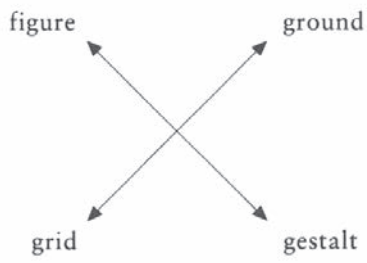
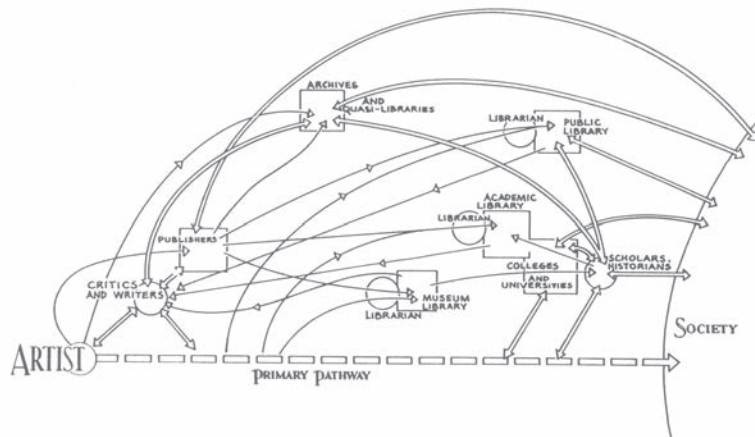
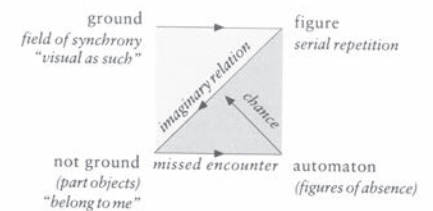
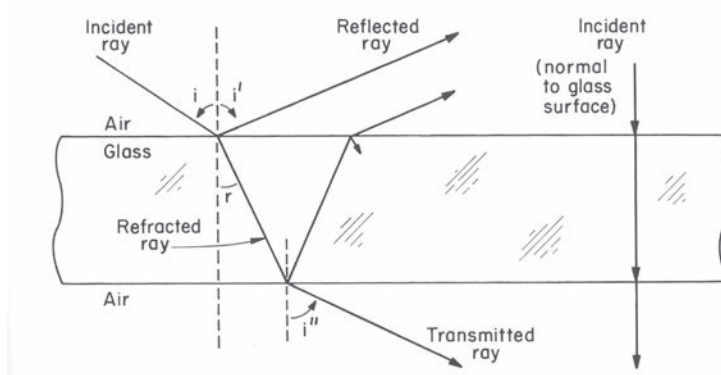
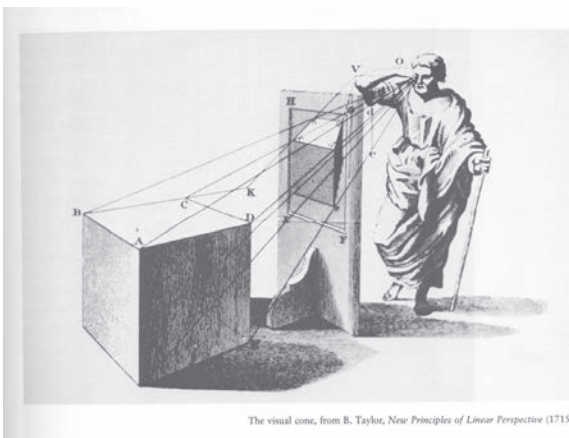


Fig. 4: Model of the information network of contemporary art: the art world
Fig. 5 [opposite]: The documentation subsystem in the network of contemporary art

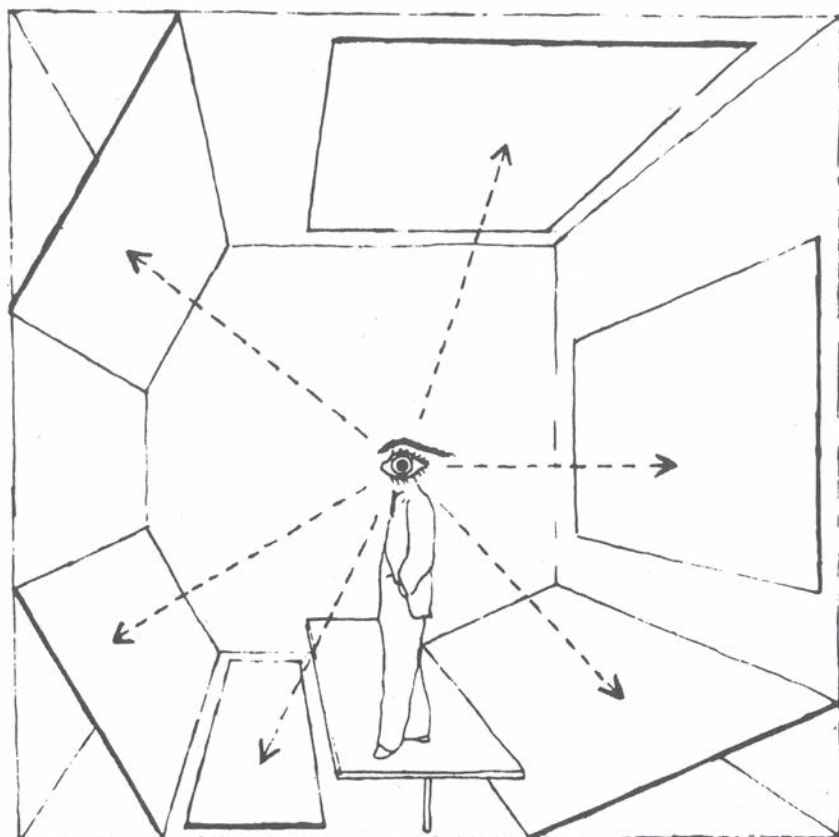
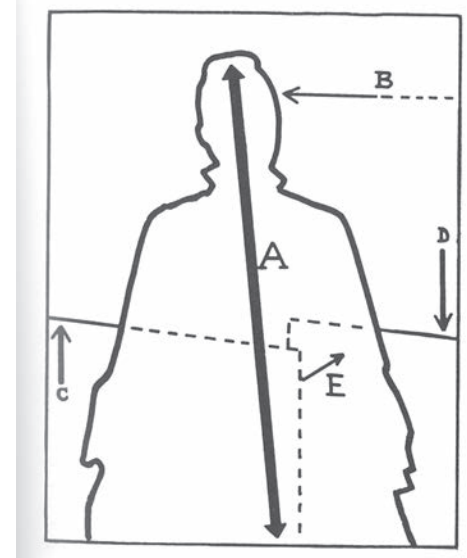
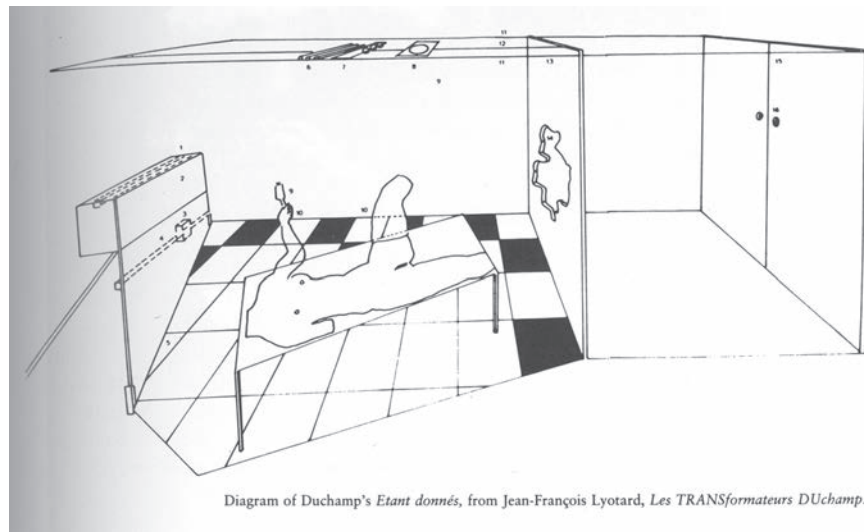


ped termin d Il is sh t?
To recognize...the relative immutability of historically formed discursive artistic genres, institutional structures, and distribution forms as obstacles that are ultimately persistent (if not insurmountable) marks the most profound crisis for the artist identified with a model of avant-garde practice.

So the thread leads from Duchamp to Pop to Conceptualism, but beyond that we must turn our backs: a resignation, in contrast to Pop's affirmation and Conceptualism's interrogation. Such a project is an in m p ete ad p rh p fu ile p p itio ad sin e one can only adopt the degree of precision appropriate to the subject, this essay is written in a provisional and exploratory spirit. An art that attempts to tackle the expanded field, encompassing arenas other than the standard gallery and art world-circuit, sounds utopian at best, and possibly naive and undeveloped; this essay may itself be a disjointed series of naive propositions lacking a thesis. Cn p ete ad l o n e mea th t one cannot write a novel, compose music, produce television and still retain th statu 6 Artist. Wh t's more, artist as a social role is somewhat embarrassing, in that it's taken to be a useless position, if not a reactionary one: the practitioner is dismissed as either th p d er 6 0 r-a l e d d co, o as p r t 6 an



Surgeon General Warns: Seeing Out Loud Could Cause Acute Verbal Diarrhea



When Disaster Strikes: Send in the Eco-Artists

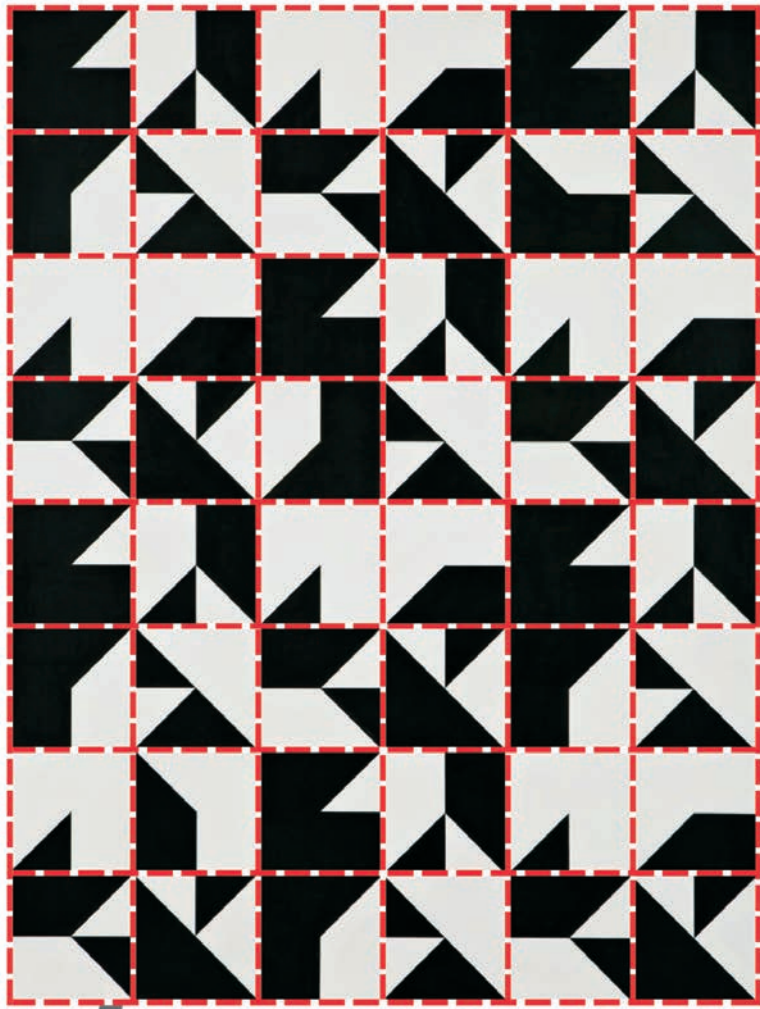
Prospect 0, the pilot for the now famous biennial of New Orleans, was a sleeper success. The formula was simple: Take a city, flood it, dissolve civil order, keep everyone there, bring in the experts. It has always been an unspoken secret of the NEA to send in artists where professionals couldn't get the job done right. "It was like having a magician at a birthday party," said the mayor of New Orleans. "One minute everyone's smashing windows and shooting up the place, up to their knees in water, and then boom you got Tue Greenfort tapping into all that neat rubbish and muck and making something all arty out of it. People just 'Ooo' and 'Ahh.'" Experts posited



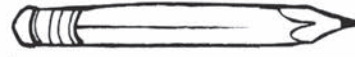
that scientists and disaster management teams fail to really harness the potential of these sites, which are deemed unique in the conditions they offer. Starting with the devastating tsunami that hit parts of Thailand and Indonesia in 2007, artists like Yoshitomo Nara were employed for a visual sigh of relief when looking at that muddled landscape. Now efforts have gotten ever more focused on artists who appropriate disciplines of professions they might have only read a book about, minored in college, or done a brief google search on. However, preliminary findings show that sending in artists instead of bureaucrats, while quicker and less expensive, has not necessarily brought anything useful beyond spotty morale boosting.

TRIVIAL PURSUITS

PICTURE PUZZLER!



Cut along dotted lines and re-arrange the pieces to form a signature work by one of New York's hottest young artists!



I Saw It At Home Depot

From shop vacs to lumber stacks, these artists knew where to find it. How many names can you find in the grid below?

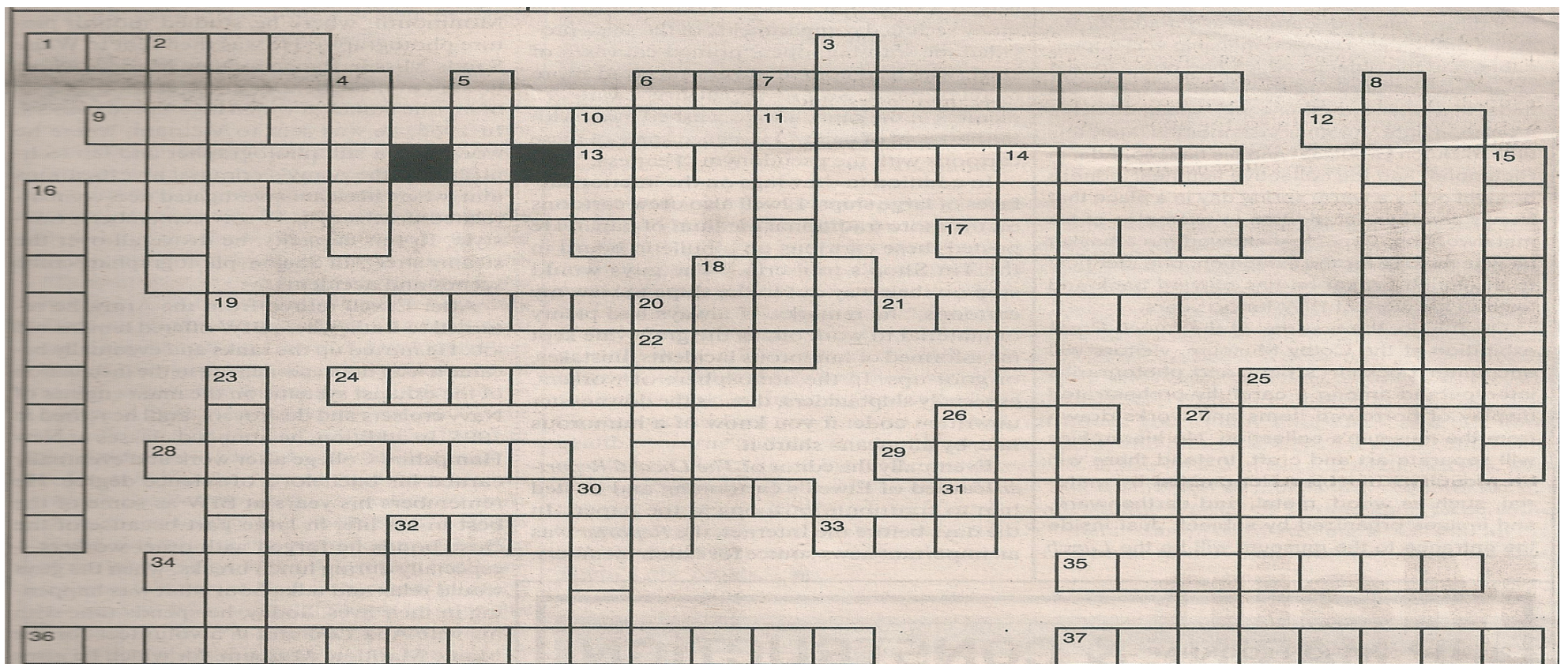
A R T A L L I S O N W I E S E M R
 G C P G H C A B N I E T S M I A H
 N N H E T E D N A C T O M B U R R
 U O O D Y L N D C A S I L S E T U
 B S E I N Y S H R D A S E H L I L
 S R B S A E R E U Y R A T C C N N
 O E E I M R S A Z N A G T A H B I
 L D W B A M N T V O H E I S R O R
 R E A O R L O H I L S N Z M I Y U
 A P S N B E O E L A Z Z A O S C K
 C I H Y H S K R L N E K E T F E L
 O Z B M A N F R E D P E R N I C E
 Z T U S R A F O G I O N D L N R I
 L I R G A N E W A I S N N E L R R
 H M N E S E J E S M Z U A T E S B
 L E G N I T S F L O D U R E Y S A
 A J A S O N R H O A D E S R A G G

Martin Boyce
 Sarah Braman
 Carlos Bunga
 Tom Burr
 A. Cruzvillegas
 Chris Finley
 Isa Genzken
 Jeff Koons

Gabriel Kuri
 Cady Noland
 Mitzi Pederson
 Manfred Pernice
 Anselm Reyle
 Jason Rhoades
 Heather Rowe
 Tom Sachs

Gedi Sibony
 Haim Steinbach
 Rudolf Stingel
 Sarah Sze
 Phoebe Washburn
 Allison Wiese
 Andrea Zittel

for more puzzle fun visit www.find-a-text.com



ACROSS

- 1. Cornish lunch special
- 6. All for on, one for all
- 9. Porkchop, meatloaf, etc.
- 11. Either
- 12. Soda
- 13. Green hard hat
- 16. Sexytime dessert
- 17. The Maine difference
- 18. Alternative to cooler
- 19. Not the county
- 21. Tough as...
- 22. Hard _____
- 24. Wool topper
- 25. Eskimo hideaway
- 26. Eater of mouse sandwich

- 28. Headcovering OK for indoors
- 29. Ride together
- 30. Dirt
- 31. Maine river
- 32. Last supper VIP
- 33. Fruity dessert
- 34. Coffee
- 35. Friend
- 36. Security slogan
- 37. Bake it, mash it, fry it

DOWN

- 2. Elongated spud
- 3. Soil
- 4. Maine drink
- 5. Carageen

- 7. Sharon
- 8. Italian filling
- 10. Poppy, sesame, i.e.
- 14. Handiwrap, i.e.
- 15. The County
- 16. Behind the horse
- 18. _____ Claw
- 20. Keeps it hot
- 23. Foxy cooler
- 26. Let them eat...
- 27. BIW minimart
- 30. Last meal of the day

- ANSWERS:**
- 1. PASTY
 - 2. SHEPODY
 - 3. DIRT
 - 4. MOXIE
 - 5. KELP
 - 6. SOLIDARITY
 - 7. LEFTOVERS
 - 8. OR
 - 9. LEFTOVERS
 - 10. DIRT
 - 11. OH
 - 12. POP
 - 13. ELECTRICIAN
 - 14. GELTOPHANE
 - 15. FLOOPIE PIE
 - 16. WHOOPIE PIE
 - 17. FLOOPIE
 - 18. BAG
 - 19. DOWNEASTER
 - 20. THERMOS
 - 21. WOOL MITTENS
 - 22. HAT
 - 23. CRUSHER
 - 24. CRUSHER
 - 25. IGLOO
 - 26. CAT
 - 27. ONE STOP
 - 28. HARD HAT
 - 29. VAN
 - 30. SOIL
 - 31. KENNEBEC
 - 32. JESUS
 - 33. JESUS
 - 34. JAVVA
 - 35. YETTAHEH
 - 36. SPIES GET CAUGHT
 - 37. SUPERIOR

TRIVIAL PURSUITS

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE!

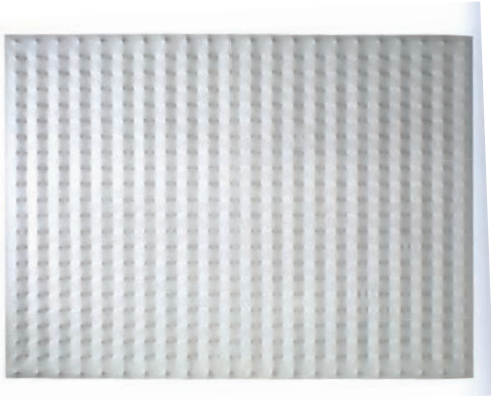
There are 9 differences between these two images.
Can you spot them all?



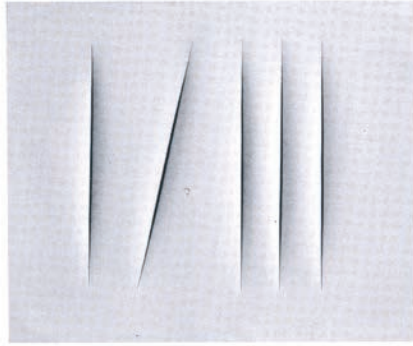
KHODUNITZI

Guess the white monochromes.

Answers in next issue.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



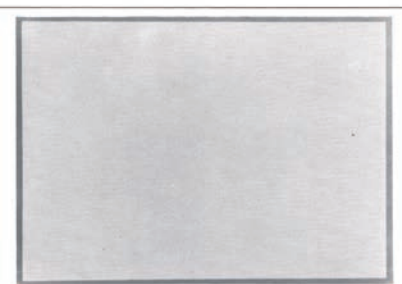
7.



8.



9.



10.



11.



12.



13.



14.

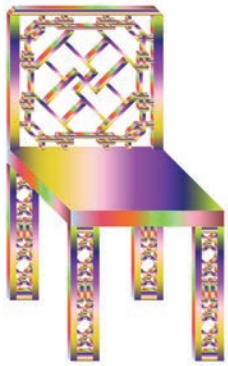


15.



HOROSCOPE 2011

By Franz von Stauffenberg



AQUARIUS

Straight down to below

Even the news has aftershocks. Overwhelmed, the desire for Neorealism rises: You find yourself in a situation that can't cause a reaction or even action. Does that mean that you should become neutral? No. Purely optical and acoustical situations will arise that require a form of resistance of a very new kind: Beware, however, of the bicycle thief.

PISCES

Outside of any given context

You will have a new birth of awareness, and your life will be unhampered by old patterns of thought that have limited you. One hundred years after Marinetti, reality and the concept of the machine are different. In Futurism, the machine was exalted as an external object, but now the machine is inside you. You are no longer obsessed with the external machine; instead, the 'info-machine' now intersects with your social nervous system. Be on alert, avoid shopping against terror, avoid shopping against bad news and depression.

ARIES

Stretched to the limit

On the immediate practical level, you may be limited in rebuilding or repairing your house or any other material object. At a more refined level this may mean you should not try to rebuild structures within yourself. Relax and



spend time in cyber time. Pirate and watch more Pasolini films.

TAURUS

Stars don't stand still in the sky

You should never worry about the difference between style and substance because substance is style. In tennis as in art there are inventors: McEnroe was such an inventor, a stylist. For his serve he introduced a hieroglyphic Egyptian posture. It is better not to waste your time running your head against the wall.

GEMINI

Unending process of therapy

Your ideas may in fact be quite good, but your problem comes from the style you are using. The ego empties itself by emptying itself of its objects. The theory of the pleasure principle no longer serves to offer you an identity: To you the Other is no longer something on the outside, but your ego is itself that Other that no longer exists in time.

CANCER

Oh, gigantic paradox, too utterly monstrous for solution!

Your perception of aesthetics has developed into rare types of stupidity. Each kind of stupidity may be broken down into categories such as bovine formalism or numb structures. All these categories and many others petrify into a vast banality called the art world which is no world, so why bother with it.

LEO

What do you think of this ashtray?

We are no longer discussing a form of anxiety born of conflicts, but rather that more radical anxiety of a human subject that no longer recognizes the categories that gave rise to those con-

flicts. What then if you consider them shadows of the fourth dimension?

VIRGO

Beyond the possibility of threshold

Your mind is open and generous, yet on many occasions, judgment will appear twisted and Bergmanesque. Go with your convictions about freedom, rights, duties, obligations, but do not dare to copy Klara Liden's staging of her strange "little chamber dramas," episodes of domestic violence, filming herself hammering her bicycle into pieces or getting naked in the middle of a subway car.



LIBRA

As far as the eye can see

This is a good time for making plans, and you are inclined to think big: Big public art, fountains. A general function of your optimism could mean that you could liberate yourself from all copyright restric-



tions; "They're Justified and Ancient, and they drive an ice cream van," and telling listeners that we are "all bound for Mu Mu Land."

SCORPIO

Various degrees of damage simultaneously done

This time it is different for you. This is not your crisis, but the symptom of the incompatibility of the potency of productive forces (cognitive

labor in the global network) and the paradigm of growth. This is not your collapse but the strong blink of a final implosion of a system that has lasted for five hundred years. Take it easy.

SAGITTARIUS

The fish is mute expressionless, the fish knows

In the near future you will achieve something significant. Your ambition will become more powerful than usual. You'll take on Clausewitz's approach to philosophy, which even Engels cautioned as "odd," but "per se very good": More than anything



else, war resembles commerce. Keep in mind, combat is to war what cash payment is to commerce.

CAPRICORN

Barking up the wrong tree

Under the influence

of Jupiter some persons experience an inflated ego. Ideas, like dress, are dictated by fashion as so many other marketable commodities. But they are all partners in global destruction. Politics and therapy will be one and the same activity in the coming era. Saturn, however, will make attempts soon to lead you out of dystopia.



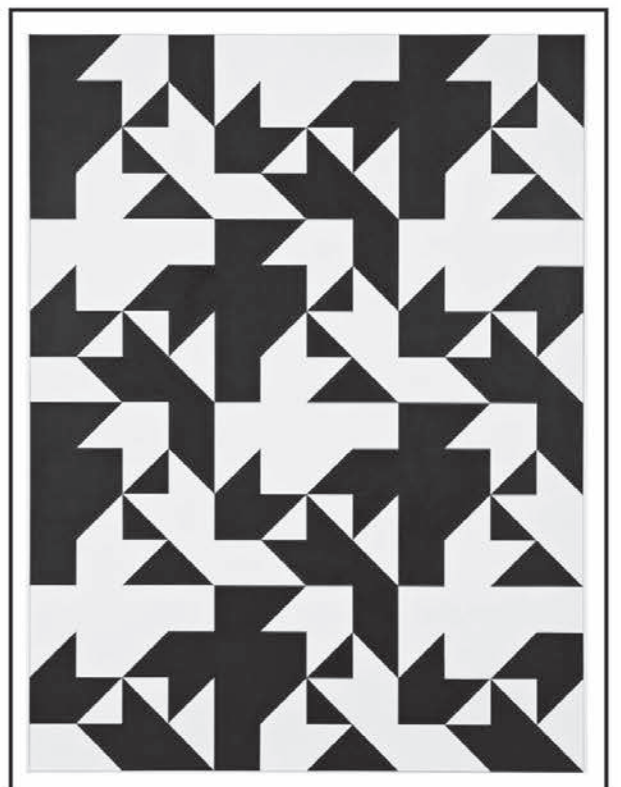
arrogant, parasitical, self-styled elite.

But hasn't the artistic impulse always been utopian, with all the hope and futility that implies? To those of you who decry the Utopian impulse as futile, or worse, responsible for the horrible excesses of the last century, recall that each moment is a Golden Age (of course the Soviet experiment was wildly wrong-headed, but let us pretend—and it is not so hard—that a kind of social Dispersion was its aim). The last hundred years of work indicate that it's

A	R	T	A	L	L	I	S	O	N	W	I	E	S	E	M	R
G	C	P	G	H	C	A	B	N	I	E	T	S	M	I	A	H
N	N	H	E	T	E	D	N	A	C	T	O	M	B	U	R	R
U	O	O	D	Y	L	N	D	C	A	S	I	L	S	E	T	U
B	S	E	I	N	Y	S	H	R	D	A	S	E	H	L	I	L
S	R	B	S	A	E	R	E	U	Y	R	A	T	C	C	N	N
O	E	E	I	M	R	S	A	Z	N	A	G	T	A	H	B	I
L	D	W	B	A	M	N	T	V	O	H	E	I	S	R	O	R
R	E	A	O	R	L	O	H	I	L	S	N	Z	M	I	Y	U
A	P	S	N	B	E	O	E	L	A	Z	Z	A	O	S	C	K
C	I	H	Y	H	S	K	R	L	N	E	K	E	T	F	E	L
O	Z	B	M	A	N	F	R	E	D	P	E	R	N	I	C	E
Z	T	U	S	R	A	F	O	G	I	O	N	D	L	N	R	I
L	I	R	G	A	N	E	W	A	I	S	N	N	E	L	R	R
H	M	N	E	S	E	J	E	S	M	Z	U	A	T	E	S	B
L	E	G	N	I	T	S	F	L	O	D	U	R	E	Y	S	A
A	J	A	S	O	N	R	H	O	A	D	E	S	R	A	G	G

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE:

1. Different tulip in Irving Penn spread
2. Extra clip added to Irving Penn book
3. *Dictionary of Cliches* added to books on upper shelf
4. Pet Rock added to lower shelf
5. Troll doll added to lower shelf
6. Horizontal book stack shifted right
7. Post-it note added to top shelf
8. Book *The Hidden Dimension* switched with *The Search for Big Foot*
9. Publisher of *The Poetics of Space* changed to Dutton



What a Contemporary Auction Is Depends On What Your Definition of 'Is' Is.

By April Elizabeth Lamm

It begins before the herd is seated, and the un-herded few leave before it is over. It is not the opera nor the ballet but a staged battlefield where artworks are stock: up, down, out. There is no intermission, the pace is relentless, a "piece" sells for millions or is "passed" on in a minute. None have qualms about coming late or leaving early: leaving after the piece you wanted is bid out of your range. I'm bored, honey, let's go.

It's a quick and quixotic theatre of inconspicuous consumption. It's conceptual and concrete: the artworks are abstracted but real and the people who acquire them are real but abstracted, that is they are not real people but "the lady here," "the gentleman there," "you sir at the back," "yes, madam, I see you here on the aisle." They hold paddles with numbers but all that one can see from the back — from where I sit — are the backs of well-coiffed heads. P.T. Barnum raised high in the chancel, the auctioneer, sways dramatically right to left and left to right like an amateur singer in an off-off-Broadway musical. The ringleader of the spectacle gestures mostly to the first few rows of heads, the big-wigs. Some are seen, while others are represented by the pew dressed in black gripping old-fashioned landlines. And they have names: "Alex can I have one more? It's Alex now against the lady's bid. Alex, Charles is against you and the lady now. The lady is out. Charles are you still in? Can you go one more? Now it's not yours Alex, no, fair warning, I can sell it at... Sold to Alex on the phone. Alex may I have your number? Paddle number 0010, thank you sir."

It's a battle between invisible parties who communicate via secret agents bidding on their behalf. They hide behind aliases: Alex and Charles or Daryl and Warren. To further complicate matters, Alex is not always Alex 0010, but Alex 434, 1757, or 658. Alex is legion. There's the rush of the beginning, the boredom of the middle, the blurriness of the end. Was that good, bad, medium rare? After so many artworks — 64 lots at Sotheby's and 75 lots at Christie's in an hour and a half — and so many escalating sums, you feel as if you have entered a search term and gotten lost in the links. Did that just sell for 9 million or 900,000?

It is the week of contemporary auctions in New York and everyone is on tenterhooks. This week defines the moment whether or not the art world is a submarine or a sinking wreck (while the rest of the world, or those who owned houses, are breathing "underwater"). "Many like to put their money in banks; I like to put it on my walls," said rock-star art collector Lars Ulrich of Metallica fame, who is putting yet another of his Basquiats up on auction. It is because of this penchant, this trust in art as an investment, that the art world lived out its own parallel market, largely through the wild sums reached on auction. I remember at one

point asking myself whether or not 200 million was a lot to spend on an art collection (witness George Michael and partner Kenny Goss) if a single piece of art could potentially cost you 72 million? That was 2007, when what they call "the bubble" was big.

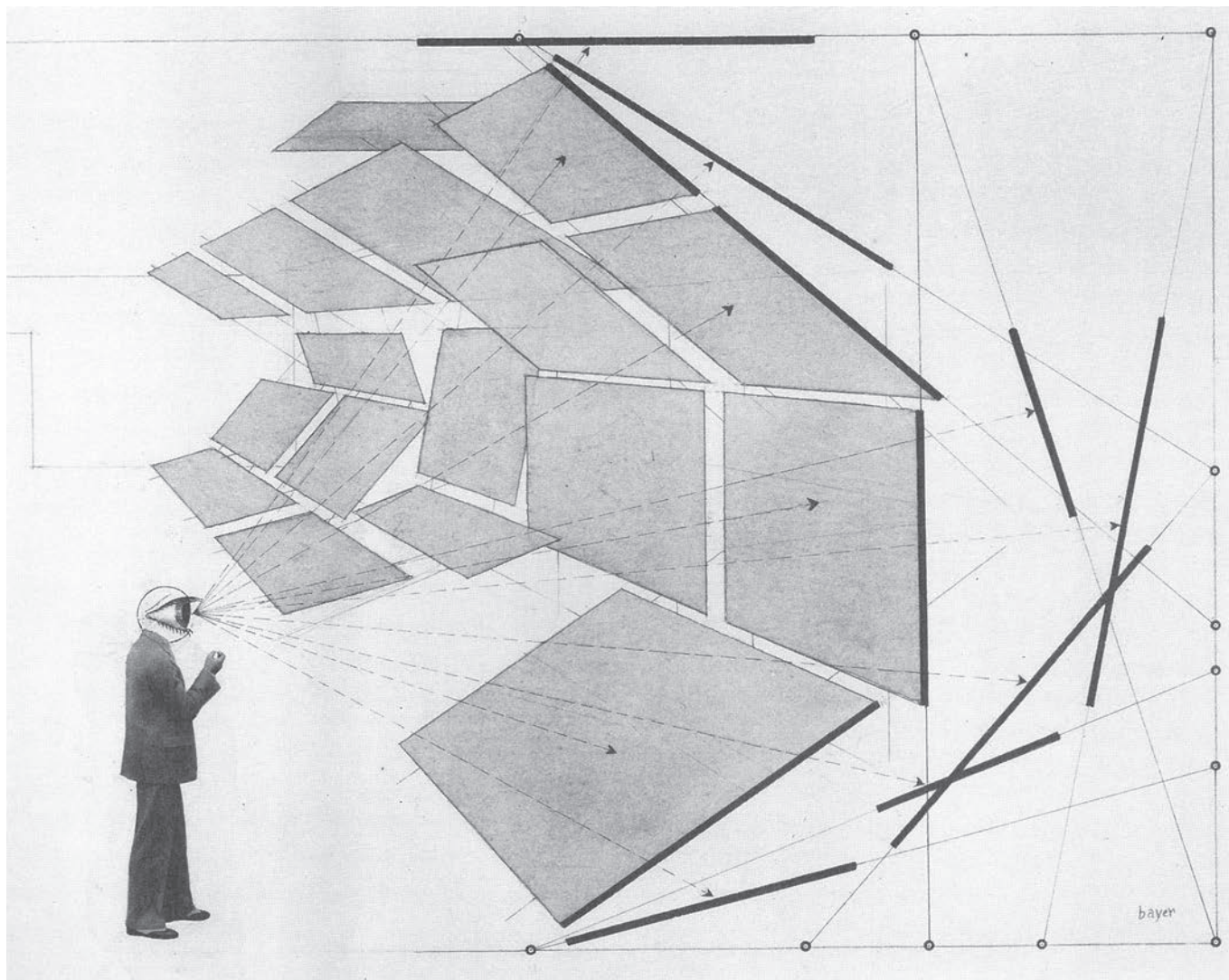
It remains a mystery to me why people buy art on auction when they can get it for much cheaper through a gallery or dealer. Why people sell, sure, that's easy to understand. But buying? It makes no sense. It only makes sense to buy works on auction when they are works that are no longer available in a gallery, works that are rare or difficult to acquire. When they

list of all tomorrow's parties. Sherry Levine is not Carl Andre, or at least not yet.

"It depends on what the meaning of the word 'is' is," Bill Clinton once said of his affair with Monika Lewinsky. "There is nothing going on between us." His reference to the present tense "is" made his statement true. I had always wondered why some of those same always-on-auction artists are represented by Larry Gagosian. Could one say Larry Gagosian is Sotheby's? And if so, is Larry Gagosian Christie's too? Can Larry be more than Larry? Larry is Sotheby's and Christie's and, well, Larry too? Years ago, it was well-known that Larry on the auction floor is

what the meaning of "is" is. What a million "is" is also a matter up for discussion, but that's not an issue for a Marxist with Groucho leanings.

I had asked several people and no one could come up with an answer. It was a case of the missing MacGuffin, the necklace, the diamond, the mysterious papers, the brief case that we always see but never know what's inside. Why do people buy at auctions when the guarantee is only a guarantee for the next five years? It depends on how you define "guarantee." The auctions were full of MacGuffins, the plot being driven by the demand for more alone.



It was a case for Inspector Clouseau and his chaotic comic reasoning. Clouseau was at the auctions, that is, the comedian Steve Martin, whose connubial relations made him one degree closer to me than years before (after having married a colleague of mine last year). He was either in disguise, perhaps as one of the many European men in pin-striped suits and flamboyant scarves to frame their natural-looking wavy manes. Perhaps he was the lady with the purple fade to blue hair. "So very last-season Prada," I heard someone say in snobby mockery of her hue. "Rothko could have done that," said another. My question was, "Is this Steve Martin in one of his many Chief Inspector disguises?" "Comme des Garçon once dressed me as a hunchback," a fine Southern lady collector confessed to me at a dinner after the auctions, "and when Rauschenberg saw how foolish I looked he said, 'Just go to the bathroom and turn it inside out and I'll sign it.'" Now *that* is a true collectible, a piece perfect for the auctions — according to the old-fashioned meaning of "is."

* * *

are what no one dares to call them: bargains.

For many auction-goers this week, Sotheby's or Christie's is Sotheby's and Christie's. Sotheby's is Bacon, Basquiat, Hirst, Koons, Lichtenstein, Murakami, Prince, Richter, Stella, Warhol, Wesselman. Christie's is Wesselman, Warhol, Stella, Richter, Prince, Murakami, Lichtenstein, Koons, Hirst, Basquiat, Bacon. The same but different. Why do the same artist names always come up on auction? This was the question that had long plagued me. Was it only a matter of money making more money? When a Richard Prince *Nurse*, one of a series of 19 paintings that once sold in a gallery for \$80,000 each, sells on auction for 8 million some 12 years later, what you have is a gain of, absurdly, 10,000%. Prince has just had a major retrospective at the Guggenheim, but there are 19 *Nurses* out there painted in 2003-2005, and recently I had seen drawings elsewhere. The artist is still alive and kicking and he might decide to take up a fancy for making yet another *Nurse*. Wouldn't you just go to Barbara Gladstone to find out if she might find a collector who was willing to sell at a large profit but not quite so large as what one might get or might not get at auction? The matter is not easy as Prince is not Gladstone anymore, but Gagosian, you see. And a Richter is not a Polke, god knows why. Bidlo or Sturtevant is not Warhol, but Warhol is nearly cut from the

not really Larry but S.I. Newhouse. But now even Larry is legion. Larry might be Si, Charles, Ron, David, Aby, Francois, Steve or Dave.

Which brings me to the new matter of the Importance of Being Lisa: she is not just any Lisa but a new acquisition in the ranks of Sotheby's employees. Lisa Denison was chief curator of the Guggenheim for many years and destined to replace the director Thomas Krens, until she surprised them all by jumping ship and taking course with Sotheby's. That is, when you are at Sotheby's, Lisa is a warm gun, which might help or hinder her client. She is a Brand Name.

* * *

What's in a name? A name is a name is a name, but that name is not always *the* name, if you know what I mean. The Pink Panther is a diamond and not Inspector Clouseau. This is clear; do not tell me what I already know, you say? But what becomes confusing is that a Rothko is not always a Rothko.

If you successfully bid on a "Rothko" you are only guaranteed "Rothko" for a limited time of five years. At 72 million divided by 5, that's 14.4 million a year, a mere 1.2 million per month for the belief in a Rothko. Should you discover that your "Rothko" is a fake after five years of having it above your sofa, you might have to re-define

"Look at it as a funnel. What you're hearing is the very bottom of a funnel."

"Like Pollock the painter?"

"Yes, he is... he is Pollock the funnel arranger guy."

This is a description of a drummer getting his socks off about the playback of a drum riff. He's talking with his manager and radio "personality" Crabby Cabbie. The drummer, at the height of his powers, is described as being Pollock. Jackson, that is, the piss painter, the angry man of the Cedar Tavern, the guy who painted on the floor.

Lars Ulrich is not a drummer. He is Pollock.

Inspector Clouseau reasons: if Ulrich is Pollock, and Pollock is selling his Basquiat, what this art market "is" now is not easy to define. A hedge fund manager described it to me like this: *Call the \$8M for a Prince painting in '08 a spike and chart the long-term trend — remember this result is coming off a major retrospective and eight years of cheap borrowing. Will anybody have money after this crash is over? And then what are the 19 Nurses worth? Markets are very efficient over the long haul. My guess is that it will be like living in Apt 2A — nice address but not much of a view, plus all the street noise.*

MARKET ECONOMY

Rogue Urinals: Has the Art Market Gone Dada?

By Sarah Thornton

Critics tend to declare that Marcel Duchamp's urinal, entitled *Fountain*, is the most important artwork of the 20th century. Yet its standing as a collectable object has always lagged behind its value as an idea. The work questioned notions of authenticity when Duchamp first purchased the mass-produced plumbing fixture and signed it "R. Mutt" in 1917. Now, over 40 years after the artist's death, the problem of legitimacy remains relevant as unauthorized urinals have been discovered circulating in Italy. The art world loves paradoxical conceptual gestures, but it seems that someone might be taking the piss.

Fountain was the first readymade that Duchamp engineered for scandal. The artist was a member of the board of the Society of Independent Artists, whose exhibition had no jury and was set to be the largest in America. He knew that most people would perceive the work as a prank, particularly if submitted by an unknown Richard Mutt from Philadelphia. When the board duly voted against it, Duchamp and his chief patron, Walter Arensberg, resigned in protest — a story that was swiftly leaked to the New York papers.

The readymade had its public debut a few weeks later in an art magazine called *The Blind Man*. A photo of the urinal by Alfred Stieglitz was published alongside the founding manifesto of conceptual art, which included the words: "Whether Mr Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it." The urinal then went the way of many of Duchamp's early readymades; it was smashed or trashed. So insignificant was the porcelain pissoir at the time that no one can remember exactly what happened to it.

Fountain was not a coveted art object until well after the Second World War, when Duchamp became a cult figure among Pop artists. In response to the art world's desire to see his legendary lavatory, Duchamp authorized curators to purchase urinals in his name in 1950, 1953 and 1963. (The first is in the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the second is lost and the third sits in the Moderna Museet in Stockholm.) Then in 1964, in association with Arturo Schwarz, a Milan art dealer, historian and collector, the artist made the momentous decision to issue 12 replicas (an edition of eight with four proofs) of his most important ready-mades, including the urinal. Mr Schwarz, now 86, went on to write the artist's

catalogue raisonné — a scholarly book meant to document the complete works of Duchamp.

As one who had painted moustaches on postcards of the Mona Lisa, Duchamp understood the power of reproductions to render a work iconic and consolidate an artist's international reputation. Indeed, nine of the 12 official Schwarz *Fountains* have been included in museum collections around the world. Of the three in private hands, one is in Bel Air, California, another is in Manhattan with the Mugar family, and the last, owned by Dimitris Daskalopoulos in Athens,

volume devoted to prints and given a lowly estimate of \$2,000-2,500. It sold for \$65,750 to Dakis Joannou, a Greek-Cypriot construction tycoon, and is now enshrined in the front hall of his main home in Athens. "I couldn't believe that we could actually own it," says Mr Joannou. "People didn't appreciate its historical importance, so we got a bargain." In the following decade, Duchamp's renown increased yet again, as did the marketing of his work. In 1999 Sotheby's put an official Schwarz urinal on the cover of its Contemporary Art evening sale catalogue; it commanded \$1.8 million.

Mr Di Maggio and Mrs Zignone have been shown in public institutions in Basel and Buenos Aires. In an interview, Mr Schwarz reluctantly confirmed that he is trying to sell a fourth "Fountain" for an undisclosed sum, which one source says is \$2.5 million. (When pressed, Mr Schwarz says the asking price depends on whether the purchaser is a museum, a well-reputed collector or a speculator.)

The artist's estate is not pleased. Jacqueline Matisse Monnier, the head of the Association for the Protection and Conservation of works by Marcel Duchamp, says that "neither my mother nor I ever sanctioned the sale of unauthorized readymades." Mrs Monnier's mother, "Teeny," was married to Pierre Matisse, the dealer son of Henri, before she married Duchamp, making her an heir to both the Henri Matisse and Duchamp estates. She sees Mr Schwarz's activities as curious given that "Arturo was a great friend of Marcel."

Some Duchamp connoisseurs are outraged. Francis M. Naumann, a scholar and dealer who has published widely on Duchamp, argues that these urinals cannot be considered Duchamps at all. "For Duchamp, the signature was everything," he argues. "It is the single most important element in the process of transforming an ordinary everyday object into a work of art."

Others appear more ambivalent. Daniella Luxembourg, co-owner of Luxembourg & Dayan, a New

York gallery that recently held a Duchamp mini-retrospective, says the artist's market has "the atmosphere of relics in a religion," adding that "with globalization, the differences between what was signed by Duchamp and what was in his vicinity will become smaller and smaller."

Duchamp's relationship to commerce was not naive. Although he preferred to give away his work rather than sell it, he made a living as an art dealer for many years. Duchamp was also an able chess player who could think a good few moves ahead. One wonders whether the Dada master, who challenged the notion of the authentic artwork, might not be amused by the way these questionable *Fountains* muddy the waters of his current market. "My production," he once said, "has no right to be speculated upon."

(This article originally appeared in *The Economist*.)



York gallery will be exhibited at the Whitechapel Gallery in London this summer.

One of the many ironies of the Schwarz urinals is that they are carefully crafted earthenware sculptures modeled on the Stieglitz photo of the "original." Every edition has a story, but there is no beating the provenance of the 13th one. Dubbed "the prototype" and bearing Duchamp's signature, it slipped quietly onto the market in 1973 at the then fledgling gallery of Ronald Feldman in New York. Andy Warhol, who visited the gallery repeatedly, pressed Mr Feldman to trade the urinal for some of his own portraits. "Duchamp didn't sell well in those days," says Mr Feldman, "but Andy knew what multiples meant because he made them."

When Warhol died in 1987, his urinal was consigned to Sotheby's as part of his giant five-volume estate sale. *Fountain* was buried in a

Collectors of contemporary art are comfortable acquiring individual works in series, but they don't relish unlimited editions or dodgy authorship. Some may be dismayed to learn that there are at least three more "Duchamp urinals." Gio di Maggio, a collector whose Fondazione Mudima is in Milan, and Luisella Zignone, a Duchamp collector based in Biella, both have "Fountains" that Mr Schwarz says he gave as gifts. Sergio Casoli, a Milan dealer, is also thought to own one. (He declined to comment.)

Mr Schwarz claims that these works were made in 1964 under Duchamp's direction, but were not included in the original edition due to "imperfections." (It is unlikely that more than 17 urinals could have survived from this edition, but only Mr Schwarz knows for sure.) None of the newly discovered pieces have the "Marcel Duchamp" signature of official readymades. Nevertheless, the *Fountains* owned by

Dood! Where's My Art?! Found Installation Considered a Lost Classic.

Police are looking for anyone in connection to the image seen at right. It was found by a night watchman late Tuesday evening. "I dunno man it seemed like a bunch of stuff to me but my kid took me to the MoMA last week and I got to thinking that it looked quite familiar. It fit the same description the docent gave for how it might be something like art. Maybe it's even worth somethin' if they get the right people to say so," said Kevin Jacobs of Decatur. It is potentially a supposed installation purported to be by Gedi Sibony or someone closely aware of his profound aesthetic and conceptual rigor. While officers have spoken to experts connected to legitimizing the work of the artist, they have been rather tight-lipped with a pokerface of saying nothing or having nothing to say. Any information that proves the provenance is appreciated. Anonymity is guaranteed.



demonstrably impossible to destroy or dematerialize Art, which, like it or not, can only gradually expand, voraciously synthesizing every aspect of life. Meanwhile, we can take up the redemptive circulation of allegory through design, obsolete forms and historical moments, genre and the vernacular, the social memory woven into popular



Stripping the Underbidder: On Spotting Domestic Pachyderms and the Work of Christian Jankowski.

Is “fair market value” the right term to use in an unregulated market? In a room full of one hundred active bidders there is one buyer and ninety-nine so-called “underbidders.” The question that should always be considered is whether there is anyone bidding without the intention of buying: This is the speculative underbidder. When we consider the seemingly successful but malleable markets of artists like Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Andy Warhol, Jeff Koons and Damien Hirst, the potential for speculative underbidding becomes a sinister reminder that an artwork’s value—and by extension its importance—is dependent on the interest (or conflict of interest) of potential bidders.

But how do you identify the speculative underbidder? You have to know the entire room of people, why they are there, who they buy, and who they are buying for. Do they represent the artist? Galleries are typically present at auctions of their own artists, especially when the artist is having their first appearance on the auction block. It is a great opportunity to identify potential clients. It is even a chance to buy work at a potential bargain, as we see in Christian Jankowski’s *Strip the Auctioneer* project when Buyer #6783, identified as the artist’s Berlin gallerist Martin Klosterfelde, purchases Lot 132E, a sock removed from the auctioneer’s left foot.

In the case of Christian Jankowski’s project we also see an unprecedented moment of market validation—possibly the first time that such validation has ever publicly occurred without the standard backroom hypology of experts and shareholders. No one need explain or qualify anything: Jankowski’s auction lots now oscillate between priceless and worthless, transcended by a Duchampian alchemy whereby a sock still warm from its wearer becomes a four-figure item of artistic value. The gavel becomes a magic wand that itself takes on value and aura by proximity. The artist has framed the visible birth of the contemporary art object within an

entirely new form of fine art commerce: the primary-market auction.

A young artist’s debut at auction is the critical moment when the market of that artist is first properly and publicly tested—the moment when the Duchampian magic is deemed real or snake oil. It is the moment when the secondary market



very directly affects the primary market. What if no one buys the work? Does that mean the market should be corrected and prices adjusted accordingly? Typically gallerists will “catch” a piece if it falls at auction, so that primary-market works by the same artist do not suffer a corresponding plummet.

At what point does a bidder own enough of an artist’s market to be considered a major shareholder? If a lot proves unsuccessful, will it affect the overall value of that shareholder’s holdings?

And based on these questions, how should their bidding be interpreted? At the end of the day, all we know is that the work sold for a certain amount in relation to its estimate. The buyer, the bidders and often the sellers are totally anonymous. Telephone bidders are always granted anonymity.

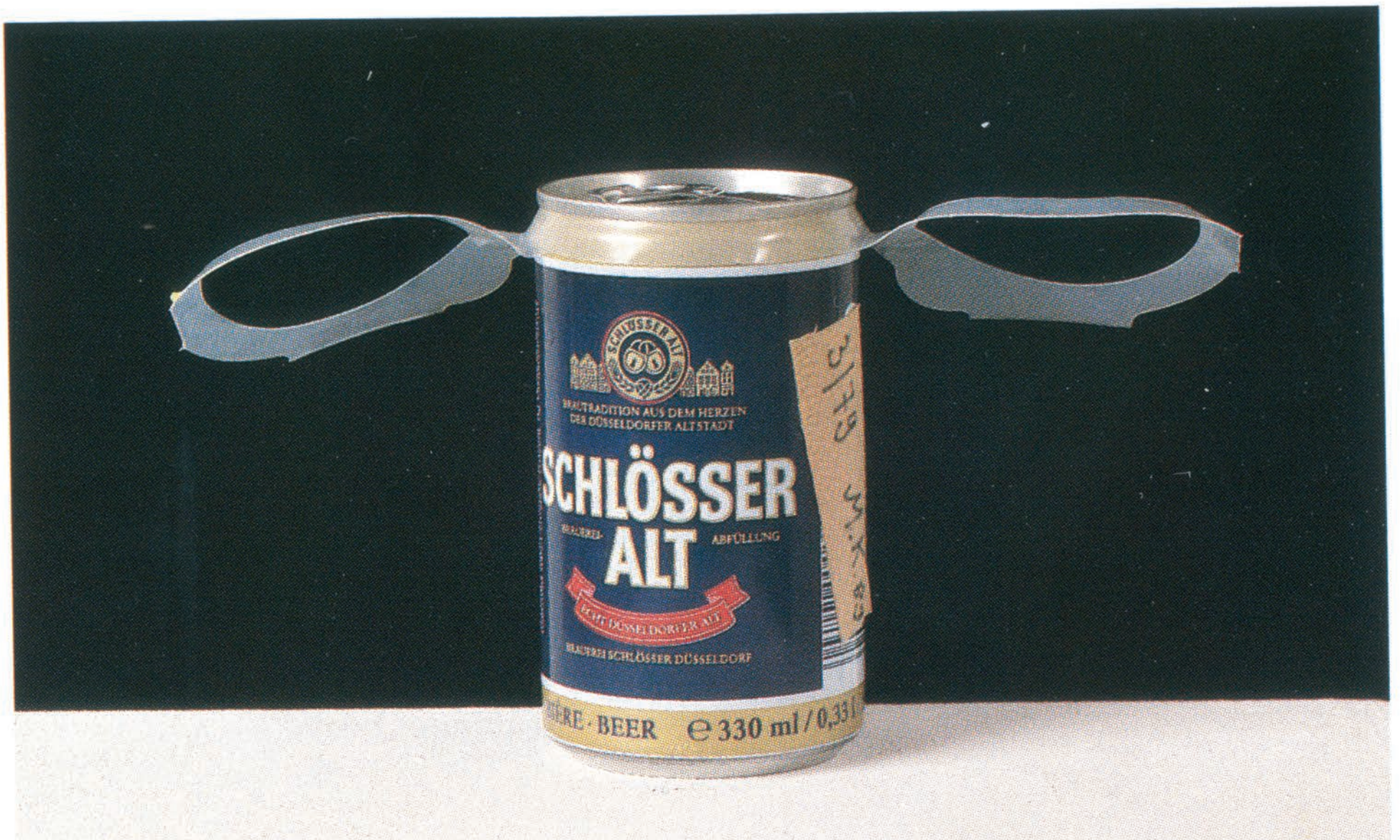
Such practices can be seen very plainly as

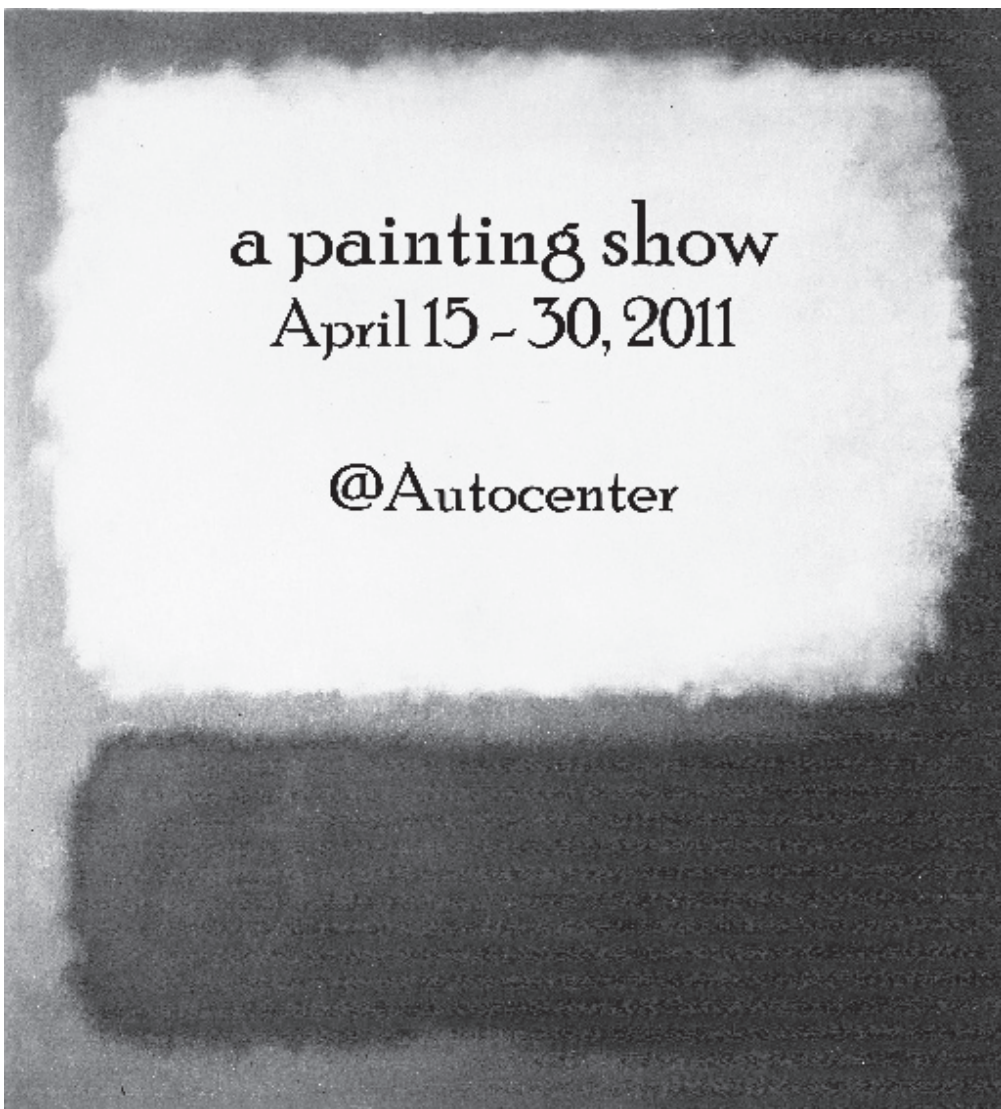
it is not a scientific source of information, it has long been the only publication that attempts to address underbidding through auction scrutiny. The reports in *The Baer Faxt* are far from exhaustive, and are often simply based on who the author recognizes on the auction floor and chooses to identify. Even so, and despite non-corresponding lot breakdowns and disparities of information, a casual perusal of *The Baer Faxt* over a few years provides an illuminating “Top 20” guide to the art world’s speculative underbidders.

Still, the phenomenon of underbidding without the full intention to buy is, like the art market itself, based on speculation. Identifying the speculative underbidder is the art-world equivalent of spotting Bigfoot. In a crowd of poker faces, how do you differentiate between sincerity and guile? Unless it is extremely off the record, virtually no journalist (or gallerist or art-world employee), even the most informed, will discuss this subject while naming names. And how can you *prove* a bidder’s intentions anyway?

Today, as we all step back and our markets correct themselves, we have become slightly more savvy about how precarious things have been and just how much things have been allowed to inflate. Attention has often been bought rather than deserved. Whether those responsible can articulately put their mouths where their money was—to explain why works were once deemed important—will be interesting to see.

The institutionally critical side of Jankowski’s practice is one of the few places in cultural production where institutional critique has not been “institutionalized” and “activism” merely aestheticized. *Strip the Auctioneer* in particular playfully opens a variety of otherwise hermetically sealed back-room doors that surely some would rather be left undisturbed. For one thing, it raises the question of what would happen if there were a publicly accessible information database on the auctions and the people who participate in the proliferation of the art market, and, based on such a resource, whether our understanding or acceptance of contemporary art history might look entirely different.





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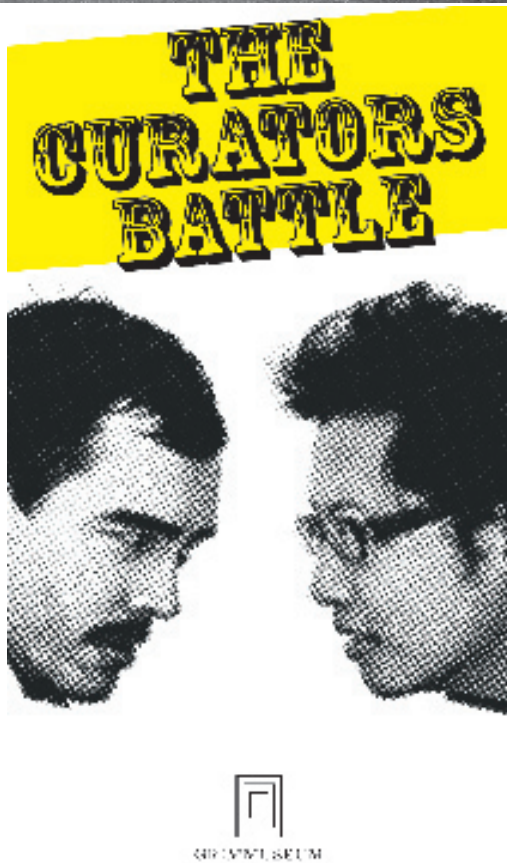
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Harald Szeemann 1933 - 2005

By Ami Barak

It is with sharp emotion and great sadness that we learned of the death of Harald Szeemann. We had the highest esteem and consideration for his personality and his very important contribution to the contemporary art field in the last forty years. It is a great loss for the international artistic community. All of the profession carried a great regard for his work.

Born in Bern, Switzerland, in 1933, Mr. Szeemann studied art history, archaeology and journalism at the University of Bern. By 1961 he was head of the Kunsthalle Bern. Harald Szeemann forged his reputation there by

transforming a very provincial institution, dominated by local artists, making it a crossroad for the rising generation of European and American artists, organizing about a dozen exhibitions each year, including the wrapping of the Kunsthalle building by Christo and Jeanne-Claude in 1968. His groundbreaking 1968-69 "When Attitudes Become Form" included nearly seventy artists such as Eva Hesse, Walter de Maria, Joseph Beuys and Richard Serra. After heavy criticism of his influential exhibition, in 1969 Szeemann quit the Kunsthalle to become a freelance curator. In 1969 he co-founded IKT, the International Association of Curators of Contemporary Art. In 1970 he organized another large, even more improbable show, "Happenings and Fluxus," at the Kunstverein in Cologne. In 1972 he was appointed as curator of Documenta 5 in Kassel, and he introduced installation and



performance-oriented art to even broader audiences.

After Documenta 5, Mr. Szeemann developed a nomadic mode of work. Then he created an imaginary museum, "The Museum of Obsessions," a concept from which he derived his program. He

organized "Bachelor Machines" for the Venice Biennale in 1975. In 1980, he was appointed as a co-commissioner of the biennale, and he created the first "Aperto," a cacophonous survey exhibition held in a gigantic former rope factory, which ignored the national divisions of the biennale's pavilions. In 1981 Mr. Szeemann became

the independent curator at the Kunsthau Zurich and mounted shows with a dizzying mix of 19th- and 20th-century artists and writers, including Victor Hugo, Charles Baudelaire, Eugene Delacroix, James Ensor, Sigmar Polke, Cy Twombly and Richard Serra. His thematic exhibitions included "In Search of the Total Artwork," "Austria in a Lacework of Roses," and "Swiss Visionaries." He continued to work independently, organizing the Lyon Biennale and the Gwangju Biennial in Korea in 1997 and serving as commissioner of the Venice Biennale in 1999 and 2001. In 2003 he organized a survey of Spanish art at the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in Long Island City, Queens. The last exhibition that he curated, "Visionary Belgium," was inaugurated on March 4th, 2005, at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels.

An exceptional personality, a man of rare spirit and professionalism without equal, he will remain forever in our memory.

Stephen Parrino, New York Painter Who Died in 2005, Has Died Again

By Bob Nickas



The painter Steven Parrino, who died in a motorcycle accident on New Year's Day 2005, and whose career subsequently took off after he was posthumously included in a Whitney Biennial, with collectors and dealers—many of whom had never heard of him before—paying record high prices for his work, has died again following a November 8, 2010, auction at Phillips de Pury. His painting *Schism's Kiss*, a 2002 diptych, was one of only three lots that found no takers in a heavily promoted sale that was organized by the private dealer Philippe Ségalot, titled "Carte Blanche." Also unsold was a photo collage printed on canvas by Jeff Koons, and a sculpture by Paul McCarthy, two artists who are both very much alive, exhibiting, and still in full production mode. After four years of brisk business for the Parrino market, the fact that such a major work failed to find a buyer signaled that demand has certainly waned. Although his was an "action-glamor death," as his friend the artist Cady Noland would insist, and the catalog sales pitch invoked Parrino's relationship with the raw physicality of Jackson Pollock, it seems that those who wanted a piece of the artist already have it, and they have moved on.

"The artist was never 'hot' when he was alive," one advisor remarked, "but once his body was cold, things heated up ... for a while at least. Everyone knows the expression, 'You only live once.' In art, you only die once. How long that death attracts and seduces collectors, well, that's hard to say."

The undisputed star of the sale was a 1962 Warhol, *The Men In Her Life*, which fetched an astounding \$63 million. While the painting comes from Warhol's truly great period, the early to mid-'60s, years in which his level of engagement surpasses the entire career which followed, *The Men In Her Life* is not so much a museum example of the artist's work as it is, and has now become, the crown jewel of a private collection. The men in Warhol's life are still vying to be seen in his company, especially if they missed out on the artist the first time around. It's through acts of necrophilia, as Parrino once caustically noted, that most people are involved with artists. Com-

menting on Warhol's career after he was shot by Valerie Solanas in 1968, Parrino observed that he had "lived, died, and was brought back from the grave ... a wigged corpse."

A number of the lots snapped up in the Phillips auction were by deceased artists: Felix Gonzales-Torres, Martin Kippenberger and Jean-Michel Basquiat, whose third-rate picture, *Self-Portrait*, 1982, managed an astounding \$4.5 million. "Quality," one collector in attendance noted, "always comes second to scarcity, and almost always when a buyer doesn't know the difference between a great painting and one that's just okay. And it helps that Schnabel made that movie. So Jean-Michel lived and died, and then lived and died all over again!" The same could be said for Lee Lozano, the artist who stopped making art in 1971 with *Drop Out Piece*, and who can be seen to have symbolically killed herself by prematurely ending her career. Within five years of her death, there was a revival of interest in her work, and her estate was soon represented by the prestigious gallery Hauser & Wirth. A perforated canvas from 1970 that was included in the Phillips sale brought in just over \$600,000 — one of the more modest prices realized in the auction, but nothing to sneeze at for an artist who died penniless.

While the significance of one unsold painting on the auction block should not be overstated, it's clear that "Parrino fever" has subsided. Those same collectors and dealers who had no interest in the artist when he was alive had circled around like vultures when he was gone. He knew it would happen, and predicted as much in the years before he died. Even afterwards, he hadn't taken it personally. "That's what they do; they come in and they pick at the bones. They don't think they're doing anything wrong. They're predators. It's their nature." After the Phillips auction, we couldn't help but wonder how Parrino felt to be dead again? "Now," the artist smiled, "I can finally get some rest."

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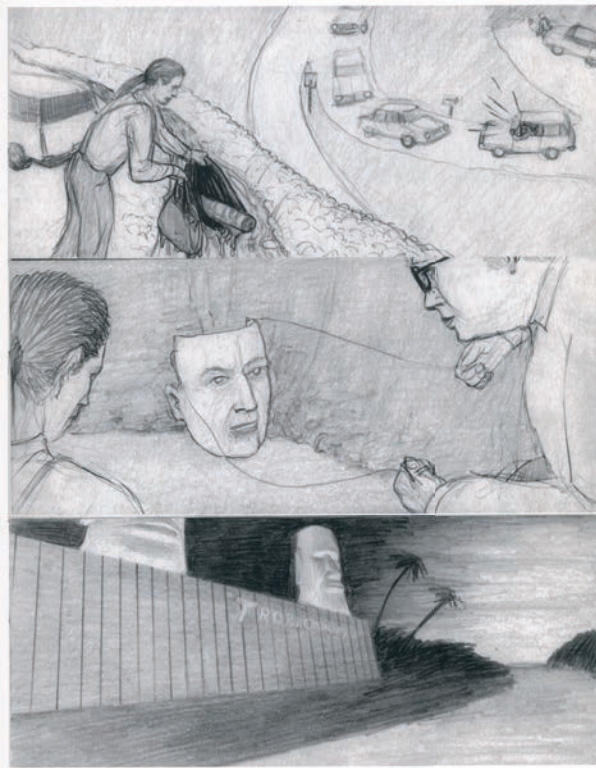
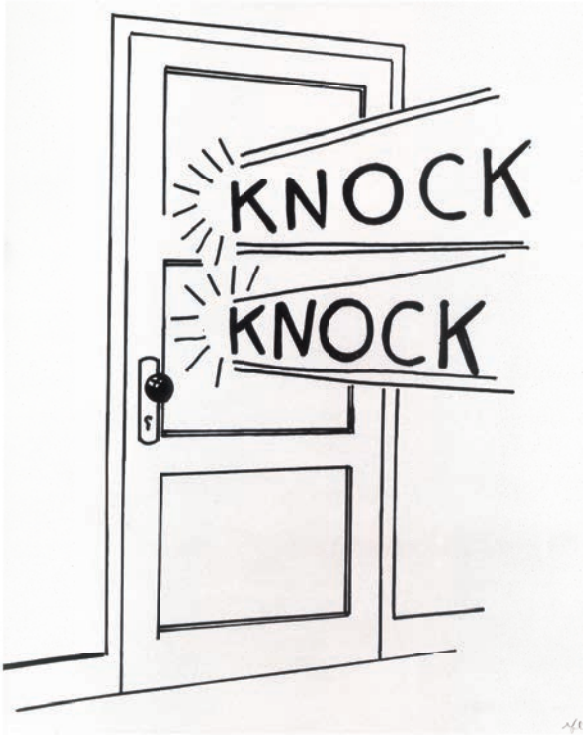
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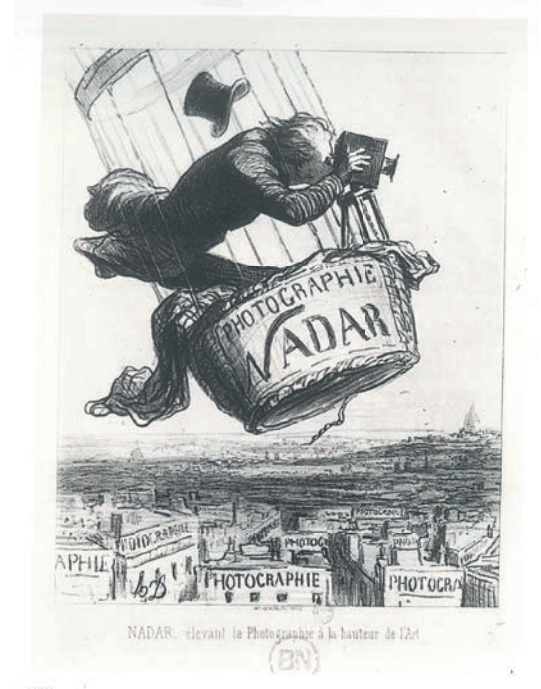
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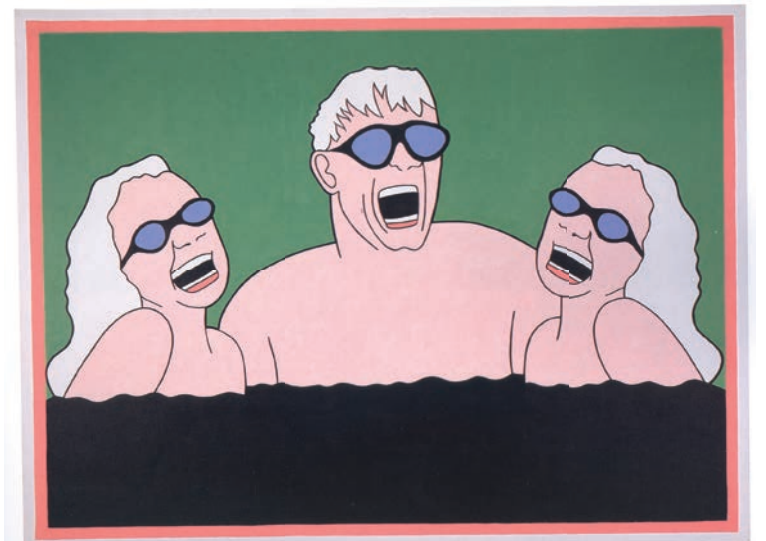
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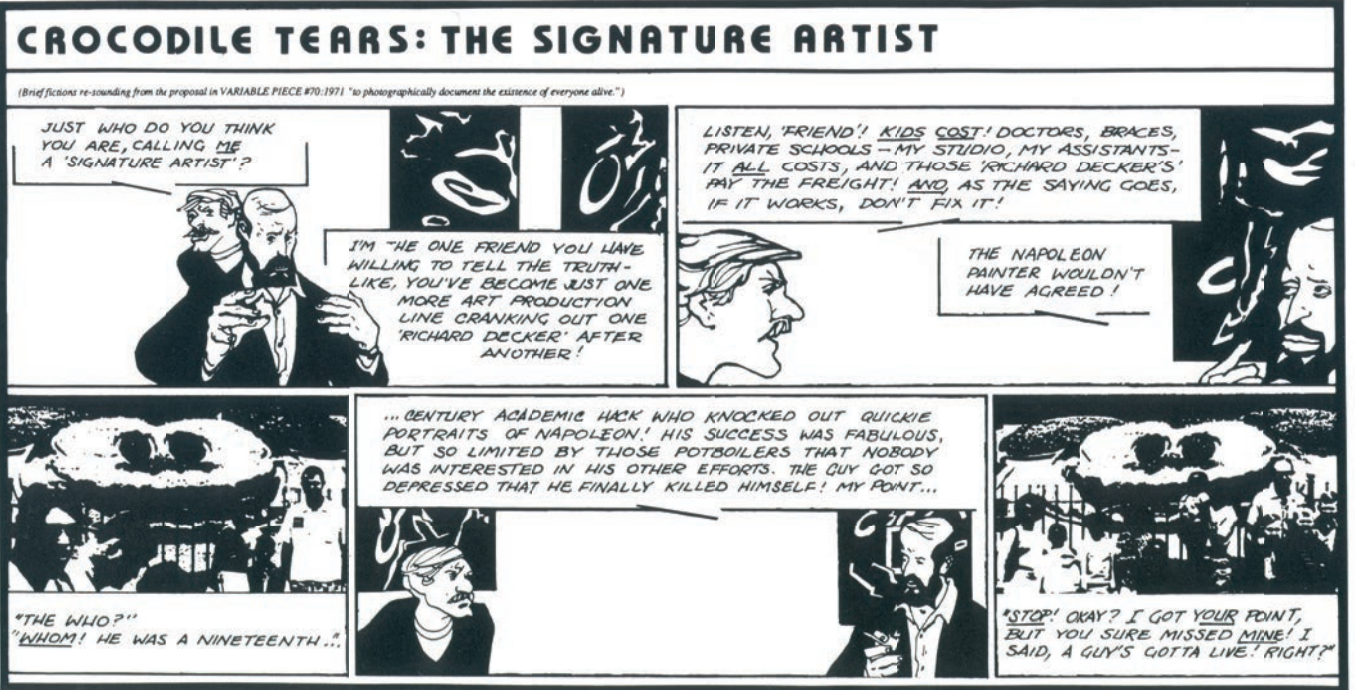
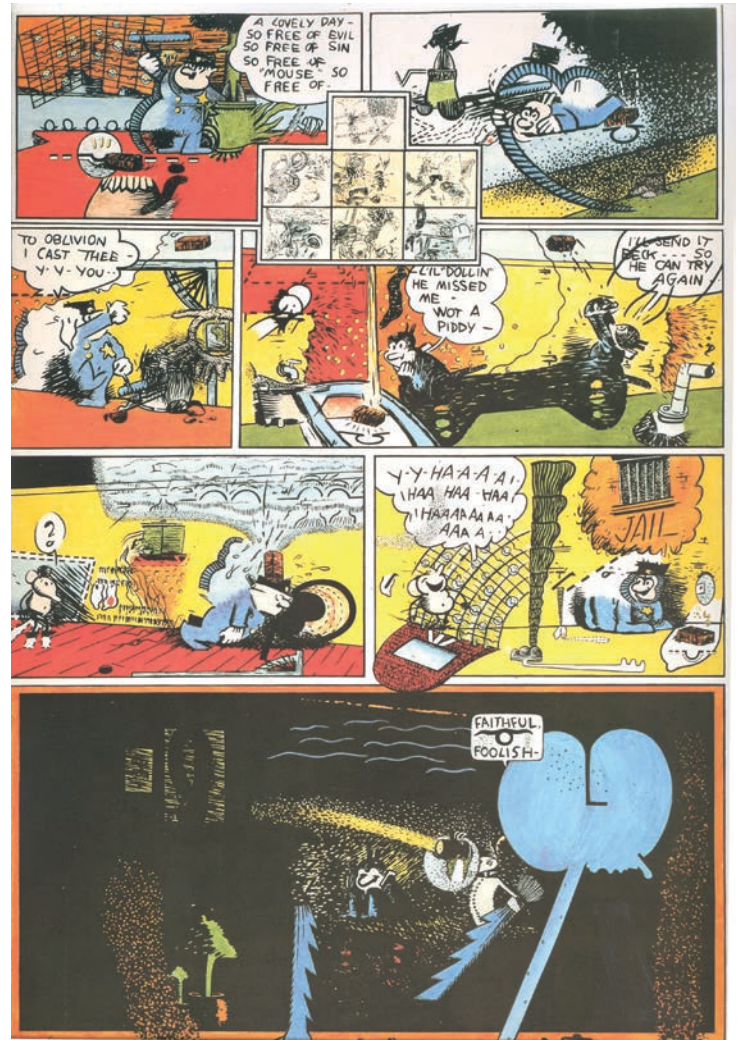
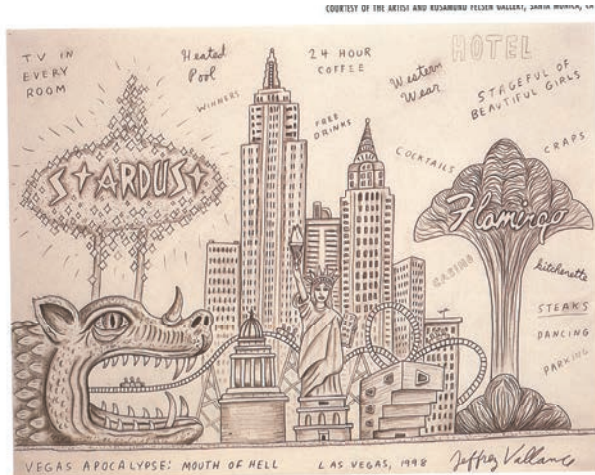
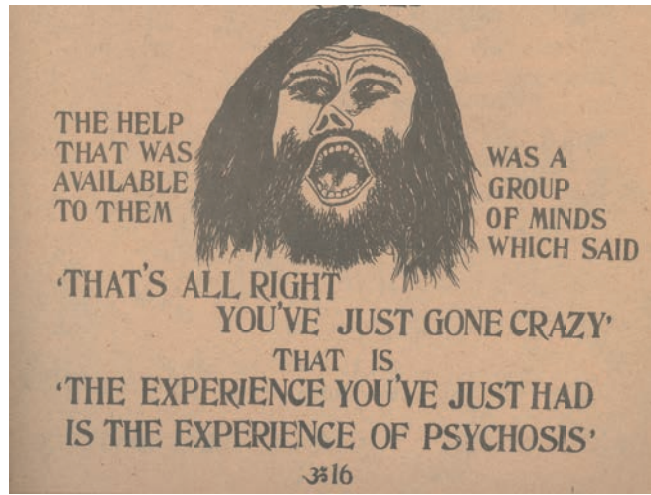


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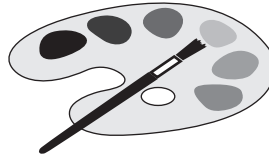
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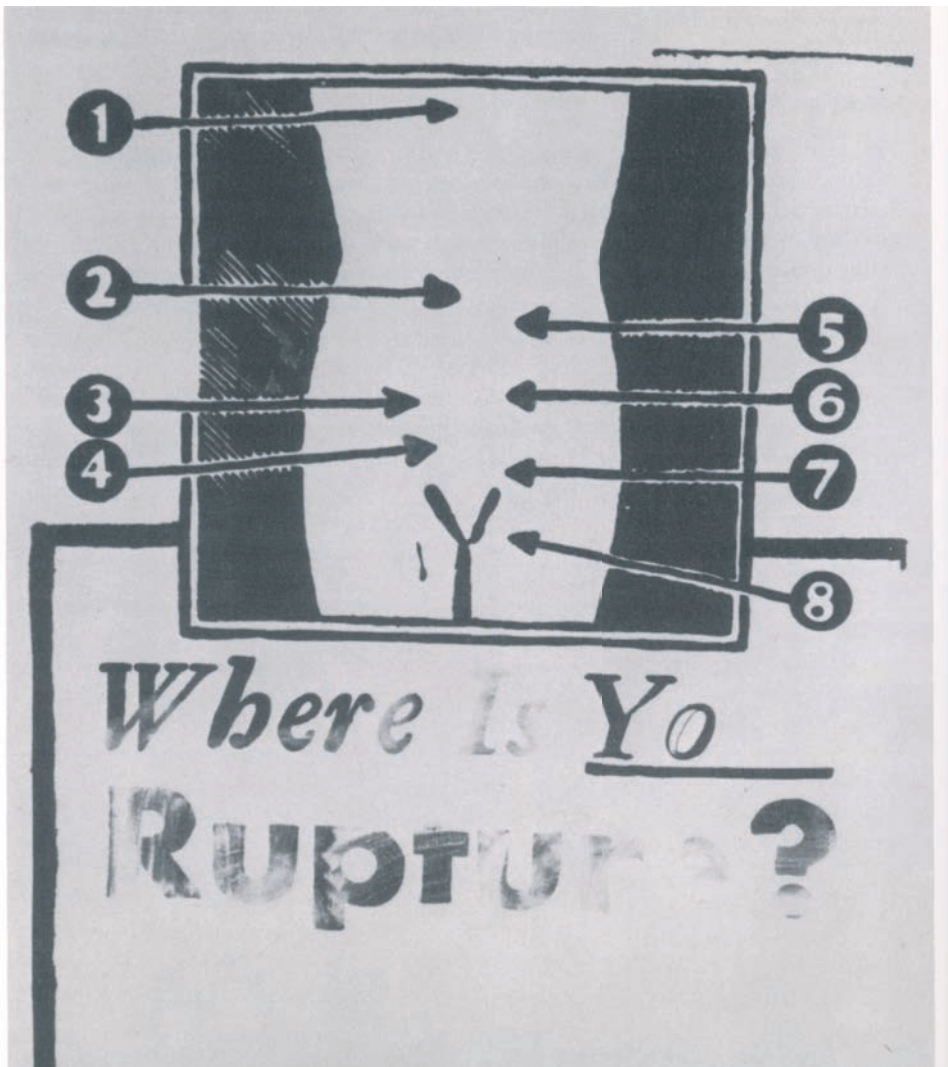
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