

# CHATEAUSHATTO

January 12, 2015

To  
Parker Ito  
1317 S Grand Ave  
Los Angeles CA 90015

From  
Château Shatto  
406 W Pico Blvd  
Los Angeles CA 90015

Re: *A Lil Taste of Cheeto in the Night*

Dear Parker,

*A year ago you decided to have an exhibition in a coffee shop, though you hold no interest in drinking coffee. Exhibitions in cafes amount to a tender history and they customarily land in one of two scenarios: the amateur painter whose work seeks incidental viewers, or the artist who invites the social congress of the cafe into the meaning of the work. Where did yours sit? Maybe you combined and confused the two. Your eight oil paintings, still life depictions of rainbow roses styled and painted in your studio, are thickly folded into the layers of your work and yet are easily separated out to play the role of light material adornments in a neighbourhood cafe. You seemed to be pursuing the sapid activity of the cafe and a moment with an unconditioned audience, and called this moment the 'prelude.'*

*A small bird flew into the Grand Avenue space when you'd stepped away for a moment. It was a sweet, bland bird but its flight over the chains and the in-progress installation circled back to the flamboyant parrots that spent time in 'Maid in Heaven / En Plein Air in Hell,' in London last summer. Neither of us were present with the parrots, but apparently one of them totally resisted the lens and doesn't appear anywhere in documentation, a slight by the obstinate bird that probably impresses you. In fact much of the show eschewed the lens and, in a pinchy review that referred more to your Twitter than your work, you were called a 'valleygirl.' I still believe this term is sexist and Ann agrees so I'm in good company, though I suspect you remain unconvinced and humored by the accusation. Helen just pointed to the Frank Zappa song that shares the name, but like everything that moves through time and space and cultural placement, its origins are amputated and untraceable and I can't correlate the meaning of this song with this characterization of you in an exhibition review.*

*Before the birds attended 'Maid in Heaven / En Plein Air in Hell,' you had to give a small performance to the gallery staff and it was probably the first time they had been told that this already-abundant presentation was part of a much larger vision for an exhibition that was too verbose to fit into a single space at a single time, that it was stretched across a year, during which time galleries became sites (like a café or an elevator shaft) to be conducted by whatever you charged them with; that began in the quietude of a cafe and continued to a gallery in Echo Park and the apartments that run contiguously to the gallery space and onto the rooftop, where you reproduced a mural from the Denver International Airport, a mural that willingly invites allegations of conspiracy by graphically prophesying future catastrophes or post-apocalyptic scenarios, thick with Judeo-Christian and Mayan symbolism, references to biological warfare, mass human suffering and extinct species... 'I don't want to be consumed by your gallery,' you told them. 'I want to consume it.'*

*What has the Internet imparted to painting? This question is hard to resist... both are such protean, generous and treacherous sites for information to swell. Your tiny portraits of Joan of Arc, (or rather, of a printed jpeg of a photograph capturing a sculpture of Joan of Arc) aid this reckoning. When you asked Justin to paint Joan's portrait in the style that Stingel would make it, the image had already been transmitted across several platforms, had lost and accumulated information and inflection. That there were five paintings produced from the one subject, each readjusted with a new priority or approach, kept the work in its perfectly unstable state. Once the UV-printed chains had been laid over four iterations, it was inevitable that the process had to continue to move on the fifth portrait, hence the chains were rendered in oil paint. This tiny portrait hung on the top floor of the London gallery, above the dealer's desk,*

# CHATEAUSHATTO

*like a full-stop to the third presentation in this year-long exhibition. While people remarked on the fullness of the show, in a broader context it offered a thin preview to the installation that you're currently distributing across 12,000 feet of chain on Grand Avenue, Los Angeles.*

*People really love Parked Domain Girl, maybe because it's a meme and it connects with people so efficiently. Daniel really loved how the Shipton & Heneage Parked Domain Girl slippers, worn by the receptionists in London, were packed into neat boxes inside elaborate crates. The crates were filled with everything that was leftover from the show, the painted vases and politely scuffed slippers. They'll remain in these well-built wooden casings and will be transferred to 'A Lil Taste of Cheeto in the Night,' heavy traces of the links within this chain of presentations. The elaborate sequence will eventually end with an epilogue in our gallery, another site colonized by this exhibition, where water will be passed through pipes between the works and between the buildings that host this final chapter and it's subsequent.*

*In both the cafe prelude and the presentation in London, you abjured putting your name in the spaces where the artist's name habitually goes. In the cafe, the paintings floated without an author; in London, you filled those spaces on the invitation, the press release, websites, with your assistants' names and Black Widow. The fallout of confusion has generated its own kind of charming content. Nothing is ever 1:1 with you...*

*When 600 rainbow roses were delivered to your studio they were kept moist in large orange buckets and a smoke machine accompanied them. The machine's output softened the eccentric flowers with a smoky filter. When they died, you heaped the rotting plants into the dumpster outside your studio. Above the cafe hosting the rainbow rose still lifes, a billboard was also offered to you. You pasted an image of the languishing roses being swallowed by the dumpster; and then later thought to have a friend come and write graffiti over the billboard. The friend lives in San Francisco and it didn't ever happen, but one morning you received a photograph from another friend passing by the billboard: unsolicited, somebody had laid graffiti over the billboard with a perfect fade-out towards the top of the image, where the roses rest.*

*While Marcel Proust has never really been your business, his novel may be meaningfully imposed on these exhibitions as an analogous way to contemplate them. Their arc covers so much activity that, invariably, some false memories are produced while other memories are abandoned. Details and tangents keep forming generously. So, since Proust has been forced on you, we'll visit him here: '...Botticelli ... that name evokes, not the painter's true work, but the vulgarized idea of it, banal and false.' Proust maligns the dull delivery of Botticelli as a false referent. Botticelli has been invoked too many times as a pale idea, and in this procedure the 'true work' is lost. This immediately led me to your treatment of content, how you are divesting the material of its 'reference' to allow content to become a medium in itself. When you lay a recognized form or figure into a work, you manage to circumvent both the 'true work' and the 'banal and false.' I think it's chemistry that accounts for this new state of content.*

*The installation at Grande Ave is populated with versions and hallucinations of other artists' work (Sturtevant, Murakami, Hockney, Bernini, Koons, anonymous, etc), yet you also apply this treatment to yourself. Documentation of a cast bronze Western Exterminator, suspended by chains in a disused elevator shaft and draped in rainbow roses, is painted 10 feet high. Laid over this is the 3D title screen for 'WipoutXL,' a speculative film that you'll make sometime in the next two years. The activity of the painting occurs in every moment other than the present, but the space conjured by the work holds this history and this future together.*

*The epistolary form is always a romantic conceit and it ends here. On January 24, we visit the exhibition, which itself will not be complete or resolved or stable on this date, and which feels a lot like making a visit to the lush environs of your subjectivity. Or at least, as mist resembles rain.*

*Love, as ever*

*Chateau Shatto*