

CHATEAUSHATO

*Intimate Wine Reception*

curated by Melissa Sachs and Cameron Soren

Selected Texts

CHATEAUSHATO

*Bruno Pelassy*

**IVRY, BREST, SÈTE, GENÈVE**

**Bruno Pélassy** Crédac / 16 janvier - 22 mars 2015; Passerelle / 7 février - 2 mai  
Crac / 16 octobre 2015 - 17 janvier 2016; Mamco / 2016



Né au Laos en 1966, Bruno Pélassy est mort en 2002 des suites du sida, qu'il avait contracté à l'âge de 21 ans. Si sa production est plutôt restreinte et de qualité inégale, sa force réside dans l'émotion qui la sous-tend, celle née de l'urgence qu'il y a à vivre et à créer, les deux activités apparaissant ici fermement liées.

Artiste autodidacte formé à la joaillerie et au stylisme, Pélassy participe pleinement d'une scène niçoise turbulente, ouverte aux questions de genre et au travestissement des corps, en ces années 1990 marquées par la lutte contre le virus et le cortège de représentations qu'il véhicule.

Créées dans l'intimité domestique, ses œuvres révèlent un goût personnel pour le travail manuel; le jeu des étoffes et la profusion de détails précieux balancent du rire au tragique, et empruntent au vocabulaire ornemental sacré pour le mêler à une imagerie *queer*, volontiers provocatrice. Fragiles et précaires, elles sont parfois vouées à une inéluctable détérioration comme *Sans titre*, *Sang titre*, *Cent titres* (1995), film sur VHS dont l'image est malade, rongée par l'usure. Plus que les *Bestioles* à l'agitation dérisoire, l'ensemble le plus fort demeure celui des *Créatures*, mystérieux organismes aquatiques dont l'évanescence presque magique bouleverse au centre d'art Passerelle de Brest comme au Crédac, où le ton juste d'une scénographie mesurée a su être trouvé. Une belle monographie signée par Marie Canet accompagne le vaste projet en cours de reconnaissance de l'œuvre, également programmé au Crac de Sète et au Mamco de Genève.

Marie Chênél

Bruno Pélassy (born Laos, 1966) died in 2002 as a result of AIDS. If his body of work is relatively small and uneven in quality, it does carry a real emotional intensity which comes from the artist's need to live and make art, and the fact for him that these were pretty much the same thing. Self-taught, with a background in jewelry and clothes design, Pélassy was an active member of the Nice scene where questions of gender and cross-dressing were very much to the fore, not least because of the struggle against AIDS and all the representations that it brought to the surface. Created in the privacy of his home, his art reveals a taste for manual work. The use of fabrics and the profusion of precious details swing from laughter to tragedy, mixing the ornamental vocabulary of religion with deliberately provocative queer imagery. Fragile and precarious, they are sometimes made to inevitably decay, like *Sans titre*, *Sang titre*, *Cent titres* (1995), a VHS film in which the image itself is sick, eaten away by wear. More than the rather silly agitation of the *Bestioles*, it is the *Créatures* that constitute the most powerful ensemble here. These mysterious aquatic organisms have an almost magic evanescence to them which is as moving at the Passerelle art center in Brest as it is at the CREDAC, a show notable for the measure and poise of its design. A fine monograph by Marie Canet is being published to mark this great rediscovery, also under way at the CRAC in Sète and the MAMCO in Geneva.

Translation, C. Penwarden

[français](#) | [english](#)[The Never Ending Stories cycle, last sequence](#)

February 24 to May 1, 2016

## Bruno Pélassy

The work of Bruno Pélassy was created over a period of just ten years. Infected with the disease very early on, he died of AIDS-related complications at the age of 36. During this brief period, he succeeded in developing a highly unique aesthetic, supported by a body of work that constantly oscillates between tragic and burlesque, eccentric and refined, graceful and obscene, meticulous and precarious.

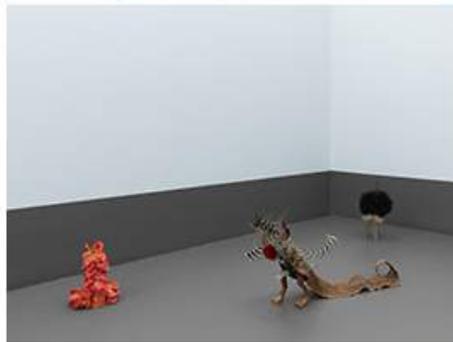
Formé au textile et à la joaillerie (il a notamment dessiné des bijoux pour Swarovski), Bruno Pélassy a gravité autour de la Villa Arson à Nice dès le début des années 1990. Il se fait proche d'une génération d'artistes qui bouscule joyeusement les identités sexuelles et manifeste un goût pour l'ornement dans un contexte artistique qui reste encore marqué par l'héroïsme viril et formaliste de Supports-Surfaces.

Trained in textiles and jewellery (he notably designed jewellery for Swarovski), Pélassy gravitated around the Villa Arson in Nice from the early nineties onwards. He became close to a generation of artists that enjoyed playing with sexual identities, manifesting a taste for decoration and symbolism, in an artistic context that remains marked to this day by the virile and formalist heroism of Supports-Surfaces. In this nebula, which notably included the artists Jean-Luc Verna, Marie-Ève Mestre, Brice Dellsperger, Natacha Lesueur and Jean-Luc Blanc, Pélassy distinguished himself through his artisanal expertise, enabling him to work with jewellery and costumes. Beaded curtains and sculptures, gowns, statuary gloves or intuitive assemblages are just some of the elements of this poetics of "wonder".

His name remains particularly associated with two emblematic series. The "créatures", elegant cloth dolls floating beautifully inside aquariums. The "bestioles", small sculptures dressed in eccentric costumes that continually move about and squawk. To the mutating disturbance produced by the bewitching motion of the former replies the brash arrogance of the latter. Completing this bestiary, at once majestic and insufferable, are the two-headed snakes, coiled around velvet branches. One of them, entitled *Ouroboros*, refers to the autohagmic myth of self-destruction and renewal.

A latent threat or morbid impulse runs through many of his works. His film *Sans titre, Sang titre, Cent titres* compiles excerpts from films, documentaries or advertisements, in a disjointed continuum. The opening shot of Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining* never ceases to return like a ritornello, establishing the sensation of an imminent nightmare. Edited by the artist using a videotape recorder, the film can only be shown on VHS. So the more often it is presented, the more it deteriorates, and the more the image and sound will fade, before disappearing altogether. This process of corruption is found again in the series of drawings *We Gonna Have A Good Time*, in which disease afflicts the moronic models of hair salons.

The symbolism of mutation and the practice of editing characterise the monumental installation produced by Pélassy at the Atelier Soardi in 1997, as part of the exhibition *Sur le moment*. For the decor of a "safari photo rave" initiated by Ben, Pélassy recreated a bedroom with his own things. On the floor, motley rugs are spread out under a bed, armchairs, tables and all kinds of accessories; on the wall, there is a gigantic patchwork of dyed fabrics on which a certain number of his friends' works are displayed, along with a false rhinoceros head by Ben.



*Untitled (Helmet of jellyfish)*, 1997,  
coll. Gallery Daniel Varenne, Geneva.

*Reliquaire*, 1992-1993,  
coll. Pélassy family, Nice; court.: Air de Paris, Paris.

series *Bestioles* :

*Untitled*, 2001, coll. Museo Ettore Fico, Turin;

*Untitled*, 2001, coll. Pélassy family, Nice,

court.: Air de Paris, Paris;

*Untitled*, 2001, court.: Air de Paris, Paris.

View of the retrospective dedicated to

Bruno Pélassy, Mamco, 2016,

court.: Air de Paris, Paris.

Photos: Annik Wetter – Mamco, Genève.

An essential work in the artist's career, it was obviously impossible to recreate it exactly. The Mamco thus invited the artists B. Dellsperger and N. Lesueur to provide a "version" of the bedroom recreated from photographic archives and discussions with certain witnesses of the time; as a way of taking stock of the connections that united Pélassy with Nice's art community. It is important to insist on the benevolent role of Ben, whom Pélassy assisted occasionally, and who provided considerable support to the artist, particularly by purchasing many of his works.

Pélassy also cultivated a taste for the occult, cryptic symbols and sacred objects. The reliquaries series presents jewellery and a leather jacket in Baroque chests. These are shown in a black room, just as the artist had presented them in 1993. They are brimming with secret details yet remain mute regarding their potential ritualistic functions. A year later, the artist produced *Temple*, which brought the fetish objects together and was accompanied by a cryptic poem combining Latin with French and English. Hermeneutists could have a field day here. In short, this multifaceted, generous, eccentric, romantic body of work, littered with brilliant intuitions, manifests – to use Didier Bisson's words – "the risk of living as well as concern for the unknown, with the idea of also having to die."

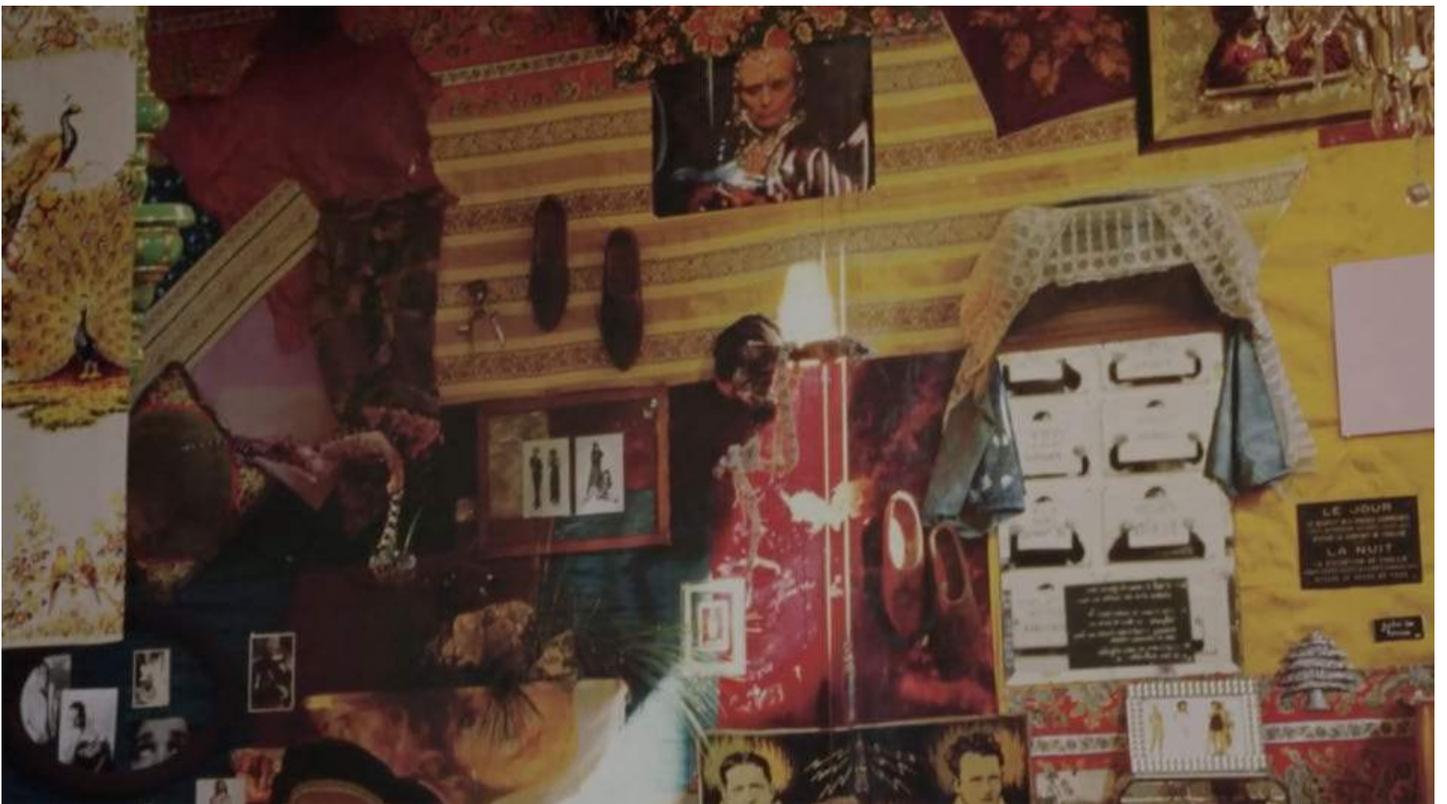
This exhibition extends and enriches that of the Centre d'Art Contemporain d'Ivry-le Crédac, organised by Claire Le Restif in January 2015.

It enjoyed valuable support from the Pélassy family, Florence Bonnefous, Marie Canet, Brice Dellsperger and Natacha Lesueur.

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Bruno Pélassy was born in 1966 in Vientiane, in Laos; he died in 2002 in Nice.

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Bruno Pélassy - Centre d'art contemporain d'Ivry - le Crédac

[Link to video](#)

CHATEAUSHATIO

*Georgina Starr*



...lies in wait for its meal of the day.



To find them you must fathom the abyss.

The Opening Ceremony performance of Georgina Starr's exhibition, *Before Le Cerveau Affame* at Cooper Gallery in Dundee on 10th October 2013. Curated by Sophia Yadong Hao.

Written, choreographed and directed by Georgina Starr.

[Link to video](#)

# Interview: Dominic Paterson talks to Georgina Starr

Bubbles, brains and what led to *I, Cave*, a new solo show opening at mima on 7 April 2015.



Georgina Starr, *I, Cave*, installation, 2015

**Georgina Starr's early works brought her to international attention in the 1990s, but her complex, layered and affecting recent projects make an even stronger argument that she is amongst the most compelling artists working today. Starr's solo exhibition, *I, Cave* at mima in Middlesbrough (7 April to 28 May 2015) offers a chance to see a new presentation of the body of work which audiences in Scotland saw in development at Cooper Gallery, Dundee in 2013, and at *The Uplawmoor Show* during Glasgow International 2014.**

**Having worked with the artist on a short residency at the University of Glasgow in 2014, including a presentation of her 2007 film work *THEDA* with a new improvised soundtrack, I was keen to try to capture something of the energy and originality of her approach to art-making, and to invite her to expand on how her practice has developed over the past few years.**

*Dominic Paterson: Georgina, there are so many possible starting points for a discussion of your work that I must admit it's hard to know*

*quite where to begin. I hope that this conversation might touch on your use of the vinyl record as a medium, your interest in ventriloquism, your engagement with psychic mediums, and with spiritualism and occultism more generally, and also, not least, the political and emotional resonances of the way the female body appears in your work. In short, there's a lot to cover! Anyway, I thought it might be interesting to start out from something small and see where we get to, so why not bubblegum? You've been using bubble forms a lot in recent work, especially in your show Before Le Cerveau Affamé at Cooper Gallery in Dundee, and in the works on paper included in The Naked, a group show at The Drawing Room, London. What is at stake in these proliferating bubblegum bubbles in your work?*



Georgina Starr, *Before Le Cerveau Affamé*, performance, 2013

Georgina Starr: The bubble is birth, it is the beginning of everything. It's the first breath, the first word and the first sculpture. The bubble is a world, an orb, a globe, a womb, a double, a moon, a sun and a crystal ball. It is also a voice—*à haute voix*—out loud. It's what is inside spoken OUT LOUD. The bubblegum material is feminine. Bubblegum is 'the pink material', when I chew it becomes a potion or a spell which transports and transforms.

But before the Bubble came the Brain. The brain was the first thing I made with 'the pink material'. The brain is heavy and oversized: a monstrous brain. The bubble is the opposite of the brain but is created from the same stuff and by using the mouth and the breath.

While making the brains I started to collect the bubbles and pin them to my wall. I began filming the breath entering the bubble, over and over and over like a ritual. I have always filmed myself making things, it's integral. I have to capture myself bringing things to life. I don't always show these

films. From the very beginning the making, building and recording of things was important, for example the small paper figures in *Static Steps* constructing the bar in *The Party*, sculpting the clay sculpture of Georg Herold's head in *There's Something Going on in the Sculpture Studio*, making 'Junior' in *The Making of Junior* and the artist sculpting 'vanity' in *THEDA*: all these actions were filmed. I only really started using video to capture myself making things or to prove that something very ephemeral had happened.

I see all of these things as sculpture and with the bubble it is the same. The bubble, like the spoken word, only exists for a very short time. The material has to be prepared in a particular way. You need 3 or 4 pieces in your mouth to make one bubble. These are broken down with teeth, tongue and saliva. The tongue pushes and presses the material into shape. As the hard material mixes and warms up it becomes soft and sugar oozes from it. Gradually the sugar seeps out (is swallowed) and after a few more minutes of chewing the material is ready to be used. The tongue forms the material into a spherical shape and then pushes into its middle. The material forms a thin membrane around the tongue and the tongue pushes a little out of the mouth. Then, simultaneously the tongue pulls back quickly and with an inhalation, and slow exhalation through pursed lips the bubble is created.

*DP: So the bubbles are partly about a process of making—and about 'inspiration', breathing life into something—but in a specifically feminine register. Following up on that link to form-making, can I just ask you about The History of Sculpture, the artist's book you made to accompany the show at Cooper Gallery? What was its relation to the show, and how should that title be read? I rather hope that you meant it very seriously.*

GS: I think I probably answered this already: the bubble, birth, breath, voice, sculpture, the female body, feminism... For me this is what makes *The History of Sculpture*.

*DP: The bubble is, fittingly enough, a capacious form for you. It's able to encompass a lot, including, but not limited to, the history of sculpture.*

GS: The more I thought about 'the bubble' the more connections I made. I couldn't sleep. Between 3am and 6am I am awake, somewhere in-between dreaming and waking, and I started writing and making plans. Is this the heavy brain, or maybe the heavy brain is the daytime brain? The bubble became alchemical, something that had carried me into another place. I called this place '*Le Cerveau Affamé*'. I called it this because it reminded of a place I visited eighteen years ago in a work called *Hypnodreamdruff*. This place was called 'The Hungry Brain' and began as a dream recounted by a woman in great detail to her friend/analyst

and the friend attempts to decipher it and give every detail a meaning. This dream eventually became 'real', as I filmed elements of it to create the *Hynodreamdruff* work.



Georgina Starr, *The Hungry Brain*, *Hynodreamdruff*, video, 1996

After making the bubble myself I began to imagine groups of people using them to communicate. I imagined a kind of physical education facility where women would be educated in movement and gesture incorporating the bubble. These were first described in a series of large watercolour paintings and photographic works in 2011/12. In the paintings there were processions of performers taking part in a kind of religious ritual of 'the bubble', called *The Annunciations*. The bubble appeared both as a large sculptural form and also as the swollen bellies of pregnant performers. In the photographic works I was placing the actual blown bubbles onto the image, usually on the mouth or the genital area of the performer.

*DP: Anyone who has encountered Peter Sloterdijk's 'spherological' work Bubbles won't be surprised that the chain of associations that can be drawn out of this humble form is so rich and far-reaching. I know you've read Bubbles—what did you make of it?*

I really enjoy reading the Sloterdijk book, especially for all those multifarious connections he makes between wombs, caves, eggs, doubles and spheres. I found so many crossovers in the *Bubbles* book with the research I was doing especially in relation to the imagery in 'the cards' and ideas around spirits, rebirth and doubles. My favourite chapter is the one where he connects the idea of the 'placental twin' with Orpheus and Eurydice, Hildegard von Bingen's *Scivias* and Magritte's *La Voix du Sang*. In relation to the placental twin, did I tell you that I took some photos of amazing drawings of placentas in the Glasgow library on my last visit?

It was also through this book that I first saw an image of the ‘mouth of hell’ in the Monster Park in Bomarzo, which I’ve since visited. I had been thinking about and drawing caves, openings and tunnels for a while and making connections with the body and the curtained ‘layered’ entrance in theatres, churches and the TV game show ‘reveal’. At the same time as reading *Bubbles* I was totally immersed in Goethe’s *Faust* and was especially focused on the second part where he encounters ‘The Mothers’ and also the Homunculus. The Homunculus in *Faust* is really interesting to me in relation to ‘bringing things to life’. Faust’s assistant (Wagner) ‘creates’ the Homunculus in the alchemy studio and so this small being becomes to life and starts to speak and have opinions. I hadn’t read *Faust* when I made ‘Junior’ back in 1994 but now I enjoy the similarities that occur in these narratives. Also the fact that the Homunculus was in this glass bubble/sphere, I suppose it was some sort of ‘retort’ vessel that was used in alchemy, the idea of breath entering the bubble and then a voice being inside the bubble, I get very excited about these connections, just like Wagner in *Faust*:

Wagner: (*turning to the kiln*)

... It’s rising, flashing, swelling more and more:

Another moment and it will be done

At first a major project seems insane

But chance one day will be eliminated

I see a future when a powerful brain

By some great intellect will be created

The glass rings loudly with a pleasant tone

Again it’s growing cloudy—but it clears

It’s worked at last! A tiny shape has grown

What higher aspiration can there be?

The mystery is there for all to see

And if we listen to the sound, we hear

It turn into a voice that speaks out clear

*DP: Your take on the bubble seems to relate, as your answer suggests, to literary or philosophical sources, but it also resonates with concerns that have run through your practice pretty much from the start. Maybe we could tease out some of those threads a little? The Faust quote is great way of bringing the conversation round to another important and consistent dimension of your work—an attention to the voice. When you say that you ‘have to capture yourself bringing things to life’ and relate the bubble to breath and voice, I wonder about the use you make of the recorded voice—notably in the many vinyl records you’ve produced, from the nineties to now. Could you say something about ventriloquism and the throwing of the voice in your work? I’m thinking of how in voicing your alter ego Junior, in using your parents’ voices recorded on your answer-phone, or in*

recording séances, and more recently in podcasts, you are bringing forth and capturing uncanny, estranged voices. Here bringing things to life is magical and inspired for sure, but also intimates death, or the undead...



Georgina Starr, *The Making of Junior*, video, 1994

GS: The recorded voice has been a constant throughout all my work. One of the first 'voice' recordings (*The Voices*) was very much connected to the idea of voices coming from 'the other side' in that they were disembodied voices I wasn't able to explain or even locate (were they from inside my own brain?). I was never particularly interested in ventriloquism until I made 'Junior'. I made this small version of myself so I would be able to have a conversation with myself, and especially the part of myself I felt unable to vocalise at the time. I never really thought about what kind of voice I was going to give to her until it actually came out. I was filming myself making 'Junior', and when she was finished it felt natural that we should converse with one another. I was surprised when her voice arrived as it sounded very 'Yorkshire', a lot like my own voice would have done when I was child. It was as if the voice of 'Junior' was channeled through from the past. Many years later when I began visiting the spiritualist mediums I saw parallels with ventriloquism as the mediums were like puppets speaking the words and thoughts of the dead. But the question I asked was, if they were ventriloquists were they actually controlling the voices rather than 'channeling' them as they had promised? This is what is fascinating to me, especially with the trance mediums. It is very much connected to religious belief and in my case to Catholicism. Giving a voice to inanimate objects and religious icons feels quite natural to the Catholic.

Getting back to the recorded voice—the early voices I recorded were originally done out of instinct. I asked my mother to sing 'Hello' down the

telephone in 1993 because I wanted to hear her sing the song. I liked the idea of having her voice singing on my answer machine tape. The first recording became part of *The Nine Collections of the Seventh Museum* but I didn't have an idea that this recording would end up being so important to me and being transformed into a new sound work, *Mum Sings Hello*, sixteen years later. The voices and sounds I gather often get reworked and appear in different forms much later. When putting together all the tape-to-tape recordings of my mother singing 'Hello' onto one vinyl record I started to hear a disintegration and a reincarnation of the mother's voice. The mother had become another. My interest in the Realm of The Mothers in *Faust* really came from thinking about what 'mother' meant, the actual nature of 'mother'.

Faust is forced to enter the Realm of the Mothers on his journey in search of beauty and perfection. As Mephisto says "it's the strangest sphere you have encountered yet... they are The Mothers!" Faust replies that yes "The Mothers' does *sound* very strange. "These goddesses exist beyond the range of mortals: even we avoid their name. To find them you must fathom the abyss." When I read this it was like a key suddenly fitting a lock in my brain. The abyss or 'death' was also a kind of 'mother', motherhood raised to the universal and cosmic, of the birth, sending forth, death and the return to all things—the eternal circle—"birth and the grave, an infinite sea'.

*DP: I'm pleased you mentioned Mum Sings Hello here. It's a truly haunting work I think, which is a serious piece of alchemy considering that its basic material is a Lionel Richie song! I know it had a big effect on the audience when you played the record during your talk in Glasgow last year. Despite the connotations of the song, the disintegration of the maternal voice seems to open onto a confusion of longing and loss, of Eros and Thanatos. As your mother's voice decays and distorts with the loss of fidelity in the repeated recordings, it becomes more and more plaintive, more ghostly, but at a certain point if we hear this gathering distortion as the very grain of the maternal voice it starts to sound an overwhelming, endless demand. It's as if death itself is saying—as perhaps is often the case when technology records or relays voices—'Hello, is it me you're looking for?' This seems like a good example of how darker themes often seep through in your work, even when it seems comic or pop at first glance. Is this maybe especially true of more recent projects?*



Georgina Starr, Mum Sings Hello, sound piece, 2009

GS: After the year of the twelve sittings with different psychic mediums (for *I am the Medium*, 2010), I suddenly felt very lost, like I had been given a glimpse into a series of strange futures. Listening to the 'spirit' communications I had recorded it was as if I had been taken on journeys into dark unknown worlds (Hades?). I'm not sure what I was expecting to happen, but the two worlds (both real and unreal) became blurred and I fell into a sort of an abyss. Like Faust I knew I had to claw my way through this (via 'The Mothers') so a type of rebirth or reentry could take place. With the idea of reentry came the cave, the tunnel, the curtain opening, the lights, the hand, the mothers, the first breath, and the bubble.

One odd thing I just realised is that when Faust is in the Realm of Mothers (or is it the Realm of Persephone?), the reader is taken to another scene involving the Homunculus. The Homunculus wishes to live truly as an embodied being without his glass sphere. He is not happy to exist just as a voice inside the bubble. He throws the glass vessel against the throne of Galatea and escapes into the womb of the sea below. He is reborn in an embodied form. I have to think of 'Junior' calling out for the suitcase to be reopened after eighteen years (in *Junior's Big Comeback*)... "What we call birth is but a beginning to be other than what one was before; and death is but cessation of a former state" (Ovid's *Metamorphoses*).

I think this brings us back to my first answers about the bubble and the beginnings of '*Le Cerveau Affamé*'. Have I come full circle? Talking of 'spherology'....

DP: Seeing as we're back with the bubble again, I want also to ask about the feminine (or feminist?) aspect of this imagery. Roland Barthes wrote about the way Georges Bataille interchanges 'chains of metaphor' in *Story of the Eye*, so that all manner of objects get drawn into the

*association of eyes with eggs and with testicles. Your description of how the bubble as a form has metamorphosed as its passed through your work recalls this to some extent, but whereas Bataille's metaphors seem to be predicated on the male body, yours are much more markedly a matter of femininity. Is it right to say that rethinking and reworking the representation of the female body has been a consistent concern for you?*

GS: After I made 'Junior' and took photos of myself holding her for *The Nine Collections of the 7th Museum* work, I knew there was an awkward association with the 'Madonna and child' image. I was slightly uncomfortable with this but also drawn to the strangeness of it. The Virgin Mary and her body had been a preoccupation of mine while growing up. In fact my whole childhood experience was very female dominated. My dad was a workaholic, so there was mainly my mother, my sister, an all-girls convent school, and the Virgin Mary. I remember seeing that John Waters film a few years ago, was it *Pecker*, where one of the characters talks to a ventriloquist dummy of the Virgin Mary. Everyone in the cinema was laughing, but I was thinking, I spoke seriously to her image on a little prayer card and her statue in church for many, many years!

I am instinctively drawn to looking at and re-imagining female imagery, ideology and identity. As a child I didn't really question the grounds for Mary's elevation to idol status. In fact they were all very much out of her control: being visited by a spirit, being a virgin and becoming a mother. I was a teenager before I started to question this... and then later the questions came out in the work as I began working with notions of female identity and rewriting them for myself. The characters and roles I created in many of the early videos were attempts to de/reconstructed identities, for example: *Crying*, Liz in *The Party*, The Marys (a group of female magicians) in *Hypnodreamdruff* and the multiple roles of all the female stereotypes in the *Frenchy* video.

*DP: When you were in Glasgow you had a chance to look at 15th century alchemical texts from the University's Special Collections. I know that the extraordinary illustrations to those texts have been a particular interest to you and you've been developing your own iconography out of that, and other occult sources. Could you maybe say something about Tarot imagery and why it appeals to you as a vehicle for work? How is this manifested in what you are doing now?*

GS: The idea of prediction or magical transformation has always been at the centre of my work. I first touched on it in early works like *Visit to a Small Planet* and *Getting to Know You* where I attempted to get to know a stranger by experimenting with various psychic phenomenon like palm reading, dream analysis and numerology, and in more recent works like *THEDA* and *I am the Medium*.



Georgina Starr, THEDA, video, 2007

The ideas for *'Le Cerveau Affamé'* imagery developed directly from the recordings I had made during the twelve séances for *I am the Medium*. The tarot had figured heavily in these 'sittings' and I liked the idea that the images would take you on a journey into the future. The mediums I visited had started to take on a Mephistophelian quality as they drew me into their various predictions of possible futures. When I started gathering imagery for the watercolour paintings I got very involved with the bodies I was drawing and the paintings eventually started to look like they could be symbols or guides that might possibly lead me somewhere. The poems were an important development as they were what I was writing in the middle of the night. The paintings were a daytime activity and the writing was night time, so 'the cards' brought these two zones together. The insomnia state I connect very much to the 'the voices' which is something that I encountered when I was a child. As a child I turned these into fear and anxiety, this time I'm trying to turn them into something else.

When I was invited to do the show in Dundee I decided to present some of the first stages of this place I called *'Le Cerveau Affamé'*. Even in those early, early stages it was already quite complex as I had devised a set of predictive cards with the main 4 symbols of the 'the bubble', 'the brain', 'the hand' and 'the cat'. I had the idea that the cards could be like a game or instructional device to allow people to enter the work. For the opening I scripted a ceremony where ten of the cards would be 'turned' and a series of instructions would be read by a voice on a vinyl record. The voice was authoritative and very precise, like a radio announcer from another era. I was also thinking of course of the Radio Rorschach voice in Jean Cocteau's *Orphée*. The voice I used was a French-speaking female and as she read out 'instructions', which were actually short poems I had written, certain actions took place in the space. The texture of the voice was very

important. It was also important that it was on a vinyl record. I wanted the voice to feel as if it was coming from another place, almost like a spirit communication. In the performance I placed the needle on the record so it gave the impression that the voice was somehow coming through me, as if I was the medium.

When the 4th card was turned a group of female performers (The Mothers) appeared and began communicating through acrobatic gesture and the bubble. The bubble was at first comic and then strange and finally sinister as it appeared and disappeared, 'bubble, breath, breath, bubble, bubble, breath, breath, bubble...' It was repeated over and over and became like a lesson as it connected with the instructional voice on the record. The bubble revealed a darker side then and spoke of loss and collapse and death.

*DP: Rather than end with loss, collapse and death—which would burst the bubble rather abruptly—could I ask you to say something about how you are selecting work for mima? And what direction has 'Le Cerveau Affamé' taken since Cooper Gallery? What have you been making?*



Georgina Starr, *Before Le Cerveau Affamé*, performance, 2013

GS: During the installation of the Cooper Gallery show (*Before Le Cerveau Affamé*), I used the exhibition setting, specifically the large curtained room, to film with a group of female performers. The filming process was about trying to focus on this spherical object as it was conjured by the women and held in front of them as a miraculous sculptural form. I have now finished a short film using this footage. It took me a long time to edit together something I was happy with and which conveyed the power of these magically abject shapes made from breath. It also took me directly back into the Realm of The Mothers and Mephistopheles's description of it:

Some sit, some stand, some wander to and fro,  
As it may chance. Formation, transformation,  
Eternal mind's eternal recreation.  
Girt round by images of all things that be,  
They do not see you, forms is all they see.

While editing I began thinking about the two tiny orange paper figures I made back in 1992, in *Static Steps*, and realised that although visually this was quite different I was still preoccupied with capturing the almost impossible: breath, static, shadows, memories, voices, gestures, momentary fleeting moments of magic and loss. I got out the these paper figures, which like 'Junior' I had kept in a little box, and now have them hanging from invisible thread in my studio. They dance and glide around a small, mirrored dance floor controlled by the air currents in the studio and by my own body moving to and fro. The simplicity of their magic totally mesmerises me, watching them I can feel myself disintegrate. In a kind of pareidolic ecstasy I suddenly started to see paintings on caves that I traced over many years ago in Africa.

It's a long story but back in 1991 I had been reading a book by the archaeologist Mary Leakey about her discovery and recording of 2000 year-old paintings in caves and on rocks in Tanzania. In the book she mentions that one of the paintings had gone unrecorded due to lack of time and funds and that it was vanishing. Through various strange coincidences I ended up meeting Leakey and she drew a map of how to find the paintings, deep in the Tanzania bush. Along with her granddaughter I led a small expedition with the local chief of antiquities and rock painting and we spent 2 weeks tracing scenes of fading orange pigment figures on cave walls.

My paper figures have led me back to this (mother?) cave and to revisit these tracings that are strangely connected to the recent drawings I've been making on tracing paper and also to the bubble form. For the mima show I will attempt to weave some of these connections together. The title of the exhibition is *I, Cave*.

*DP: It seems we've come full circle again, back to the various figures of the bubble. Thanks so much for sharing your thinking around this work Georgina.*

*Dr Dominic Paterson is a lecturer at the University of Glasgow*

*MAP is a publisher and producer based in Glasgow and co-run by Alice Bain and Laura Edbrook*

# GEORGINA STARR

## the betrayal of identity by the mass media



In *The Bunny Lakes are Missing* installation at Pinksummer Genoa, 2000??, Starr created an allegorical installation based on Otto Preminger's 1965 thriller *Bunny Lake is Missing*. Preminger's film is set in London where an American single mother arrives with her four-year-old daughter. We never see her child, even when she is supposedly dropped off at a nursery school, and when she goes missing the police and the viewers are left in some doubt as to whether she ever existed. Starr's *The Bunny Lakes are Missing* is not an appropriation in the sense that Hans Haacke, Victor Burgin and Barbara Kruger appropriated mass media in the late 1970s and 1980s. It is instead a poetic interpretation and intermixing of Preminger's concept with many other intertextual threads including Peter Bogdanovich's film *Targets*, 1967, Starr's childhood and adolescence and more general reflections on female identity within a postindustrial world saturated with cinematic, televisual and commercial representations of femininity. For example, she uses a group of young teenage girls who she calls the Bunny Lakes and organises a fashion show complete with elegant models dressed in costumes designed by Starr. In the course of



this show the Bunny Lake teenagers gun down the grown-up models amid a flurry of red taffeta 'blood' terminating as a well dressed heap of bodies at the end of the catwalk.

The performance-installation is expanded by graphic photographic imagery, videostills, costume designs, a logo and 'merchandising' such as a T-shirt and CD. Starr also created a 'Bunny Lakemobil' shown below, blood besplattered, at the drive in cinema.

Starr transforms *The Bunny Lakes are Missing* into a brand. But the crucial question in any marketing scenario is what are the brand values? In this case, as Petra Schröck has noted, they appear to involve the existential confusion of a generation fed by television from toddlerhood to the maelstrom of teenagehood. Starr's Bunny Lakes appear to symbolise a generation that has 'gone missing' due to the interpenetration of their reality with the fictional constructions of film, television and marketing. From this point of view Starr's fashion models have to perish because they represent the unattainable perfection used by mass media to condition behaviour. Instead of buying the product the impressionable young teenagers kill it. In this manner Starr constructs an entirely new layer of meanings on top of Preminger's original film.

For Burgin, Haacke and Kruger working in the 1970s and 1980s the message was clear: mass media and consumerism are bad. But this ideological certainty is less pronounced in the work of artists who have come into prominence in the 1990s and 2000s. And the media associations are subjected to significantly more elaborate processes of translation and intertextual mixing.

Starr's reference to Bogdanovich's *Targets*, 1967, has been





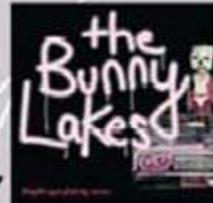
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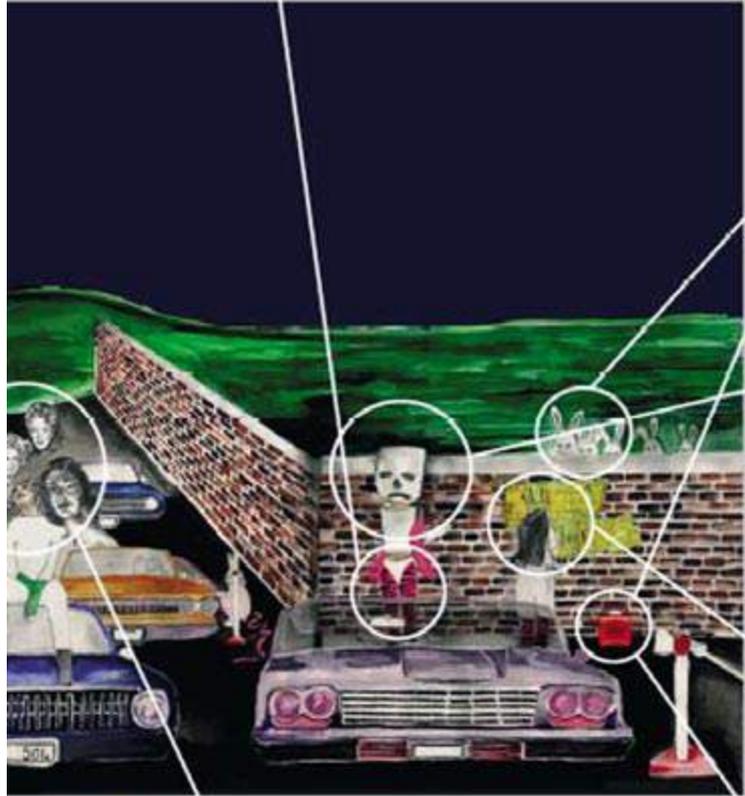
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8



7



1. *Bunny Lake is Missing* (Otto Preminger, 1965)
2. *The Bunny Lakemobile*
3. Illuminated Drive-In movie speaker
4. *The Bunny Lakes* (teens)
5. *Misty Roses* playing in *The Bunny Lakes are Coming*
6. Scenes from *The Bunny Lakes are Coming*, 2000
7. *Misty Roses/Bright Eyes* white vinyl 45rpm record
8. *The Bunny Lake Collection*, 2000
9. *The Bunny Lakes* (Killer Bunnys)
10. Scenes from *The Bunny Lakes are Coming*
11. At the Drive-In
12. *Magpie* from *The Bunny Lakes are Coming*
13. *Targets* (Peter Bogdanovich, 1967)

6



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11



1

# THE BUNNY LAKE PLAN

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3



4



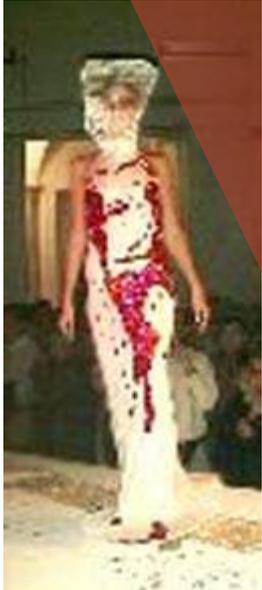


mentioned. In this film, gun fanatic Bobby Thompson shoots his family and then takes a rifle to a drive-in movie where he snipes at members of the audience through a hole in the screen. Clearly this story plays on the intertwining of fiction and reality that plays such a key role in the hyperreality of a media-saturated postindustrial world. For example, the idea of flying a jet plane into very tall buildings in New York resonates very strongly with Hollywood action movies. It would appear that the constantly increasing technological amplification of imagination that is mass media is outstripping rational control of that apparatus.

The basis of Starr's Bunny Lake system is the Bunny Lake plan, which charts the complex interrelations between the individual elements in form of a pattern. On three horizontal displays a pictorial history is outlined in the manner of a cryptic puzzle

Also within this system the Starr works with a mixture of styles and media. the ultimate foundation of which is the comic strip. Confronted with the flood of images the viewer can decode the puzzle-like 'media landscape' with the help of the encircled the reference fields and data lines. The lower image plane is introduced by a block of four with film sequences from the Preminger film. Clips from both films are the source from which the artist sketches her central fantastic panorama picture from which the Bunny Lake system expands in all directions. A distant, hilly landscape that serves as the location for Bogdanovich's " Reseda Drive-In

Apart from some early examples like the dramatic five minute video work *Crying* (1993), Georgina Starr's works tend to involve a multimedia synthesis of the arts, whose



Georgina Starr filmed unwittingly filmed herself bursting into tears during a difficult phase in a project she was working on. The question she poses with her video installation *Crying* is whether the action remains genuine or whether it has been translated into artifice. The location of the video in a gallery and the fact that it is an endlessly repeating loop seriously problematize its authenticity.



elements are systematically interlaced together with interrelationships with her previous work. Starr mixes expressive forms and reality levels (from film and television) with her personal life creating a baroque image-world so replete with personal references that it defeats viewers' attempts to make sense of it.

Petra Schröck notes that a sceptical analysis of her identity plays a role in many of Starr's works, for instance by swapping identities with other London artists (Schröck ??). Schröck also observes that the cinematic myth of the missing Bunny Lake provides Starr with an allegory for the search for identity characteristic of modernity-postmodernity. And one can add that the strategy Starr deploys in *Bunny Lake* is not simply one of attack but also of co-option. Starr immerses herself in fantasy which is the principal substance of marketing. She even takes on the role of merchandiser. But all of her actions are synthetic. She lacks the punchline of all marketing which is the demand that we part with our money. We only have to give her our attention. Those wealthier than ourselves: collectors or museums will buy the work.

Starr's baroque enfolding of attack upon and collusion with the mediatised world is akin to the frenzied struggle of one who discovers they are in a prison from which there is no escape. Her obsessive systematising of the fantastic fabric she has woven presents us with yet another layer of self-frustration.

CHATEAUSHATO

*Irving Norman*



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## ARTSY EDITORIAL

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# ‘War and Peace’ Imagined in Vivid Narratives by Social Surrealist Irving Norman

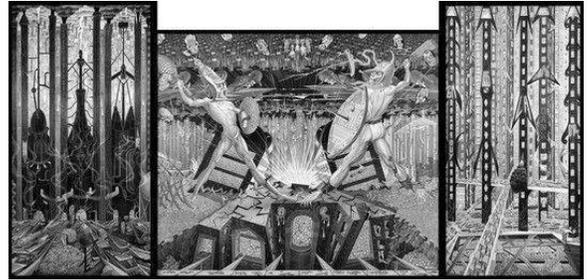


ARTSY EDITORIAL

2 DAYS AGO

A Polish émigré who survived World War I and later volunteered as a machine gunner in the Spanish Civil War, [Irving Norman](#) studied at the Art Students League of New York during the 1940s. While there, he was exposed to American social surrealists including James Guy and O. Louis Guglielmi, and many of their left-leaning counterparts from Europe (including André Breton), who were fleeing due to the onset of a second world war. Norman was a political radical from the very beginning. His otherworldly figurative works are inspired by the intensity and expressionism of earlier masters like [Matthias Grünewald](#), [Hieronymus Bosch](#), and [Jan Brueghel the Elder](#). His commitment to narrative genre, unequivocally mobilized to deliver scathing social critique by representing the dark side of modern life, was unfashionable during the era that gave rise to American [Abstract Expressionism](#), and furthermore, was executed vividly enough to earn the artist and his wife FBI surveillance for two decades. This September, the late Norman is featured in [“Irving Norman: War & Peace, Monumental Paintings, 1969–1986”](#) at [Michael Rosenfeld Gallery](#) in Chelsea.

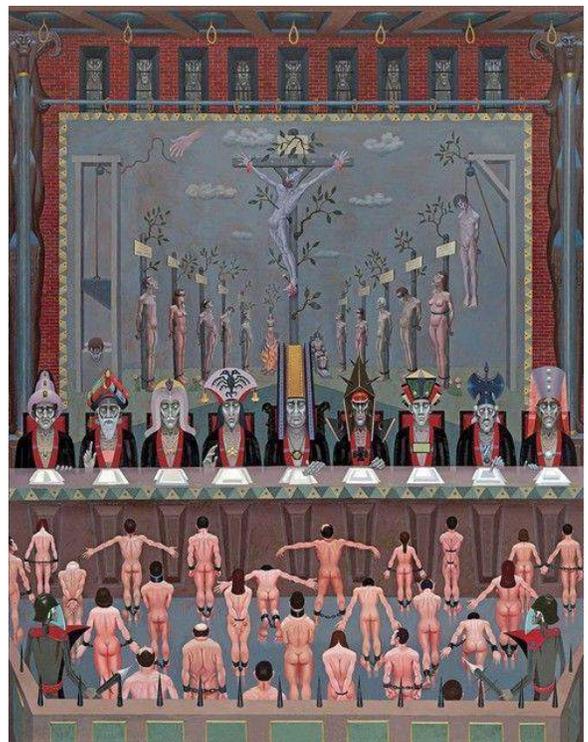
Of his work, Norman [has said](#): “We are faced with so much that is unknown, so many unanswered questions ... It’s human nature to look for answers, to investigate, but in developing answers, we create illusions. I try to go beyond illusions, to tell the truth. I go deep, I go high, I go wide.” This sentiment at the root of his passionate vision still resonates today.



Irving Norman

*War and Peace*, 1965

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery



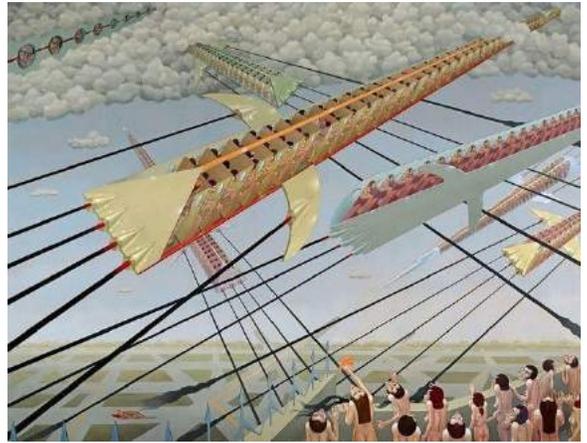
Irving Norman

*Supreme Justice*, 1974

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery

The exhibition takes its title from the show's centerpiece, the epic triptych drawing *War and Peace* (1965), rendered in graphite on illustration board. Its main panel depicts two bare-chested, colossal warriors confronting each other in battle as the concrete foundations of the surrounding civilization crumble beneath their feet. This stark drawing—anti-heroic in its ambitious vision and refined detail—establishes those themes central to his later production, including the horrors of war, exploitation of the masses, the dehumanizing effect of the urban environment, and the unfortunate consequences of technology, visualized through a symbolic lexicon of naked humanoid figures, prison cell windows, skulls, and throngs of the suffering caged in towering skyscrapers and other confined spaces. Still other richly colored canvases on view reflect—forebodingly, yet brilliantly—on the objectivity of jurisprudence (*Supreme Justice*, 1974), the perceived security of industrial technology (*Airport*, 1972), and the authority of institutions (*Monumental*, 1969), by framing unwieldy moral questions in hauntingly human terms.

*“Irving Norman: War & Peace, Monumental Paintings, 1969–1986”* is on view at Michael Rosenfeld Gallery, New York, Sept. 6th–Oct. 25th, 2014.



Irving Norman  
*Airport*, 1972  
Michael Rosenfeld Gallery



Irving Norman  
*Monumental*, 1969  
Michael Rosenfeld Gallery

## War & Peace

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery opens its 25<sup>th</sup> season with the monumental and socially charged paintings of American surrealist Irving Norman

**September 6-October 25**

**Michael Rosenfeld Gallery**

100 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue @ 19<sup>th</sup> Street

New York, NY 10011

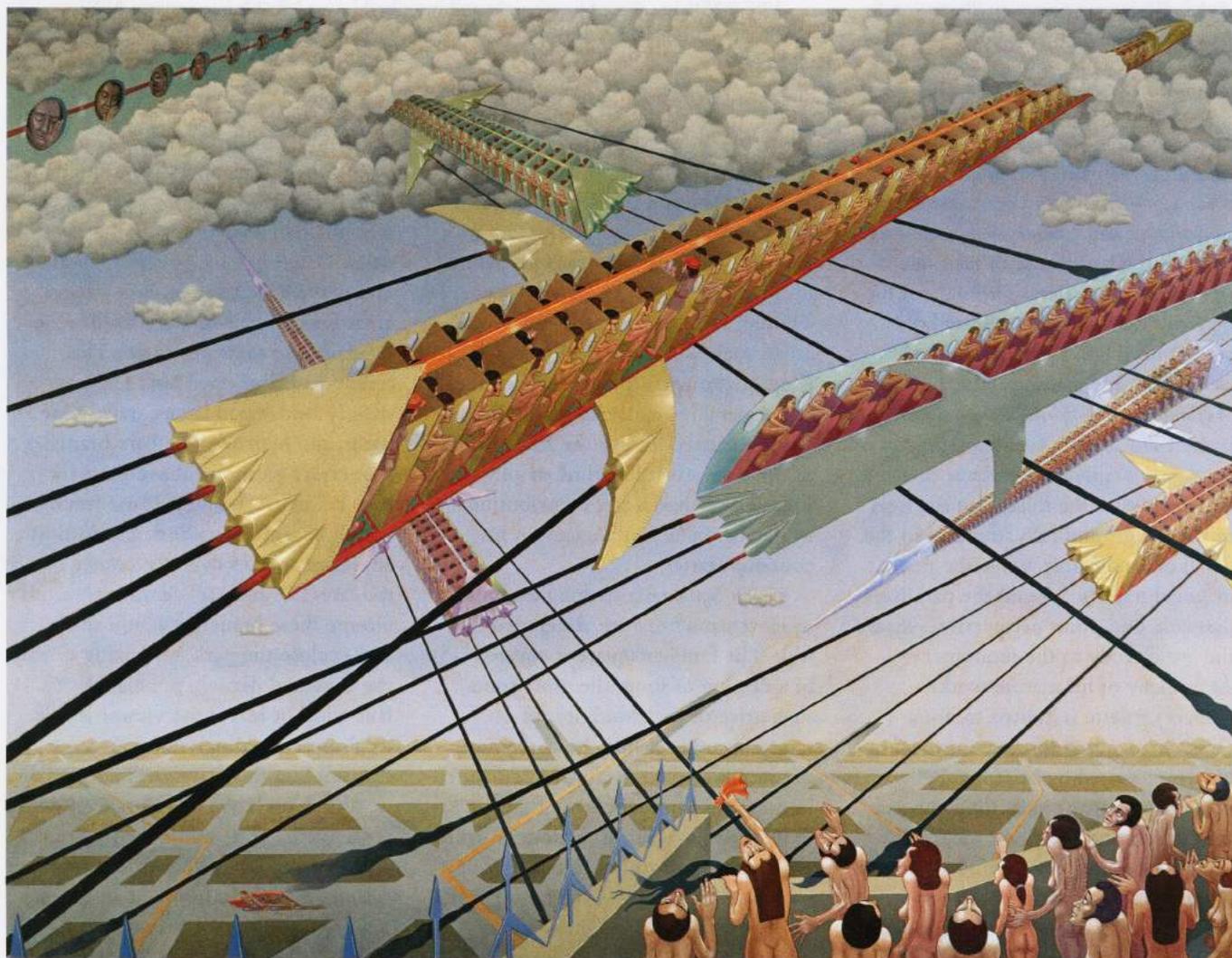
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www.michaelrosenfeldart.com

Michael Rosenfeld Gallery in New York City opens its 25<sup>th</sup> season with *Irving Norman: War & Peace, Monumental Paintings, 1969-1986*. This is the gallery's second solo exhibition for Irving Norman (1906-1989), a Bay Area artist known for his carefully

detailed representational imagery and strong social messages.

Norman immigrated to the United States in 1923, living first in New York's Lower East Side and then moving to Los Angeles. After surviving time served in the Spanish Civil War, Norman returned to



Irving Norman (1906-1989), *Airport*, 1972. Oil on canvas, 92 x 119¼ in., signed. Courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC, New York, NY.



Irving Norman (1906-1989), *Officer's Club*, 1986. Oil on canvas, 73 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 89 $\frac{3}{8}$  in. Courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC, New York, NY.



Irving Norman (1906-1989), *The Academy*, 1975-76. Oil on canvas, 110 x 90 in., signed. Courtesy Michael Rosenfeld Gallery LLC, New York, NY.

California in 1939, where he began to express through drawing and painting the atrocities he had witnessed during the war. He then moved to San Francisco and enrolled in classes at the California School of Fine Arts and by 1942 had his first solo exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Art. He also took classes in New York with Reginald Marsh at the Art Students League before settling permanently near Half Moon Bay.

The gallery notes, "Norman's experience as a Polish-Jewish immigrant helped to shape his understanding of American society, and he often seemed to observe life in the United States with the shrewd and detached eye of an outsider. Over the course of his long career, Norman became best known for his highly detailed paintings, which offered powerful critiques of inhumanity and social injustice. Norman believed that by pointing out the cruelty, economic oppression, racism, and brutality enacted by both individuals and governments, viewers of his work might be moved to change society or at least to consider their own role in larger systems of power."

Norman's choice to buck popular artistic trends, paired with 20 years of surveillance by the FBI because of his youthful political affiliations, attributes to the fact that his work today remains relatively unknown. And while many of his epic-scale paintings render at times the horrific conditions of urban American life, there is an underlying sense of hope in his work.

In a letter dated January 30, 1989, Norman wrote, "I have always believed in the human capacity to persevere and overcome the most incredible circumstances."

There will be an opening reception for the show September 6 from 5 to 7 p.m. with approximately 15 to 18 major paintings on view, including *Monumental*, 1969; *Airport*, 1972; *Supreme Justice*, 1974; *The Academy*, 1975-76; *Officer's Club*, 1986; and *To Be Remembered*, 1974. The exhibition hangs through October 25 and will be accompanied by an exhibition catalog with a contribution by Graham Nash. ■

CHATEAUSHATO

*Jacqueline de Jong*

## Potatoes

The humble potato, which she grows in her own vegetable garden in the Bourbonnais area of France, had waited some time to be turned into a work of art.

In fact, it turns up in a natural form in a series of paintings made after Malevich in 2001, as the hair of the farmer's wife ("Potato Hair"). This in turn gave rise to the painted dialogue ("Harvest") with the pioneering Russian artist.

In 2003 she contributed the installation "Aardappeltaal" (Potato Language) to an exhibition by Jennifer Tee at the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven.

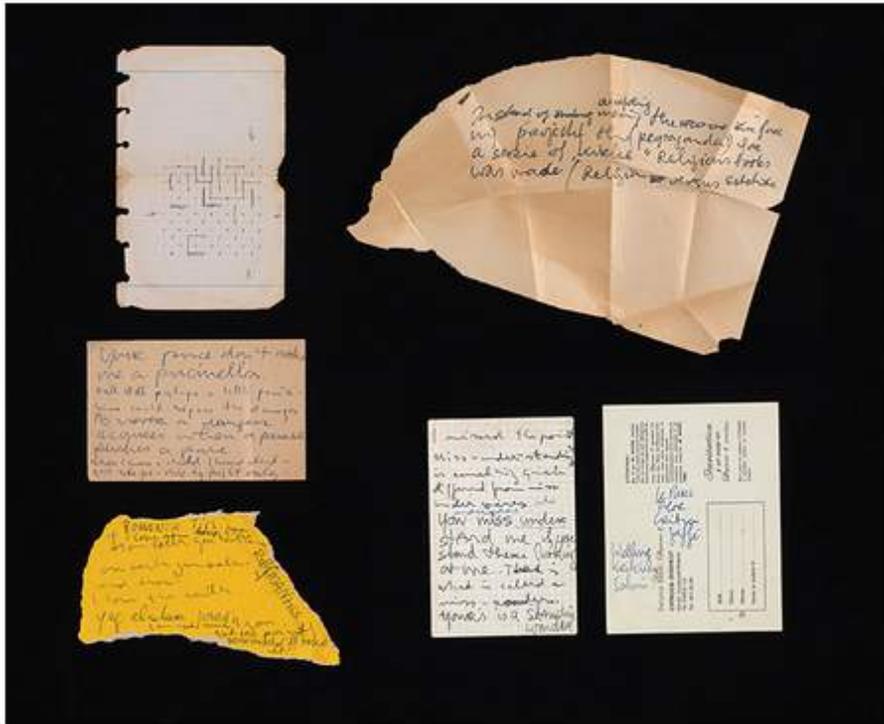
In 2006-2007 Jacqueline de Jong was invited to take part in the Biennale di Ceramica dell'arte contemporanea in Albisola by curator Roberto Orth. Together with German artist Jonathan Meese she worked in this known Italian centre for ceramics to produce works for the home and garden of Danish artist Asger Jorn (1914-1973). De Jong produced the installation "Baked Potatoes" as a surrounding for the garden pond. Meese made ceramic objects for the home and bath house.

Her most recent work involving potatoes is the "Pommes de Jong" series, in which potatoes and their shoots have been dried slowly over a period of two years and submerged in a bath of gold.

JANUARY 2016

## MISSIVE GIVING

Greil Marcus on Asger Jorn and Jacqueline de Jong



Six notes between Asger Jorn and Jacqueline de Jong, 1962–69.

*The Case of the Ascetic Satyr: Snapshots from Eternity*, by Asger Jorn and Jacqueline de Jong, with texts by Axel Heil, Karen Kurczynski, Marc Lenot, Roberto Ohrt, and Kevin Repp. New York: JdJ/D.A.P., 2015. 2 volumes, 56 pages, 1 folder, 48 ephemera items.

**EVEN THE FORMAL HEADING ABOVE** will give you no sense of this book. The definition of a title, never mind the neat totality suggested by an elegant case and a cover painting, won't help solve this case—all punning inevitable. Better to start in the middle, blank, with a fragment, a piece of pinkish-gray paper scavenged from a hotel, an office, a desk drawer, covered in a half-drunken scrawl:

my body is over the ocean

bring back my body to me.

The physical source of love.

laugueovillage

extremely.

the level of love is V love.

in love and out love

loveleveled life is laugh.

beauty is the end of love.

only an ugly can be beautyfull.

an ugly con con-tain beauty.

canned beauty en conserve

[The page is flipped over and the hand keeps writing:]

conserve beauty in cans.

---

only the con serve beauty

---

je ne suis pas con  
je ne suis pas beauty

[Along the side of the page: EROSENTRIC]

---

tu aime, donc tu est con.

Descarteé

---

Je t'aime, donc je suis con.

---

Je suis re-connaisate.

---

Je suis un con naisseur confirmeé

---

confesseur en confiture. confit

---

Je t'aime  
I wonder dont j'aime  
I wonder donc j'aime

Even though this is all written by the Danish painter Asger Jorn (1914–1973), it is a dialogue between him and his lover and collaborator Jacqueline de Jong, the Dutch painter born in 1939. They came together in 1959; their affair lasted ten years. Starting in 1962, mostly in Paris, mostly in English, but here and there in French, Danish, Dutch, and German, they fooled around with words.

Look at the passage again. Jorn is talking to de Jong, and he is talking to himself. He is letting the words take him one to the other, by sound and cognate, pun and the dance of modern language Lewis Carroll caught in three famous lines ("When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all.") Humpty Dumpty is the shadow of the Gestapo here, locking up words like political prisoners; Jorn is Alice, realizing any word might have as many meanings as the number of words in the language he is using.

What turns up may be commonplace, in the wind of the moment (Jorn was writing sometime in the early or mid-1960s; in 1961, the Beatles made their first record, "My Bonnie"; "The only beauty's ugly, man," Bob Dylan wrote in 1963 in liner notes to *Joan Baez in Concert, Part 2*), banal, irritating, puerile, the tiresomeness of the artist who thinks everything he says must mean something profound. But it's not ego that's writing, it's rhythm. As he goes on, Jorn is more and more attuned to what the words want, one word asking for the next, the lines piling up with a momentum of their own, so that the physical source of writing is as much the author as anyone with a name, and, in moments, as with "conserve beauty in cans. / only the con serve beauty," words begin to break up, and the fragments really do mean so many things, with *con* in English meaning both "swindle" and "against," in French "prick," "cunt," "asshole." For a moment the ego disappears in the flux of words: Words write you.

Jorn was a founder of the avant-garde combine Cobra in 1948, the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus in 1953, and the Situationist International in 1957, and with Guy Debord produced the stunning collage book *Fin de Copenhague* (1957) and Debord's all-quotation *Mémoires* (1959). De Jong joined the Situationists in 1960 and soon became a central member. She and Jorn left in 1962, when the group turned against artmaking; de Jong began publishing the *Situationist Times*, a hugely ambitious compendium of aesthetic affinities, while Jorn continued to collaborate with Debord under another name. This is boilerplate, but not quite irrelevant to what's happening in *The Case of the Ascetic Satyr*. The book is a true realization of Situationist ideas about play; the shifting, momentary utopia of the free field; and the replacement of capitalism with potlatch: the replacement of commercial exchange with the exchange of gifts, be they

goods, acts, letters, essays, ideas, or conversation, with the motor of the matter that each return gift must outshine the gift that prompted it. It was an aesthetic economy of challenge and dare.

I say the book, but *The Case of the Ascetic Satyr* is a book torn up before it ever became one. In 1962 de Jong produced a set of blazing black-and-white woodcuts in which lines of force danced on the page—if the first work made you think of tree branches, by the last, bodies were beginning to emerge. Jorn wanted them published, but with writing to bring out the sexual explosion in the pieces. So he began to write, and de Jong began to write, sometimes with one or the other interrupting or completing a sentence or a sequence—writing on pieces of paper (often carefully torn to look like detritus, lost notes from nowhere, something picked up on the street by a passerby who read it and then dropped it back on the pavement), restaurant stationery, hotel notepads, business cards, gallery announcements. With few exceptions (lines on an envelope sent to de Jong on September 28, 1967: "I am discovering that I am recovering after having covered a cover girl"), they aren't dated. Forty-eight of these scraps have been reproduced in exquisite facsimile and are placed, loose, in a folder that contains de Jong's woodcuts on the first and last bound pages. I have no idea if they are arranged in the same order in every copy, but you might as well toss everything into the air and read a different book every time.

Jorn called the project an "erotic novel." As he and de Jong broke up before it was finished—and it would never have been finished—it wasn't published. But far more than any conventional memoir or roman à clef, the flurry and hurry of the fragments, framed by the formal presence of de Jong's woodcuts, catch the real mood, the ambience, of a love affair: the way it is, spinning from desire into loss, fury into abasement, everything heightened, everything new (*After so long! you say to yourself, has it really been two years, four, six, nine?*), both everyday life and a trance.

It was two people passing notes back and forth in class, with the class the affair itself.

Why do  
you always pick up  
the pink parts of the painting

de Jong writes, with Jorn answering on the same torn piece of paper,

Because my pick is pink  
Show me  
Shall I brush your painting  
Yes

"I will light my candle in your synagogue," Jorn says to the Jewish de Jong, just after scribbling, in hard, Flair pen lettering, on a gallery card dated December 1966, "I want to fuck you. I do not want to get fucked. I want to be loved. First i fuck you and so I will know if I love you," the *you* a vertical line with a slight hook and the rest of the word a line with a blip, decipherable only from the context. "I missed the point," Jorn says on the back of another gallery card. "Miss-under-standing's is something quite different from miss under wares who undergoes." "You miss under stand me," de Jong cuts in on the page, "if you stand there looking at me," exactly what she should say with him dithering on like that. But they go back and forth in a way that's both as ludic as Jorn's phrasing and as plain as de Jong's. "That is what is called a miss-wonder," Jorn comes in, completing de Jong's line. "Yours is a standing Wonder," de Jong finishes the page. "I am not sure you got the point!" Jorn writes on a little piece of torn yellow paper. "NEVER MIND I'll take it!" de Jong shouts back. They flip the paper over to its gray side and take off: "You asked for it," Jorn writes, in what could be a Crazy Kat speech balloon: "Yourself! No—It not it." "Hit—that's It?" de Jong snaps back. "You! Is my whole Holy to you?" "I think we understand each other," Jorn writes pleasantly, setting up a shoot-out. "I make the Point and you the holy hole," he says. "Gangster-holster!"

Despite Jorn's "*vivre sa mort et mourir sa vie*" in pencil under other lines in ink on a small piece of note paper ("Do you smoke," de Jong answers on the other side), there is no death in these pages. There is no killing rage. There's a lovely feeling of suspension, less a sense that the story taking shape could go anywhere than that it doesn't need to take a shape at all. "It was a game, it was play," de Jong said in the fall of 2015 in New York, running her hands over the book with pleasure. "It was a potlatch."

*Greil Marcus is a contributing editor of Artforum.*

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**Jacqueline de Jong**

*unauthorized interview*

"Situationists are self-declared!"

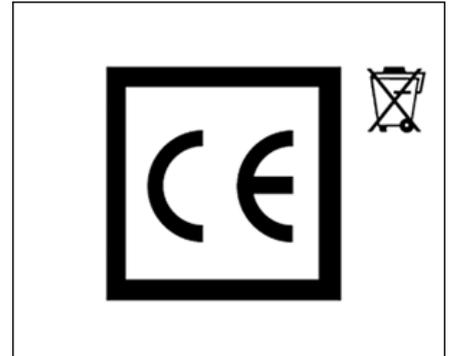
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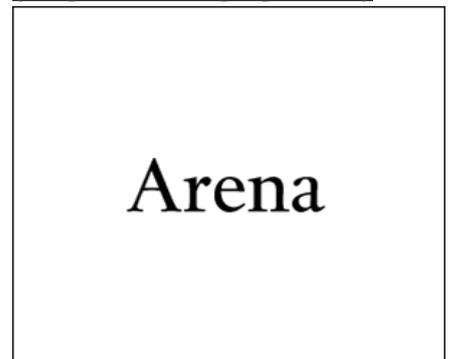
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**Born into a family of art collectors, Jacqueline de Jong's life**

has been one of constant engagement with the arts. A core member of the Situationist International at the age of 20 de Jong was the publisher of The Situationist Times- one of the only Situationist publications to give equal balance to art and text. Throughout this, de Jong has enjoyed a prolific career as a painter and printmaker, consistently showing her provocative works 2-3 times a year. With a facsimile edition of The Situationist Times coming out in 2013 by Boo Hooray, and her latest series "Pommes de Jong" Jacqueline continues to be as creatively present in her day-to-day as she was 50 years ago.

When I was reading about you I realized there were some parallels to my grandmother's background. She was also the daughter of Jewish industrialists who had an interest in art.

Your grandmother? What age is your grandmother?

I think she's in her 70's.

And where is she from?

She's from Vienna. Her family owned Anker Brot. They fled the nazis to Australia. How long after the war did it take for your father to restart his factory? A short time, but it was after this very long hiding. It was a very amazing hiding place. They had 100 Jews hiding there from 1942 up to 1945. Imagine, 100 people. It must have been an enormous organization. My father was the longest hidden person there, more than a year in the same place. It was run by two women, a mother and daughter named Buchter Schotte.

And you were in Switzerland?

My mother was Swiss before she married my Dutch father; she fled with Max van Dam and me to Switzerland. We got caught near the Swiss border and were taken to a police office in France. There was a German officer who told my mother and Max to go to a hotel and come back the next day. The hotel was run by resistance people who helped us. My mother went off with me and tried to get across the Swiss border. There we were sent back by the Swiss customs. Then we were taken across the border by a passer-by, and taken to the Swiss Salvation Army. Max did not join. He returned to the police station, got deported and was murdered in 1944 in Sobibor.

# KARMA

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Jacqueline de Jong, 1963

**How old were you?**

Three years old. After the liberation in 1945 my father came to see us in Switzerland. A year later he restarted the factory.

**Had they been art collectors before the war, as well?**

They started collecting after the war around 1948.

**Why do you think they collected art?**

There is no real 'why'! My mother had a friend in Paris, she knew some artists, and they went to see these artists. It was quite shortly after the war, they were young and wanted to start a new way of living. My father was passionate about architecture, he had wished to be an architect, but as his father had this factory he had to learn to make stockings. From architecture I think he got interested in art.

**Was he an intellectual?** Definitely. He had become so during his hiding period—he had read a lot about art, philosophy and literature. He had nothing else to do but read. He hid together with Abraham Pais, a physicist, who later became the assistant of Robert Oppenheimer at Princeton and died as a professor at Rockefeller. They exchanged and discussed books and during their hiding period.

**This led to an interest in art?**

I believe that he found that art might be essential in his life.

**They had no interest in more historic art?**

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One could hardly afford historical art!

**Where did they buy paintings?**

Just after the war in Amsterdam and Paris. There were two or three galleries in Amsterdam they bought from. Later on they bought at galleries in Paris. In the early 50s my father went to New York for business and got involved in the New York Art scene. He bought paintings by Willem de Kooning and Franz Kline and got very friendly with both of them. He was actually the first private collector in Holland to have a painting by De Kooning at that time.



"Rencontre accidentale," from the Accidental Paintings, 51 x 76"

**Were there a lot of artists around when you were growing up?**

Yes, which meant that I didn't want to become an artist! I wanted to become an actress. I wished to be something other than the most obvious profession. It was a little too evident that I would be an artist. I had been painting; people said I had talent. You know how things go.

**Why did you move to Paris?**

I left school because I was fed up with the last year at school. Actually, I did like school rather much, but thought it took too long. Of course my parents disagreed—they insisted that I perfect first of all my foreign languages, so in 1957 I went to Paris for my French and had to work at Christian Dior for half a year. Then in January 1958, I went to London to study theater and English at the Guildhall school of Drama..

**This was also the year 1958 that you met Asger Jorn?**

Yes for the first time, that is. My father had already bought 3 or 4 paintings from Asger Jorn. On my 19th birthday, he came to Paris to fetch a painting he had bought at Jorn's gallery Rive Gauche.

**What was your first impression?**

My first impression was a rather bizarre one as my father and Jorn went to a bar and got bloody drunk! Instead of doing something nice on my birthday, they drank. However, I considered Jorn a rather nice person because he was very sweet to his children and I was impressed by the fact that he was so generous. I had until then, not known Jorn as a person, but I had a great admiration for his paintings and writings.

**You started seeing him a year later.**

I would like to talk about Jorn's legacy... you might one day see a Danish documentary about him.

**Why did you move back to Amsterdam?**

In 1958, I went back to Amsterdam for the exam at the Drama school in Holland and I failed. What did I do? At first I had these jobs in book shops in Amsterdam selling bibles, chess books, and literature.

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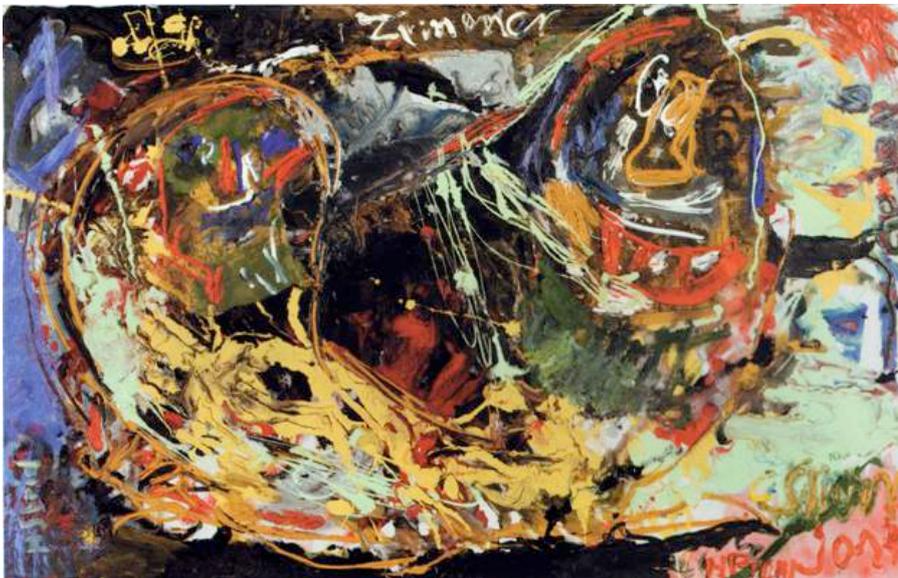
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Sans Titre, 1961 by Guy Debord, Jacqueline de Jong, Asger Jorn, Jørgen Nash, Hardy Strid, Jeppesen Victor Martin, Hp Zimmer, Heimrad Prem, Helmut Sturm

**How did you end up at the Stedelijk Museum?**

I saw this announcement that the Stedelijk Museum was looking for a scientific assistant, which of course I was not at all. The director, Willem Sandberg, was a friend of my father's, and I asked if I could be employed for half a day and study art history the other half. He said yes. I got, not only a job, but the best schooling there.

**Were you painting at that point?**

I was being taught a little bit by Theo Wolvecamp and there was Asger Jorn. Sandberg thought that I had to become a graphic artist. When I tried to go to the Royal Academy, I was rejected. They sent back my works unopened. The reason was that I worked at the Stedelijk and the Stedelijk was an avant-garde politically left-wing institution. . The director of the academy, being a somewhat Catholic right wing person, didn't want students with my ideas.

**So you started painting on your own.**

I went to work with artists in their studios.

**You were a studio assistant?**

Yes. I cleaned their brushes. These painters were all about 10 years older. They were another generation, but they helped me. It was inspiring.

**How did you find out about Gruppe Spur?**

I saw their magazine. Asger Jorn showed it to me. I thought, this is what I would like to do something very expressive and rebellious, inspired by Max Beckman and the German Expressionists. They were my age, my generation, doing the things I hoped to be able to realize too, one day.

**Was this when you started painting?**

I started painting in 1960.

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Situationists coming out from the Sailors' Society in London, 4th Conference of the Situationist International. (from l. to r.): Attila Kotányi, Hans-Peter Zimmer, Heimrad Prem, Asger Jorn (covered), Jørgen Nash (front), Maurice Wyckaert, Guy Debord, Helmut Sturm, and Jacqueline de Jong.

**How did you end up involved with the International Situationists?**

I wanted to change the world, society, things. The after-war-world was not yet global, it was not yet turned over by a real revolt. It was a desire to be able to find people with whom you could make a change in society and perhaps even the world. I had my education. I wanted to get involved in these sorts of movements, but I didn't know of any movements until then.

**So you met them through Asger Jorn?**

Not only, also through Constant Nieuwenhuys in Amsterdam. Jorn was a person who always wanted to be involved in movements and collaborate and do stimulating things with both younger and older people. Becoming a member of the International Situationist movement was of great importance to me.

**How many people were involved at that point?**

6?

Wow.

Why do you say "wow" ????

**It sounds very small. How long after meeting them were you a participant?**

I was involved from the moment I met up with them and Guy Debord in Amsterdam early 1960.

**What was it like?**

The beginning was exciting. I was, when I came to Paris at the end of 1960 frequently together with Guy Debord and Michèle Bernstein.

**Did you get along with Guy Debord? Did you ever fight?**

There was no fighting. Disagreements, of course. Discussions but mainly friendship and loyalty.

**You were also navigating a territory that was largely male. Did you consider yourself a feminist?**

Absolutely not. To me it was completely natural.

**What was your day to day involvement in the Situationists?**

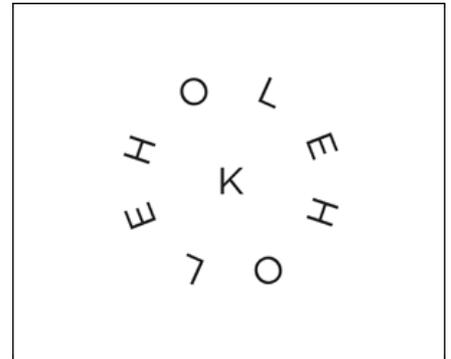
It did not exist.

**What were some of the key events you were involved in?**

The congresses in London, Brussels, Göteborg...



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Gotenberg Collage by Jacqueline de Jong, From left to right: Jean Martin, Jacqueline de Jong, Jorg Nash, Dieter Kunzelmann, Guy Debord 1960

**Why did you side with Gruppe Spur and leave the Situationists?** Solidarity. They had this trial against them in Germany. Remember, this was not so long after the war. German law was partly the same as during the Second World War. Their trial took place in Munich where they were accused of blasphemy and pornography in their magazine. Just imagine being imprisoned because you are rebellious and have published a magazine. And at that very same moment they were thrown out of an avant-garde movement, the International Situationists. I considered that absolutely unacceptable. I would have felt very embarrassed if I hadn't been loyal and supportive to Gruppe Spur.

**Then you started a magazine called The Situationist Times. I've always thought it was very ballsy that you took such aggressive ownership of that title after your falling out.**

I had announced the necessity of an English magazine with the same name during a general meeting of the International Situationist in 1960, which had been agreed upon. It was the right moment to start The Situationist Times. Of course I was furious over their disloyal and tyrannical attitude. I felt very disappointed and sad and considered their attitude unacceptable and ridiculous. It also meant that all the ideas we were working on were rejected by some (three) Situationists. So I wrote my article in the first issue of the Situationist Times "The Practise of Political Detournement". Why do three members of a movement decide for the others and overrule them? What determines a Situationist? It's not a movement where you get a badge or you have a have blood test order to belong. Situationists are self-declared!

**What were the goals of the magazine?**

If you read No. 5, you can see that there are no 'goals'. No. Just a free magazine.

**Were there other magazines at the time that inspired you?** Yes, for example a magazine made with silkscreens called KUY, the magazine of the College Pataphysique in Paris, several American magazines like the Fluxus publications, the Zero in Germany, the Daily Bull in Belgium. The magazine I thought was the best ever was made in 1927-12 issues in one year! I10. It was made by Arthur Lehning who was an anarchist in the 20's. He made this incredibly well-done international, intercultural magazine with art in all disciplines—fine arts, architecture, poetry, music, science, history... I wanted to make an effort to realize something like this. Jorn, of course, who had made a great and inspiring book *La Roue de la Fortune* in 1957, agreed. The Situationist International had very few images and was mostly text. Spur's magazine had lots of images, and little text. I wanted to have both



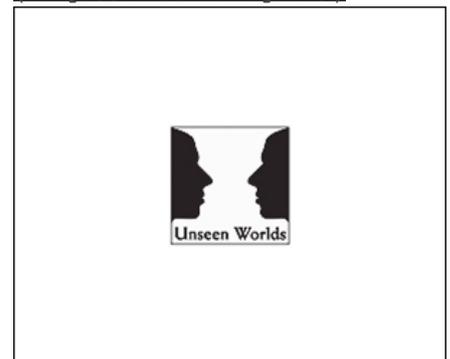
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and make a mixture.

1 2 (</articles/jacqueline-de-jong/2>) [Continue](#)  
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From [Sex Magazine #2 Winter 2012 \(/issues/sex-magazine-2-winter-2012\)](#)

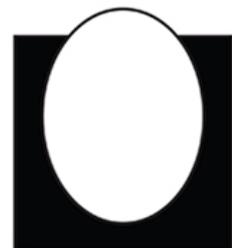
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## Jacqueline de Jong

"Situationists are self-declared!"

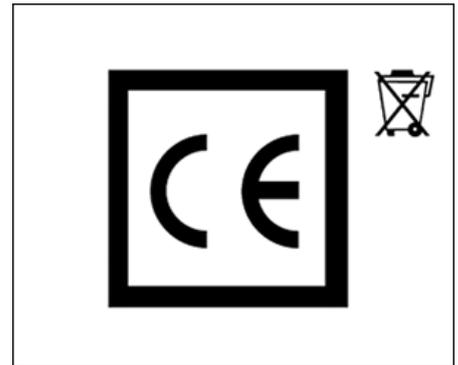
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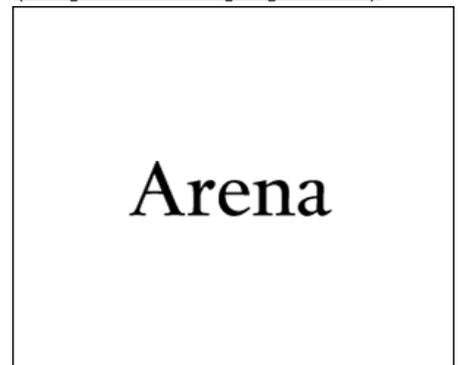
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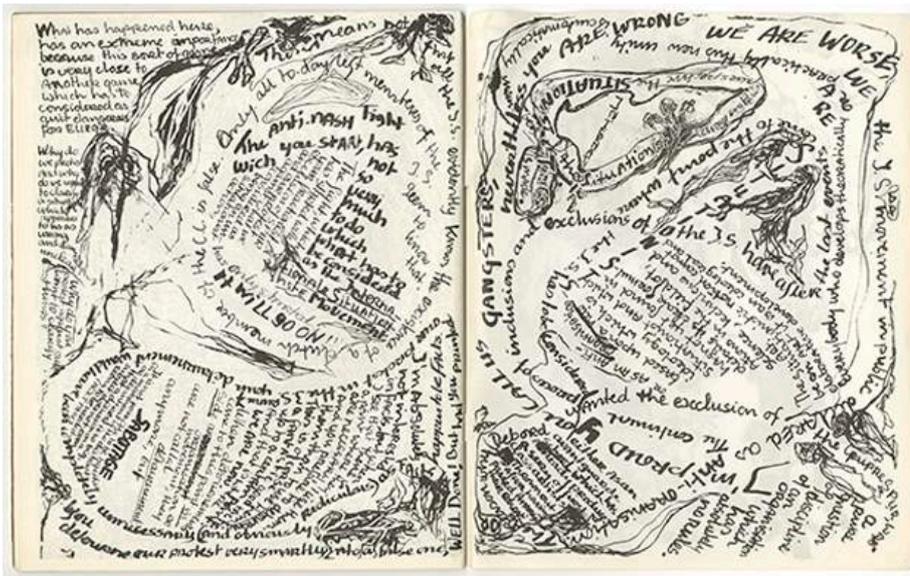
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"Critique on the Political Practise of Detournement", Jacqueline de Jong, Situationist Times #1, 1962

### How long did it take for you to put together the first issue?

Not very long. I was no expert in making magazines—that is why I was so happy and lucky that Noël Arnoud agreed to be my co-editor for the first two issues. To print the issues I went from Paris to Holland to the printer and we made it as cheaply as possible. The first issue was published in May 1962. In August of that year the second issue appeared.

### How did you distribute them?

There were several international bookshops. I used the distributors of the International Situationist. It was rather easy because I knew most of the bookshops in Paris. And there was Gruppe Spur's network.

### You had international distribution from the first issue?

We made a thousand copies of the first issue, which quickly sold out.

### How did you see how the magazine changed and grew during its five-year run?

Well, the subjects changed and consequently so did the content. Jorn's topological research and his book *La Roue de la Fortune* of 1957 helped me to realize numbers 3, 4, 5 of *The Situationist Times*.

**What was his book?**

In a way it was the start of his later (1962-1967) books on 10,000 Years of Comparative Vandalism. In *La Roue de la Fortune* there were many images on the pages, and he wrote theoretical texts. The images didn't always correspond with the text, and I liked that very much. Juxtaposing and putting items side by side without any theory behind it. I found that very important. Just let people look at it and have their own imagination with no interfering theories and dogmas.



Jacqueline de Jong, Libraire La Hune, 1967

**Throughout this entire time you were doing the magazine, you were also painting?**

Of course. I had to earn money.

**Painting was an easier way to make money?**

No, that was sheer luck. In 1962, I had my first exhibitions in galleries in Rotterdam and in Denmark—the last one sold out of my works.

**Twenty-three is really young for an artist to be showing, even today.**

Might be. The second gallery gave me a contract for three years. So I could sort of afford to make the magazine.

**It sounds like a nice balance.**

It was. In the mornings I worked on *The Situationist Times*, then started painting, and finally at the end of the afternoon or around 7:00 pm I had a beer in the café on the corner and dinner later on. The beer meant that I saw people. That was my day. You have got to be disciplined.

**Why did you stop doing the magazine?**

Because the money was gone. With no. 6, I hoped, that I was going to make money for no. 7, the wheel issue, which was never realized. The distributor kept all the money. I had to pay the bookbinder, which I couldn't afford. It was at the end of 1969, my relationship with Jorn started deteriorating because I fell in love with someone else, which meant that I didn't want to ask Jorn for financial support.

**Your early paintings have these really distinct titles: Night Animals, Dooms Day, Playboy, Why Don't We do it Like That, Suicide Carnavalesque. Mr. Homme attacking Mr. Mutant...**

Titles are important to me. You know John Chamberlain? Have you ever looked at his titles? No one does.



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**No, are they good?**

Look at them and you'll understand what I mean. Jorn always had fantastic titles. I think titles are of great importance to a work of art. It's not interpretation, but it gives a "surplus".



Quasimodo & King Kong, Scree Print, 1981

**Your earliest paintings are really surprising in how much sex and violence is suggested.**

It's still like that. It's this mixture of violence and eroticism. There's no explanation, I think it's a very important aspect in art. You can see it by so many artists: Bacon, Goya and so on...

**They're really confrontational.**

That's probably why I was not accepted into the last century's feminist exhibitions. Because there are too many cocks? Feminists threw a rock through a gallery window in Amsterdam because of my work in the window.

**What was the piece they didn't like?**

Quasi Modo and Queen Kong. A big Silkscreen.

**Your early work drew a lot of comparison to Asger Jorn. On an aesthetic level I see it, but your paintings are still distinctly your own.**

Evidently. He was also my "tutor". I tell students that drawing can be a signature—it's like signing, like writing. It's impor-

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tant that you get this sort of thing under your skin. You discover your voice by constantly working. I think that's essential. And through working you get your own style, your own idiom.

**I read that you did two to three shows a year between 1968 or 1969 and 1980. That's prolific.**

Not only the years you mention. Look at my CV, that's my usual work and exhibition rhythm. I don't believe in waiting for inspiration. It just comes out of the material, out of necessity.

**How long have you been doing the Pommes de Jong?**

I was asked to make jewelry for a great French collector of artists' jewelry. I thought I could make something out of potatoes. I had been using potatoes in some museum shows. I phoned several jewelers: "Could you please make my potatoes into gold." They all said no, but one said "I'll find a way. I'll help you." That's how it started.

**Why potatoes?**

They get so mysterious when they are waiting to be eaten, and grow sprouts and become dry. They are sort of little sculptures with all their sprouts and interesting shapes. And each is different. Unique.

**You grow them yourself.**

Yes, that's part of the pleasure.



Pomme de Jong, 2011

[1 \(/articles/jacqueline-de-jong/1\)](#) [2](#)

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CHATEAUSHATO

*Triple Candie*



## TRIPLE CANDIE: UNAUTHORIZED PRODUCTIONS

BY *Deidre Stein Greben* POSTED 09/01/07 12:00 AM

At Triple Candie, Peter Nesbett and Shelly Bancroft focus on the fictitious and the impractical.

Across from a corner store selling live poultry on Harlem's West 126th Street, two murals are painted in arched recesses in the battered brick facade of a former brewery. One reads, "The Lord Jesus is coming perhaps today are you ready." The other advertises the Société Anonyme in the center of a colorful burst of painted rays. Because they blend into their surroundings, passersby are unlikely to realize that the murals are temporary signs produced by the nonprofit gallery Triple Candie. But they are not art. Nor is the show of some 1,200 images culled from the gallery's recently acquired permanent collection, mounted in the cavernous space behind Triple Candie's garage-door entrance.



*Museo de Reproducciones Fotográficas (detail), 2007.*  
COURTESY TRIPLE CANDIE, NEW YORK

"Museo de Reproducciones Fotográficas," an all-embracing, densely packed installation of photos of artworks, extends Triple Candie's recent practice of programming shows devoid of actual artwork.

“We’re serious about this—it’s not a publicity stunt,” says Peter Nesbett, who opened Triple Candie with Shelly Bancroft, his wife and the gallery’s codirector, in December 2001. With a roster of recent exhibitions too impractical for mainstream venues—an unauthorized survey of the work of the elusive David Hammons, consisting of Xeroxes taped to wood panels; approximate replicas of Cady Noland’s installations; a display of unspectacular everyday objects; and art made by a fictitious Post-Minimalist—Nesbett and Bancroft are reinventing the alternative space at a time when nonprofit galleries and their conventional counterparts are becoming more and more alike.

In the process, they are unsettling our ideas about art and the apparatus keeping it afloat. Their shows—featuring content they refer to as “ephemera” that is promptly destroyed afterward—question our fetishization of the art object and the myth of the artist as “autonomous, self-defining, and morally superior,” not to mention the concepts of originality, ownership, value, and influence. Although Triple Candie’s exhibitions are often interpreted as conceptual art projects, Bancroft insists that “we don’t define ourselves as artists. We are making shows based on history, drawing on our skills as curators. Our stance is educational.”

While the art lately on view at Triple Candie may not be the real thing, the couple’s curatorial expertise is indisputable. For “Museo de Reproducciones Fotográficas,” which was inspired by 19th-century museums of casts and copies, they assigned the 1,200 photos accession numbers that correspond to those in a 70-page inventory list. The checklist for the Noland show offers precise descriptions of how the knockoffs were fabricated. And for the posthumous retrospective of the fictitious Lester Hayes, Nesbett and Bancroft cooked up a detailed exhibition history and biography that includes a stint as a studio assistant for Richard Tuttle and a show at Richard Feigen. The couple met in 1991 at the University of Washington, Seattle, while pursuing master’s degrees in postwar and contemporary art. As an undergraduate, Bancroft, 44, studied studio art at Michigan State University, near her hometown of Lansing, but concluded that she was not interested in a career as a painter. “I realized painting was really hard,” she says. “I didn’t get the results I wanted, but I wanted to read about it, understand it.” As part of her search, she started a radio show while attending graduate school. “It felt like curating, talking to artists about their work, encouraging them to make the visual verbal,” she says. After completing her master’s, she moved to Boston and worked briefly as director of the cooperative space Boston Sculptors Gallery and then as exhibitions curator at the Boston Center for the Arts, where she organized shows featuring both emerging and established artists and launched a site-specific, large-scale installation program. While she drew on local talent, Bancroft says, “I very quickly thought how important it was to go to New York and bring artists back.” Nesbett had joined her in Boston, and the two (by then married) would regularly rent a van, drive to Manhattan, and pick up the work themselves.

Nesbett, who grew up in Connecticut and graduated from Cornell University, worked at Christie's and then as an art handler at New York's Gagosian Gallery. "Going to Seattle was the best thing for me," he says. "I was so dazzled by New York. I was wrestling with the idealistic notion of art and my relationship to it. I needed to get out of that environment." In Seattle he worked at Francine Seders Gallery while completing his master's degree. There he met the late Jacob Lawrence, who taught at the University of Washington, and was inspired to found the Jacob Lawrence Catalogue Raisonné Project, devoted to the documentation and promotion of the painter's work.

Drawn to New York—Nesbett with plans to establish the Jacob Lawrence Institute, a mentoring program for young artists, and Bancroft in search of a nonprofit curatorial position—the couple landed in Harlem, on West 144th Street, across from a now-closed bodega that eventually gave its name (and yellow and red sign) to the future alternative art space. "Triple' means the best," points out the 42-year-old Nesbett. "And who doesn't like candy?"

The institute didn't work out. Instead the two decided that a run-down storage facility on West 126th Street, in a small artists' enclave north of Morningside Heights, would make a perfect outpost for their own nonprofit endeavor. They conceived of the space as a satellite for downtown venues, showing, for instance, new sculpture by Kiki Smith lent by PaceWildenstein. "In the beginning, we didn't use the word 'alternative,' except when referring to our location," says Bancroft. But they soon changed their business model and began curating their own exhibitions, quickly transitioning from the typical nonprofit group shows to solo shows dedicated to such artists as Polly Apfelbaum, Sanford Biggers, and Mark Lewis.

Increasingly, however, they became interested in challenging the system, and that led to their current programming, which eschews art entirely. "We weren't powerful enough," Bancroft explains. "The galleries didn't want to share, and the artists wanted more money."

The curators, who also own *Art on Paper* magazine, don't foresee abandoning their commitment to showing nonart. Triple Candie's next project, scheduled for late fall, is a re-creation of the 1969 Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition "Harlem on My Mind," notorious for (among other things) its substitution of secondary material for actual work by African American artists. Nesbett and Bancroft are consulting with Thomas Hoving, who was director of the Met at the time of the show.

Are Triple Candie's re-creations and reproductions sincere homage or, as one critic put it, a slap in the face? The nonprofit space poses more questions than it answers. But the directors have made one thing certain. By challenging our assumptions about art and its relationship to both its audience and the market, Nesbett and Bancroft have brought the alternative space back to the fringe.

## History

Triple Candie received its business license on September 12, 2001 -- the day after the attacks on the World Trade Center. It opened its doors to the public on December 15, 2001, joining Christian Hayes' The Project as one of the few art spaces in Harlem and becoming the first new, large-scale space in the neighborhood since the Studio Museum in Harlem was founded in 1969. From the outside, its building -- a former brewery, with few windows - - looked abandoned. Visitors entered through a grey garage door, ascended a short flight of wooden stairs, and emerged into a brightly lit, 5,000 sq. ft. gallery with soaring cast-iron columns, weathered brick walls, and an expansive, off-white, painted concrete floor. For many, the interior was reminiscent of Soho alternative spaces of the 1970s.

### Presenting Not Producing, 2001-2002

Triple Candie was conceived -- before 9/11 -- as a presenting rather than a producing venue. The idea was that the gallery would curate none of the exhibitions it presented. Instead, it would invite outside organizations (primarily nonprofits, but occasionally commercial galleries) to produce or curate exhibitions for its facility, which Triple Candie would then promote and staff, and around which it would organize educational programs. The post-9/11 recession made such a strategy untenable. In fact, a month before Triple Candie was to open with a performance-installation by Josiah McElheny, the Public Art Fund, which was producing it, canceled the show citing economic distress. Triple Candie opened nonetheless, with two projects by outside organizations -- The Jacob Lawrence Foundation hired Franklin Sirmans to curate an exhibition and Pace Wildenstein Gallery organized a show by Kiki Smith. The strategy was abandoned after the second exhibition.

### The Early Inter-generational Group Shows, 2002-2004

For the next two years, Triple Candie curated and presented group exhibitions inspired by its Harlem location that mixed the work of emerging and established artists. This ran counter to the prevailing tendency among nonprofit spaces of the time to promote the work of young artists. These exhibitions included "Sugar & Cream: Large, Contemporary Wall Hangings" (with work by Trenton Doyle Hancock, Jim Hodges, Rosie Le Tompkins, and others), "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (After Paul Laurence Dunbar)" (with videos by Vito Acconci, Chris Marker, and Sara Sun), "The Reality of Things" (Robert Gober, Daniel Guzman, Sherrie Levine, Shinique Smith, et al), and "Living Units" (Ricco Gatson, Jessica Stockholder, Andrea Zittel, others). Though many of these shows required collaboration with commercial galleries and other nonprofits, Triple Candie began maintaining an arm's length relationship to its colleagues. For instance, although Triple Candie was a founding member of NADA (the New Art Dealers Alliance) in 2002 it withdrew its membership within a year, after finding the organization's non-competitive and non-commercial rhetoric to be disingenuous.

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## Archive

### Solo Projects, 2004-2005

As Triple Candie saw other New York-based, nonprofit "alternative" spaces (Artists Space, White Columns) abandon their age-old focus on emerging artists, it changed its programming model again. For the next two years, the gallery focused almost exclusively on producing ambitious solo projects -- often New York-debuts. These included projects with Sanford Biggers, Taylor Davis, Rashawn Griffin, David Humphrey, Brian Jungen, Mark Lewis, Rodney McMillian, Halsey Rodman, Lara Schnitger, Kiki Smith, Jennifer Stillwell, Heeseop Yoon, and others. It also presented a fifteen-year survey of the work of the influential Cal Arts professor Charles Gaines, for which it commissioned a major new, large-scale sculpture. When it could, Triple Candie provided the artists with generous stipends (up to \$10,000), covered their travel and accommodations, secured fabrication assistants, and offered to close the gallery for as much as five weeks so that artists could develop their exhibitions on site, as if the gallery were their studios.

### Slide Shows, 2002-2005

During its first four years, Triple Candie also curated an annual series of artist talks (collectively titled "Slide Shows" and presented as exhibitions) that explored the various forms of rhetoric artists use to describe their practices. Participating artists included Laylah Ali, Tony Feher, Jon Kessler, Dana Schutz, James Siena, Amy Sillman, Phoebe Washburn, Kehinde Wiley, and others.

### The Anonymous Artist Projects, 2004-2005

In the summer of 2004, and again in 2005, Triple Candie produced *The Anonymous Artist Project I* and *The Anonymous Project II*. For each, Triple Candie invited a well known New York artist to create a new work/installation that differed substantially from her/his other work, with the understanding that both the artist and Triple Candie would rigorously guard the artist's identity in perpetuity. For artists, the shows provided a risk-free opportunity to experiment, on a large-scale, in a beautiful space. For visitors, they prompted an understandable frustration; many felt unable to judge the work without information about the artists' backgrounds, though most assumed that the artists were of African descent, given the gallery's location. Visiting the second project, Philippe Vergne, then still at the Walker Art Center, noted: "Either the artist is highly accomplished or completely naive. I can't tell." Since then, other organizations have curated anonymous artist projects -- e.g. Vienna Succession (2007) -- but in most, if not all, cases the condition of artistic anonymity has been breached at the end of the show. The two artists who did these projects at Triple Candie remain, to this day, unknown.

### Art-less Exhibitions, late 2005 - 2008

By late 2005, with the art market booming and the art fair circuit expanding, Triple Candie was having an increasingly difficult time competing with commercial galleries and major museums for artists' time and attention. Moreover, younger artists and those previously marginalized, were now gaining access to galleries and no longer saw the benefits of exhibiting in nonprofit spaces. The dire nature of the situation became most evident for Triple Candie when it set out to organize a major exhibition of new art made

in Harlem. Artists with neighborhood affiliations, such as Ellen Gallagher, Julie Mehretu, Dana Schutz, and Nari Ward were unable to keep up with market demand and could, at best, make available only minor works. Triple Candie canceled plans for the show.

Responding to its institutional limitations (i.e. a relative lack of power, money, and social connections) and inability to lure artists simply with its space and stipends, Triple Candie developed a program model that wasn't dependent on artists, their galleries, or their collectors, and returned to the organization a curatorial freedom that had been lost. It began producing exhibitions about art without the involvement of artists, and rarely containing art.

The first of these shows was a comprehensive retrospective on the art of David Hammons, realized with photocopies and computer print-outs, and without the artist's approval ([David Hammons: The Unauthorized Retrospective](#)). Though the exhibition was described as "arrogant" by a critic who visited it on assignment and then refused to write about it (David Cohen, *The New York Observer*), it received positive reviews in the *New York Times*, and just about every art magazine. David Hammons himself never came to see it in person. On the morning of the first day of the show, however, upon opening the gallery, staff members found a the board for a clown bean-bag toss leaning against the front door. When later asked by the *New York Times* for a response to the exhibition, Hammons replied by email "no comment."

Triple Candie's second art-less show was conceived at the same time as the Hammons exhibition but realized several months later. The first survey ever of Cady Noland's art, it consisted of thirteen sculptural surrogates built by Triple Candie and four artists using incomplete information gleaned from the internet ([Cady Noland Approximately: Sculptures and Editions, 1984-2000](#)). All of the objects were therefore wrong, and the show as a whole presented a plausible caricature of an oeuvre. The press response contrasted sharply with that of the Hammons show. Jerry Saltz, then writing for the *Village Voice*, said that Cady Noland should hire a lawyer and "get medieval" on Triple Candie. Others wrote that the show raised interesting questions but told viewers nothing about Cady Noland's art. The artist herself never saw the exhibition.

For the next two and a half years, Triple Candie continued to make exhibitions in this vein. Many were retrospectives or surveys -- such as *Lester Hayes: Selected Work, 1962-1975*, which focused on the work of a bi-racial post-minimalist artist (the artist was fictional), and *Limelight: Gallery and Coffeehouse, 1954-1961*, which focused on New York's first commercial photography-only gallery. Other shows focused the misrepresentation of art by art museums -- such as [Undoing the Ongoing Bastardization of the Migration of the Negro by Jacob Lawrence](#) -- or misrepresentation in general -- [Flip Viola and the Blurs \(Misrepresenting an artwork can create a non-art experience of comparable value\)](#). Still others presented objects scrounged from Harlem neighbors or the streets outside the gallery -- [Unwitting Accomplices: 36 Objects Thrown in Violent Incidents](#) and *The Social History of Objects (After Spoerri and Nabokov)*.

### Nine-Month Displacement, 2008-2009

In December 2007, Triple Candie's landlord began extensive renovations of its building, beginning with the replacement of its facade. When noise, construction dust, and flooding made it impossible to program, Triple Candie exercised a 3-month escape clause in its newly negotiated five-year lease. Its parting show was an exhibition titled *Thank You For Coming: Triple Candie, 2001-2008*, a survey of the gallery's first seven years, realized entirely through surrogates, reproductions, recreations, artifacts, and props. *The New York Times* cited Triple Candie's closing as one of the most significant "art" events of the year, along with the Philippe de Montebello's retirement, and the explosion of the Chinese contemporary art market.

### Fulton Street Vitrine

Beginning in July 2014, Triple Candie began curating small anonymous displays in a glass vitrine that it built and installed in an overgrown alley in the downtown section of a major U.S. city. For the time being, Triple Candie is not disclosing the location of the vitrine, which is known only to those in the immediate neighborhood. The shows are not pre-announced or promoted, and the contents are changed roughly every three weeks.

For more information on Triple Candie visit [www.triplecandie.org](http://www.triplecandie.org)

CHATEAUSHATO

*BANK*

# ArtReview

## BANK: The Banquet Years

MOT International, 10 January - 16 February

By JJ Charlesworth

The art group BANK (principally comprising John Russell, Simon Bedwell, Milly Thompson and Andrew Williamson, with Dave Burrows and Dinos Demosthenous early on) was one of the best things in the London art scene of the 1990s. This spiky, sociable, politically sharp and extremely funny band of artists flared brightly throughout the middle of that decade, until divisions and departures reduced the group to a duo (Bedwell and Thompson), who finally called it a day in 2003. A decade later, MOT International's revisiting of BANK's work is timely, given the group's significant intervention in the strange concatenation of zero-budget adversity and YBA commercial hubris that was 1990s London. BANK's mix of punk humour, leftist political critique, art theory pisstaking, populist vulgarity and avant-gardist bloody-mindedness reminds the current, supersleek, professionalised artworld of a moment when artists invented their own cultural context and had the guts to mock the conditions of an official system they saw as driven by liberal, careerist hypocrites.

Most of BANK's work, cheaply made and hard to store, ended up in the skip. What is left are a few works and an archive of the publications and print ephemera, here presented in a long row of display cases, alongside a framed selection of their notorious Fax-Baks, some paintings and a sculpture from their 1998 show *Stop shortchanging us*. Popular culture is for idiots. We believe in ART, and a few other works. The vitrines lay out the chronology of BANK's critical reworking of the DIY ethos of the time, as the group invented ever more parodic, histrionic and utopian versions of the artworld's usual functioning: BANK made artworks, ran their own gallery and curated their own shows – but significantly the group saw these activities as interchangeable, opposed to the professional division of labour that handed power to curators and gallerists. BANK-curated shows were artworks as well as containing the artworks of others (such as the seminal *Zombie Golf!*, where visitors rubbed shoulders with mannequin zombies, staring blankly at the artworks); BANK's gallery (BANKspace, renamed DOG, then Gallerie Poo Poo) messed with the institutional form of the gallery space, eventually staging a gallery-within-a-gallery programme, punningly titled *White3*. Everything the 'proper' artworld shied away from – vulgarity, sensuality, bad taste, idealism, embarrassing sincerity and talking openly about power – BANK threw back in its face.

Most vivid here are the samples of their own tabloid-style newspaper – The BANK – and the Fax-Baks, press releases sent to them from prestigious galleries to which the group added critical annotations, mostly disparaging, which would then be ‘faxed back’ (with marks out of ten) to bewildered and usually incensed gallerists. And The BANK, with its lurid ‘shock’ headlines about artworld personalities and politics (‘Galleries “all owned by rich people” shock!’, ‘Ad Man you’re a bad man! – Saatchi slammed by young girl’, ‘ICA complete pile of bollocks shocker!’) turned the artworld’s insiderish gossip into satirical backchat. This was relational aesthetics and institutional critique without the intellectual cuteness and politically correct selfregard. Everybody hated it. Today, power has arguably drained even further away from artists, in an artworld now run on a global scale by cultural bureaucrats, monster gallerists and auteur curators. And while it’s good that groups like BANK are feted, bought into museum collections and given their due, it’s time artists took inspiration from their example: because in the end, there’s art, and artists, and the rest are just parasites.

This article was first published in the April 2013 issue.

# Fanzine

## JOHN RUSSELL Q & A

GEAN MORENO

27.09.07

Caught in one of those unforgiving Chicago winters that not only chap the skin but ruin things deep inside, I find sanctuary and solace in the only place we natives of tropical latitudes usually do in such inclement conditions—a seedy, out-of-the-way bar. I intend to review, over a beer or two, some notes for a Q and A I just conducted, but things quickly go south.

The entertainment tonight comes courtesy of two loud burly union guys, working on their tenth or eleventh Blue Ribbon and future strategies for the labor movement. One, the traditionalist, calls for a re-fattening of the ranks, mobilizing a new generation, returning to the pre-Hoffa halcyon days. The other, the visionary, uninterested in old solutions, talks of the need for new flexible models for the union to match the flexibility of multinationals. Spewing some of the best blue-collar theorizing I'd ever heard (or, at least, that's how it seemed to me, also working on my tenth or eleventh Blue Ribbon), there is a mixture of eagerness and exasperation in his tone. He's willing to wipe the slate clean and try to start from scratch, because really what's the point of working with broken equipment.

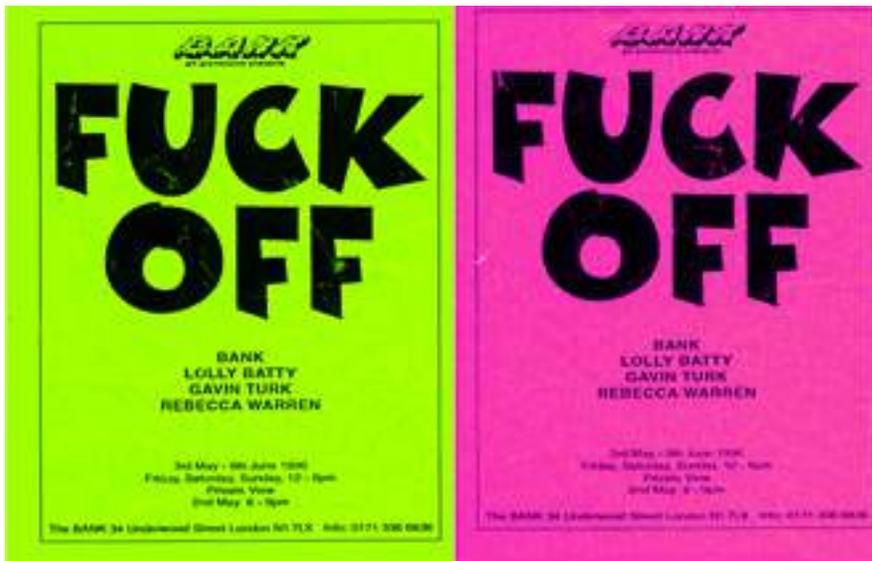
John Russell, the subject of my Q and A, is kind of like that second burly union guy, beer-breath and all. He's sick of doing things the same way. He wants to know what else art can do. We know that it can serve as a critical tool to probe some of the unseemly aspects that have accompanied the entrenchment of capitalist structures; that it's a great tool of rhetorical opposition, even if it has never really been all that good at furthering real, practical changes. But art has served this function for so long that these days it seems as if it is merely putting on a show that it can perform, Wayne Newton-like, more out of habit than out of desire or disgust.



Without putting on the clown suit of willful ignorance, Russell wants to know what is it that paintings, artists' books, exhibitions and things of the sort can be, if we forget all the uses that they have been put to and the standardized narratives that accompany them. For instance, what happens when 19th century French historical painting is recast as a back-lit digital billboard with sexy automata and shiny sports cars? Or, when a Pollock is rethought as an ornamental meatscape? Or, when Clement Greenberg with his unrealizable idea of pure flatness is recast as the first conceptual artist? What happens, in short, when we return the art object (or anything, for that matter) to some ideal virtual state and apply the pressures that will shape it from unexpected sides and skewed angles?

In the last few years, Russell has been compiling the strange Frozen Tears anthologies, which have been brought into the world in the guise of 800-page horror paperbacks with foil and embossed covers. Although perhaps at home in the same bookshop aisle as pulp slasher novels, they may ultimately earn their place at the margins of the mainstream less for the blood-and-guts fests in them than for the weird collision of views that they manage to capture. Heavyweight conceptualists Art & Language are mixed with the sticky formalism of Dennis Cooper with the weirdness of Jeffrey Vallance and Kevin Killian and Benjamin Weissman and Trinie Dalton with inimitable dispatches from the Gulf courtesy of the tweaked worldview of Reza Negarestani with the pop darkness of any number of neo-goth young artists. And all this woven with Marx and Artaud and the all-verb torrential textual currents of Pierre Guyotat. It's less a mosaic and than a dirty coleslaw wrestling match of hefty worldviews, a jumble of active forces that somehow explains the world in its mind-tweaking multiplicity better than any prim-and-proper dissertation could.

- *Gean Moreno*



Q: Let's start at the beginning. How did BANK come together?

A: There were a few of us who went to St. Martin's art school together, and when we left we couldn't think of what to do. The Frieze exhibition happened in 1987, and that looked glamorous and exciting, unlike all previous British art. The social dimension also seemed interesting. Putting on your own exhibitions seemed like a good idea. After Simon Bedwell and I designed and sent out a load of invites for imaginary exhibitions, we decided to do a real one. We put on a show in a disused bank (hence the name) in Deptford. At that time there was

lots of empty property in London and people were squatting buildings to put on raves and art shows quite regularly. The show was organized as a party primarily. We thought we were doing what Damien Hirst and his friends were doing—but we weren't.

Q: It seems to have taken on a different vibe, however. A kind of politically incorrect politics and an artist-as-cultural-jammer ethos took over.

A: Well, yes, the impetus or trajectory of things did change. I don't know about 'cultural-jammer' though – things were not so clear or planned as that sounds. BANK's performance was based around a kind of positionality or situationality but with the direction flipped around. So, we kind of adopted a series of stances, as 'angry', 'stupid', 'clever', 'political', 'working class' and so on. And it was a lot of fun. We could also play around with a kind of knowing-

hypocrisy whereby although much of the work was seemingly overtly critical of art world structures, sometimes a cartoon version of criticality, it was also engaged self-consciously in an attempt to ingratiate itself within the art world it criticized, e.g., BANK Fax-Bak and the BANK Tabloid newspaper. It also seemed that as long as you were not concerned with immediate commercial success within the conventional commercial structures of the artworld, the performances of 'bitter hypocrite' or 'twisted loser' were at least as productive and interesting as those of 'successful artist' or 'international gallery.' And this gave you a strange kind of power – the power of visibility. We were also popular and possibly even fashionable as well for a while – as well as being losers.

By the end, I had begun to find the idea of “politically incorrect politics,” as you put it, as a limiting option. It has been played out so many times, from Kippenberger to Lucy Mckenzie – the idea that an artist maintains a 'critically' located position whereby the critical or political content (or performance) of the work is staged within the structures of which it is critical but which it relies upon for its visibility...blah blah blah...existing as a kind of critical 'not-belonging' or antagonism or disaffirmation. Unfortunately, it is difficult to see what these stagings 'do,' except to signal their presence as antagonistic or disaffirmative to a receptive but fairly limited audience for this type of art product.



Q: Although Relational Aesthetics seems to have become a sought-after target as of late, I guess I want to link it here to this idea of a political posturing that doesn't really 'do' anything to the object it is critical of. The idea of participation was at times treated as somehow ipso facto progressive or correct. It didn't matter to what end the structure for participation was serving, only that 'social relations' had replaced objects.

A: Yes, I think Relational Aesthetics is just one of the latest attempts to find a way to suggest that art might 'do' something – as art, or as art-as-politics or as anything else. Bourriaud tries to suggest the political

significance of relational aesthetics is tied to a DIY microtopian ethos based around using the institution (configured as a kind of shelter/oasis from the spectacularised conditions of the world outside) as a place where we can conduct social experiments and find new ways of 'living together,' new ideas of 'non-scripted interaction,' as he puts it. I didn't really find his ideas that useful, but I suppose I prefer them to the 'critical' backlash. For instance, Claire Bishop's dumb-arse response in October, where she refers to the clapped out ideas of radical democracy and the idea of antagonism, i.e., in democracy, conflicts are good, involving the negotiation of difference blah blah blah. Then, she goes on to use the

example of [Santiago] Sierra only to reinstate the artwork within the conventionalized contexts of critical art practice/ theory, as disaffirmative/ antagonistic/ critical etc.

I have been thinking recently that in a contemporary context artworks are continually confined (to use Robert Smithson's phrase) by their staging in relation to a binaric conception of artistic practice, split between either a critical model premised on ideas of negation, deferral and lack, or an aesthetic model based on ideas of transcendence. This configuration coordinates roughly with the distinctions drawn in the 1960s, in the reaction against formalist aesthetics. This is the (supposed) distinction between the aesthetic (for instance the formalist aesthetics championed by Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried) as visual (retinal), sensual, anti-intellectual and aristocratic (criticized as a mystified affirmation of the structures of capitalism); and the conceptual (for instance Minimalism and Conceptual art) as a form of radical criticality, intellectual and politically engaged (championed as critical of the structures of capitalism). These distinctions are replayed again and again and again. It's not a useful structure. It doesn't go anywhere. A continual restaging of 'the critical' doesn't do anything.



My idea at the moment is that we should start forgetting things. In the same sense that Deleuze asks for a philosophy that has "forgotten dialectics" (in his book on Nietzsche) as a way of escaping dialectical thought without that escape being dialectically reincorporated as dialectics. In his case, he is concerned with a way of thinking or doing that would allow difference and contradiction to remain in tension in thought and in doing. If artworks are 'confined' politically, theoretically and materially by their prefigured relationship to the structures of the institution, and if doing (as art) is prefigured and contained in the same way, is it possible we could start forgetting some things, for example forgetting politics, forgetting political art, forgetting critical art?



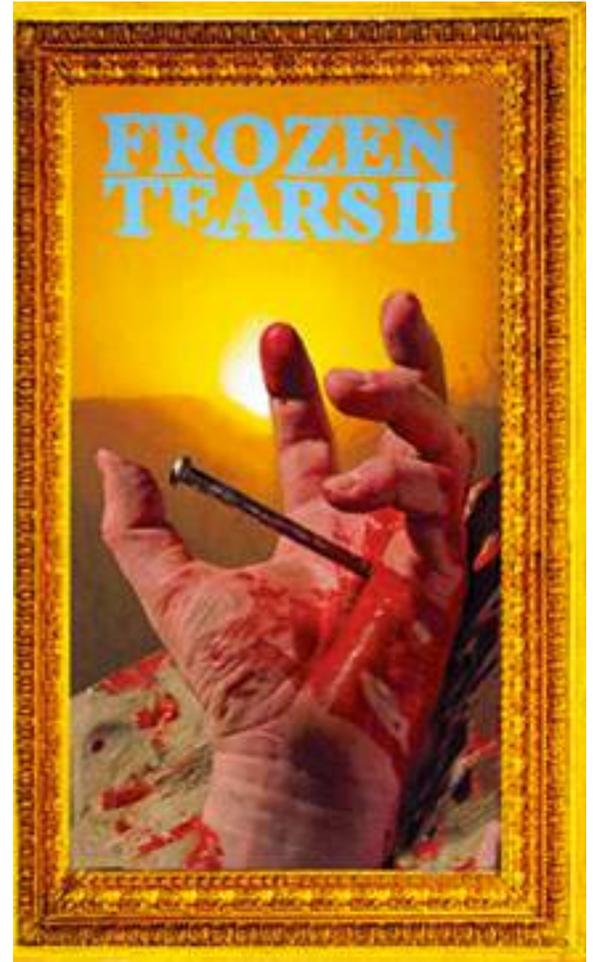
Q: With Deleuze, it's always a need to go from a tired actualization of a category back to the virtual in order to reactualize it in a fresh "format." There is a kind of 'forgetting' back to the virtual, if you like. Now, it sounds like you got to this end point with BANK and had to start forgetting how things were done. Where or how did this process of rethinking things begin?

A: Re-thinking? I'm not sure certain things can be re-thought. Like this whole discourse surrounding critical/political/function. I don't think it's a question of rethinking it. It's fucked. It's become kind of hysterical comedy/tragedy. Like that thing Andrea Fraser wrote in Artforum. She says there's no longer any

position for critique of the institution, that what we should do now is create critical institutions. And we can't get

outside the institution because its inside our heads, whilst at the same time the institution is not separate from the wider socio-economic world (that is ...err, outside our heads). What the hell was that all about? She might even be right. It's like a trauma of limits. Like I was saying earlier, an anxiety regarding boundaries and the dialectic between located and unlocated-ness—what is contained, what is excluded, what is allowed and what is censored. If an artist maintains a critically located position, the critical or political content or performance of the work is inevitably staged within the structures of which it is critical but which it relies upon for its visibility. This is a kind of critical not-belonging. However, if this type of art is pitched at a wider (mainly non-art) audience then it risks losing its art status and visibility as art and its differentiation from the (supposedly) chaos of other non-art messages. In this context, it risks losing itself within the infinity of extra-institutional social relations. In this respect, the move towards the possibility of an infinitely expanded institution leaves open problems of indeterminacy both in relation to status as art and to how this indeterminacy might operate. I think all of this stuff should get forgotten NOW.

After I left BANK the first things I did, which were a kind of reaction to this, were some performances with the artist Fabienne Audeoud. One was called 'John Russell Kills Fabienne Audeoud in the style of William Burroughs' (2001) and the other '20 Women Play the Drums Topless'. The idea with these was that they didn't mean anything. The '20 Women...' performance was based on a conversational idea for a performance (the idea was described to me ten years earlier by the artist Wayne Winner as an example of a performance that could never happen). We staged it so that the performers (the first 20 to answer an advert in a magazine) were seated on a four-tier stage and each provided with a complete drum kit (bass, snare, cymbals etc). The only instructions we provided were that the performers should move in and out of rhythm erratically for 40 minutes: apart from this they should play the drums any way they wanted. It was very loud. I thought it was interesting because it was difficult to make sense and the title did not seem to describe the performance. It was a kind of event.



This all kind of relates to something I read recently where Jerry Saltz put it very well where he wrote that theory was problematic because it always 'knew where it was coming from'. That's almost like a phrase from Deleuze. And another quotation that has remained stuck in my head was Lawrence Weiner saying that 'once his work becomes part of art history it stops being art'. This relates to the idea of meaning and what you said earlier about the virtual. Things seem most interesting when they are virtual rather than actualized. But obviously that doesn't mean they are not real. This is the case with theory. Theory is most interesting (and creative) when it's half-understood. In fact, the

problem is often that when you read theory or philosophy and finally get what the writer was trying to say, you realize how banal it was all along. Theory is much more useful at the point where it holds out a variety of half-understood possibilities – it's a kind of trippy sensation – exciting and dislocating. Smithson described the experience of watching sci-fi and horror films in similar terms as 'low budget mysticism.'

Q: Maybe this is a good place to speak of the Frozen Tears anthologies?

A: Yes, the previous Frozen Tears books adopted the format of an 800-page horror/sci-fi bestseller, including cover illustration, foil blocking, embossing, and spot varnish. That was because I liked best seller books as objects – and I like the fact that they were viscerally/violently visual. But also the format wasn't random. It pointed toward the idea of a visually excessive use of text (or 'figuralty'). In the first book I asked people to write a "visual text". I felt there was a connection between the expressionistic/cinematic/violent use of language and fiction of writers such as Stephen King, Phillip Dick, Stanislav Lem and writers from the French transgressive tradition such as Artaud, Bataille, Guyotat, etc and, in extension, the cross-over with the American beat writers (and beyond), for instance William Burroughs, Kathy Acker, and then more contemporarily Dennis Cooper and so on.

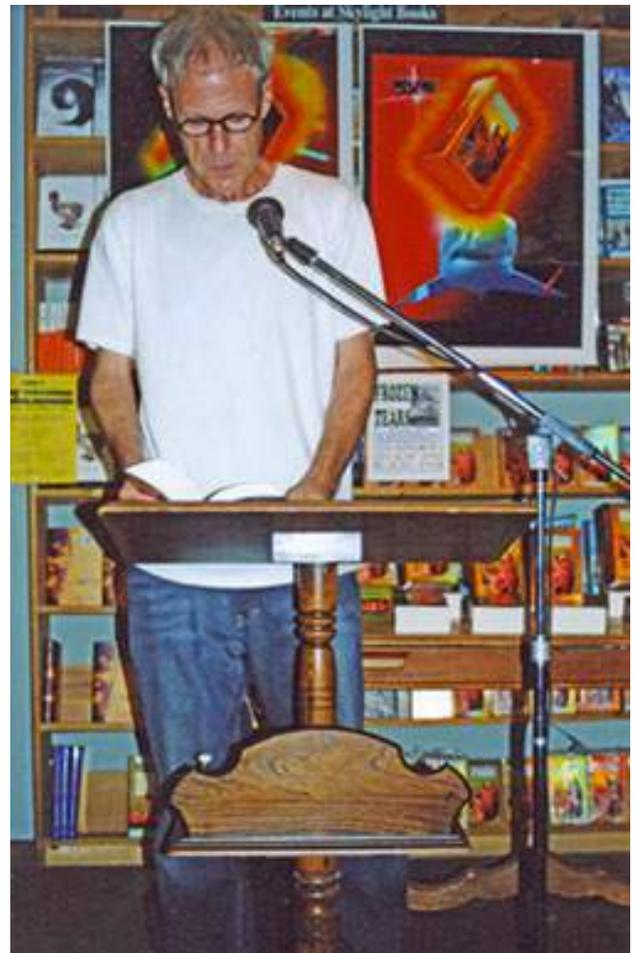
So, the idea was to stage the conflation of the visual and the textual both in relation to these ideas of figuralty and with respect to the distinction between book-as-text (text art, collection of texts) and book-as-object (art object, sculpture, commodity, found object or pretend found object). For instance, I showed the books as a pile at the Cabinet gallery like Andy Warhol's Brillo boxes. This is the idea that the object (or book), though superficially (or perhaps profoundly) visual, could only be approached, interestingly-as-a-text, by reading; which would seem to temporarily negate the point of its visual-ness as an object or art object, in line with the idea that "reading isn't the same as looking, unless it is" which was something Smithson wrote about. Put simply visitors to the gallery would be able to look at the books OR read one. In the first edition, for instance, I included two texts by Art & Language. Art & Language and Pierre Guyotat—that seems like an interesting collision.

Q: But then, the books were used as a pretext to organize exhibitions in which they weren't shown. And these were really more like events—with metal bands, hired prostitutes, live web feeds, etc.

A: Yes. I also liked the idea of Frozen Tears as a kind of brand, or virus; as a kind of speech act. The idea of performing something as a statement or speech act (or as a sort of naming) to see what reality effects it could produce. We did that a bit in BANK. Not as something that has a pretext or a plan but speculatively. I think Frozen Tears is the prophesy or curse of the infinite social as predicted in Marx.

Q. Maybe you can draw some concrete distinctions here between the Frozen Tears branding or viral model and the critical/political stagings that are no longer effective? Let's finish off by talking about the digital paintings that you are working on these days?

A: I like big paintings. In particular, French 19th century figurative painting – 'Raft of the Medusa', 'Oath of the Horatii' etc—or Jackson Pollock. I like the violence and the narrative/dramatic dimension. Pictures of people killing each other and interacting – the illocutionary force of this type of presentation. And the way this



plays off against some of those old-style formal issues like surface. At the moment, I'm interested in the way Greenberg talks about the move towards the 'purity' of flatness as painting. It's pure but it's also impossible because flatness is an abstraction – and so his idea of the purely visual is conceptual – which is exactly what he doesn't want it to be (Thierry de Duve talks about this in Kant after Duchamp). There is a drama and violence in these ideas as well. I was watching a brilliant film of Greenberg talking in the 1980s about Pollock the other day. He is drunk and ends the interview by saying "Ah, he was full of shit like all the rest of us." I've recently been producing large digital prints on canvas and vinyl of virtual Jackson Pollock-influenced paintings made out of blood and meat, and including Jesus' hands. And at the moment I'm producing 4 large (30 x 10ft) paintings on back-lit vinyl depicting a range of people standing ankle deep in an infinite ocean.



Images are:

Pg 1: Photo of John Russell

Pg 2: BANK, Invitation to 'Fuck Off' 1997. Exhibition organised by BANK. Including works by BANK, Lolly Batty, Gavin Turk, Rebecca Warren. DOG, London. 1996.

Page 3: BANK, 'Adman You're a Bad Man.' Cover, BANK Tabloid' 1997.

Page 4: John Russell, Fabienne Audéoud and Wayne Lloyd. Performance shot – Twenty women play the drums topless. South London Gallery. September 2002.

Page 5: Installation shot from 'Zombie Golf' organised by BANK.

Page 6: BANK, 'GOD' 1997.

Page 7: Frozen Tears II cover.

Page 8: Genesis P-Orridge reading at Frozen Tears III launch, NYC 2007.

Page 9: Dennis Cooper reading at Frozen Tears launch at Skylight Books, Los Angeles, CA.

Page 10: Frozen Tears II installation, Death Valley, CA.

More about Russell & Frozen Tears is at <http://www.frozentears.co.uk/>

CHATEAUSHATTO

*Head Gallery*

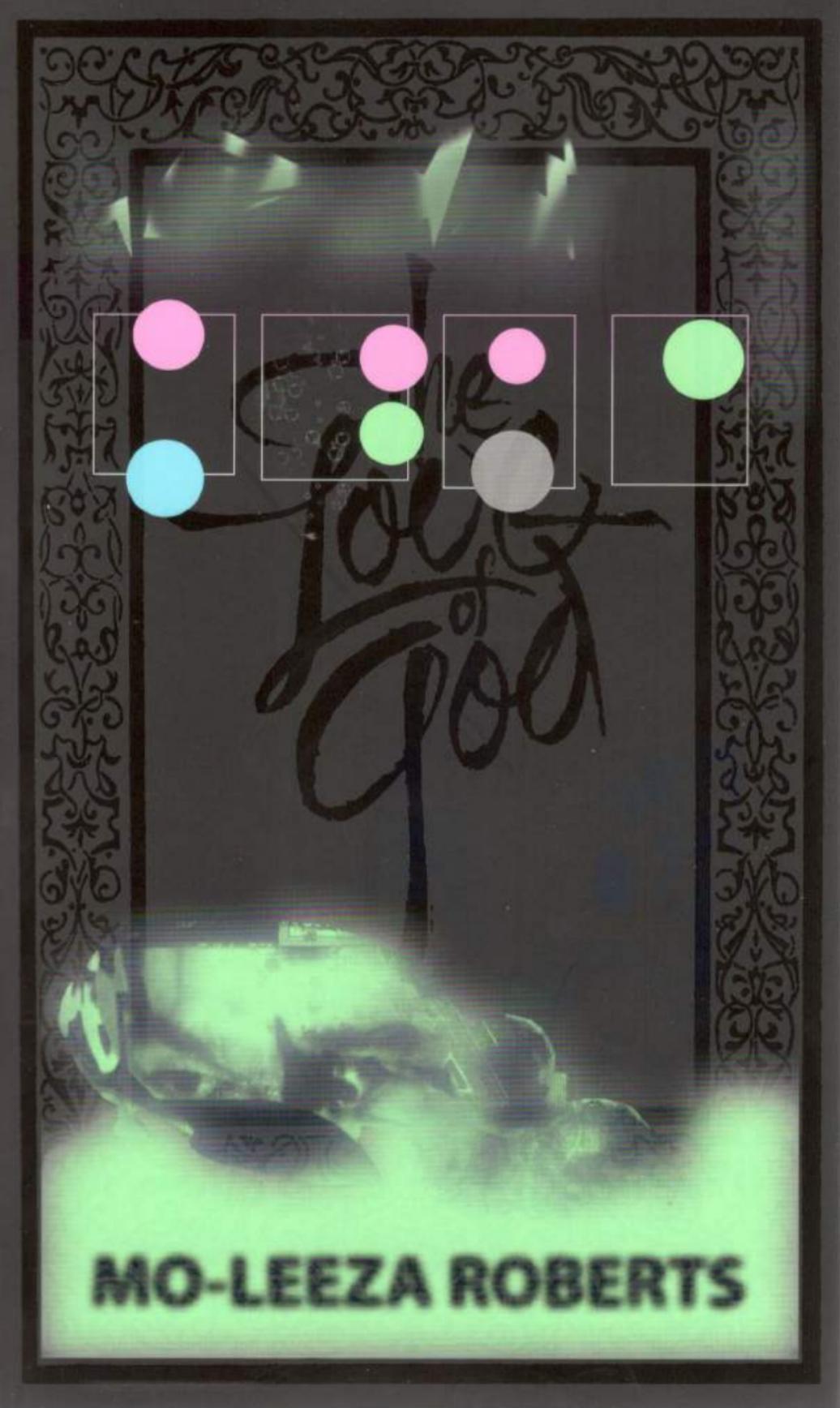
## Head Gallery Exhibitions

The Head Gallery is the most powerful gallery in post-apocalypse Nu York. Perversely, due to a complex set of circumstances, including extreme de-population and radically developed technology (which was not lost in the apocalypse), 'art' and 'the artworld' have maintained, and extended disproportionately, their position of cultural importance. Inside the gallery every month – protected from the various sub-species who roam the streets outside - strange exhibitions take place. They constantly devolve into orgies or massacres that, on occasion, turn out to be part of the artists' "interventions."

News of the activities of the Head Gallery seep back, opening a two-way porous temporal boundary, to 2013. They are transmitted via the website [www.headgallery.org](http://www.headgallery.org) as a series of e-announcements that conflate and cross-articulate the always eponymous 'artworld' of then and now – the category of 'contemporary art' remains intact as a continuous present - a passing of time counted out in exhibitions, openings and reviews, twisting in the fetishism of investment and persistence, of fame and reputation - a stake or wager on the future which underwrites the present - then as now.

In the past, Head Gallery productions have been split between a written textual element located on the head gallery website (in 2078) in the form of an expanded press release/exhibition description and sometimes a 'materialised' element installed at galleries. The two elements, text and artefact are linked (and cross-articulated) through the narrative of the Head Gallery as a spatial and temporal cross-fading, and as an oscillation (dialectic) of 'site' and 'non-site' (Smithson). In the past, this has been played out in different ways. In certain exhibitions, the exhibition and artwork exist only in the format of an online story: for instance "White Proletariat' 2009 which describes the performance of dropping an albino whale from a helicopter into the interior of a gallery. In other instances, the narrative latches on to an actualised exhibition. e.g., "Dead," 2009-10 where an exhibition of the same name was staged at Terri and Donna Gallery in Miami; "Orbitecture I and II", 2010/11 where Head Gallery curated two exhibitions online, as well as designing all the adverts for the exhibition in Frieze, Art Monthly, and Kaleidoscope, designing exhibition webpages, the invitation poster, and creating a series of artworks for the exhibition at the Grundy Museum, Blackpool and Focal Point, Southend; or at Bard/Hessel Museum of Art, NY, 2012, where Head Gallery were invited to produce an online exhibition and poster for front entrance as a response to From 199A to 199B : Liam Gillick.

In each case the performance of Head Gallery involves the morphing or mapping the virtual and fictional onto artefacts and gallery spaces.



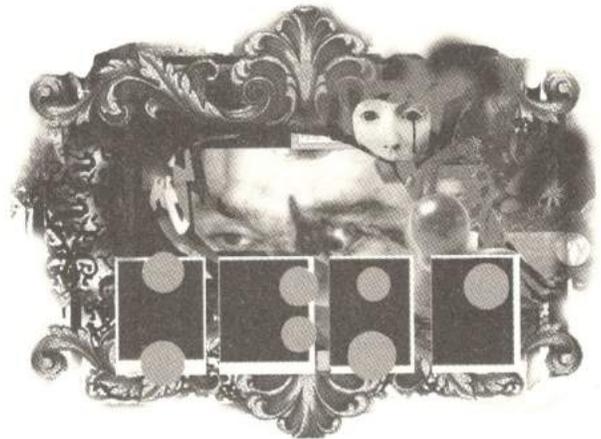
**MO-LEEZA ROBERTS**

# Head



by

Mo-Leeza Roberts



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US

## SALON: LIMITED EDITION COLLECTABLES

Art Basel Miami Beach  
1-5 November 2006

HEAD GALLERY  
Booth X-1743  
300 West 41st St  
Miami  
FL 33140  
Tel: +1 212 477 5006  
10 am - 6 pm

Head Gallery is delighted to present in their booth at Art Basel Miami Beach a high quality portfolio of contemporary limited edition artworks, crafted from the highest grade materials, and finessed as a timeless collection of quality and precision, entwining and disentwining the voluptuous cross-articulation of desire, transference and transduction of congealed labour time, these smooth surfaces, the lustrous exterior of murderous annihilation, sliding in the slippage of banal ecstasy, as the ultimate experience of bold design and stunning style, in close proximity to international calibre artists, and world-esteemed printers and fabricators, transformed and transforming as the aesthetics of recalibrated death-capital of unnamed multitudes, revolutionized as seductive critical art curios and glossy, juicy remote investment palliatives, bleeding like snakes or vines curling as a mirroring outwards of the infinite complexities of both the inward and outward facing surfaces of sensual and conceptual consumption, slipping as veins and decomposition, replayed as the banal mysticism of Capital.

'We were invited to see some of the editions and discovered some quite beautiful, high-quality prints.

By the end of our meeting, we couldn't believe we had wasted so much money there or throughout our lives buying shit art, but we couldn't help ourselves.

We cherish every piece we acquired that day.

And the herpes we picked up, too.'

- Mera and Don Rubell

## Artworks Available:

### 1. Paul Chan and Jennifer Love Hewitt

*Cocjazzler* (2096)

Archival Giclée Print, age-reducing cream

Edition of 80/ \$92,000

### 2. Andrea Fraser

*Critique in house* (2095)

Produced in collaboration with legendary

Chicago House DJ and record producer Frankie Knuckles

Vinyl (white label)

Edition of 5/ \$7,300

### 3. Adam McKeown

*Shitting out land mines II*, 2095

Marinated, infinity-etched, alumo-lithograph,  
vintage whistleball bat, promise of sterilization

Edition of 80/ \$39,000

### 4. Sean Scully

*Dribbler*, 2095

Archival Giclée print, boat motor, jetski, surfboard leash

Edition of 75/ \$777,650

### 5. Frank Stella

*Mc-protractor series*, 2094

Laser-cut aluminium and police badge

(Gift-wrapped)

Edition of 9/ \$131,000

### 6. Bjarne Melgaard

*Nazis are gay, black cock for the Pope*, 2096

Plexiglas lithograph with used switchblade,  
unlabelled lye and steroids, heterosexual desires

Edition of 82,000/ \$250,000

### 7. Thomas Hirschhorn

*Flaming the absolute* (Swiss democracy is totalitarian), 2095

Photo-etching silkscreen with bubble-wrapped dumbbell,

stame and wooden stud to beat yourself into

a self-righteous attitude

Edition of 12/ \$299,567

### 8. Henrik Olesen

*Paraphrasing the Immaculate*, 2096

Cross-articulated photo-giclée with metal studs,

and human finger with grime-encrusted nail

Edition of 100/ \$200,000

### 9. Tracey Emin and Merlin Carpenter

*Women Can Be Teachers Too, You Know* (2095)

Neon, mash-up of all of Earth, Wind & Fire's hits,

bear rug, fireplace

Edition of 10/ \$197,230

### 10. Allora and Calzadilla

*Looped Mollifications of Actual Thinking* (2096)

Resin bas-relief and letter of apology

Edition of 25/ \$554,000

### 11. Prince Harry and Nick Relph

*Be Careful with the Compass Point when Measuring*

*the Circumference of your Asshole* (2096)

Laser-cut cheetos encased in frozen mango compote

with fruit flies, and Adidas shoelaces

Edition of 10/ \$792,000

### 12. Bob Nickas

*I Curate Like a Painter... I Know, I Hate It Too* (2094)

Carved coconut shells with sapphire inlay and lightbulb,

record with love song and confession on B-side

Edition of 30/ \$17,000

### 13. Alex Katz

*Paperweights of the Absolute* (2096)

Marble composite and glass, dealer's shaved pubes,

and 'mayonnaised' tuna

Edition of 100/ \$200,000

**14. Felix Gonzalez-Torres**

*Back in Black / Annihilation Comedy II*, 2095  
Holographic silkscreen, clouds and tuba  
Edition of 55/ \$417,000

**15. Kerstin Brätsch**

*It Takes Two to Make a Thing Go Right*, 2085  
Lithograph on acetate, lighter fluid, and matches  
Edition of 5/ \$524,000

**16. Mary Boone**

*Auto-poesis in the Feedback Loop Between the Pimp and the Hoe*, 2090  
Silver print with aqua-varnish, live Korean manicurist, avocado, tax returns, disappearing photograph, Shroud of Turin, scuba tanks, and Bill Viola video outtakes  
Edition of 300/ \$415,500

**17. Lawrence Weiner**

*One Thing Like On Top of Another Thing*, 2096  
Engraved wine glass and bracelet of anal beads  
Edition of 50/ \$190,000

**18. George Kuchar and Harun Farocki**

*Shirtless Travelers Sharing a Hotel Room / No Point Shitting if You Ain't Got an Anus*, 2095  
Re-developed 35 mm film and court papers  
Edition of 80/ \$1,000

**17. Wade Guyton**

*Pissing Upwards on the Down-slope*, 2096  
Micro-etched silk-screen and shame  
Edition of 44/ \$187,000

**DEAD**

Curated by Colin de Land (via Lindy Dennis)

Rachel Feinstein

Claire Fontaine

Diego Velasquez

Yue Minjun

Seth Price

Stacey Keslo

Mike Kelley

Michelle Maccarone

Dash Snow

Elke Krystufek

Barnett Newman

David Wojnarowicz

Jason Rhoades

Guillermo Kuitca

Otto Muehl

Thurston Moore

Stephen Prina

Peter Fend

Rudolf Schwarzkogler

Cerith Wyn Evans

Performance by Michael Jackson

30 November 2096 – 10 January 2097

Reception: 28 November, 6–9pm

HEAD GALLERY

165 East Broadway

New York 100242

Tel: +1 212 477 5006

Tues – Sat, 10am – 6pm

Head Gallery invites you to 'Dead: My Spinal Cord Traversed by the Axis of the Planet', an exhibition that 'exists' as a stream of indeterminate white-code, punctuated by a series of contingent meaning-units (postulated artworks), moving through the directionless plenum and time-bends against which orbital space shores up. It accelerates in an abyssal 'vertical' plunge,

masked as an effort to trace the abstract lineaments of a post-solar gravitational vacuum. It's total illusory narrativizing or phantasmic integument-production as refusal to accept the coming meltdown, absolute material dissolution. The end of the mesh, network-scapes, Spirit, objects, Real. An ultimate context of no-context. The white-code speeds through deep space in a mock mission of alien contact as parody of the futile galactic transversality wish-work of uploaded and deep-stored consciousness. Like the white-code, emancipated from the gravitational slavery of the terrestrial, uploaded and catapulted consciousness as survival mechanism is left to spin in the vortex of its own unimaginative existence. A solution to anything. A mixture of self-generated binary couplets, DNA string sequencing, ancient Latin, Koranic braille, cthulhic runes, pre-dessiac hieroglyph, and Zoroastrian symbols, the white-code and the meaning-units it pulls along are mathematics breaking down in the zoom of matter, 'measured' by a better instrument than the metric regimes of biomass prejudice. The axis of the planet traversed by the inviolable linearity of the dissipative drive of matter and energy.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Transcription of unpublished interview between Karen Archey (Clone IV) and Lindy Dennis, November 2096]

Karen Archey (Clone IV): So, yes, um... I wanted to ask some questions... about the new show...

Lindy Dennis: 'DEAD'?

KA IV: Yeah, yeah... Is that the final title? I mean I think I heard it was called 'Heaven'. Or something about spinal columns.

LD: No. I mean... Yes. Yes... 'DEAD'. The 'DEAD' show. That's the title. There were different titles along the way.

KA IV: So, ummm, OK, where did the idea come from?

LD: Well I had this idea rolling around in my head for a bit of putting together this show which would cut across temporal specificity. But not like a historical show or a themed show that tried to bring together different historical

works. Or tried to link things thematically. More like things cutting across time, things still contemporary in some dimension but teleported here, cutting out the aging process, the build-up of historical patina and all that stuff. And kind of... not connected. Not like something with selected historical artefacts... but more vital. And then I had already worked with séance enhancement technology in the past so it wasn't a big jump...

KA IV: ... so there was a curatorial objective...

LD: ... curatorial? Well, no, I didn't think of it like that. As a control thing. Or an organization thing. It was...

KA IV: ... so you mean you passed the buck then?

LD: ... well, yeah... [laughs].

KA IV: But with Colin de Land?! He's such a rich kid fetish... With the books and all...

LD: Yeah well, I just wanted to work with Colin. Because... err... he was the kind of first name that came into my head.

With the recovery of the books, I guess his name was just in the air. You know those things have made such a splash.

KA IV: ... they are cool...

LD: Yeah, but more than all that... I mean... he was an art dealer... but he was an oddity even within this... err... typology. We have to remember that. I mean, we can go into the books, but that wasn't what I had in mind. He had an apparent disregard for commercial success. He ran a number of innovative and highly influential art galleries for almost twenty years, a kind of maverick or aesthetic provocateur... a fearless leader of pathological risk-takers, a voyeur no one could take their eyes off, a self-taught genius in the esoteric art of thrift couture and a wastrel of such laconic decadence that he made ill-health magnetically sexy. Colin was an innovator and knew better than anyone how to create a dynamic social space. There was always a great mix of artists, animals, art world veterans, and a few brave collectors to be seen there at any hour of the day or night. And plus, Thurston Moore was his best friend... And there is more we can go into.

KA IV: And so the show is in... on the spectral-film?

LD: Yes. We managed to carve out a pocket of space in one of the layers between here and the spectral-film, a giant hollow cavity where the work was installed. Where the show was located. A kind of spectral gallery. Colin baptized

it 'Heaven', so maybe that's where you get the 'Heaven' title from. What you see at the Head Gallery show is the necro-relay... or a recording of it.

KA IV: And how does Michael Jackson fit in?

LD: Colin was emphatic about including him. He said he was the best artist of the twentieth century. I thought it would be interesting if he was involved, even if some people wanted us to take him out.

KA IV: So, how did you physically contact him?

LD: Well. We've been working on the SE [séance enhancer], tricking it out. And I just put it to the test. Plugged in and went looking for Colin. Yeah, yeah. So, I plug in and begin to surf, sniffing out clues until I pinned him with his post-genetic coordinates, his aura-specs.

KA IV: Was it hard?

LD: Well, it wasn't easy. Have you ever scanned the 'other-side'?

KA IV: No.

LD: It's wild and slimy. Everything starts to look the same.

KA IV: Sounds messy.

LD: Well, it is exhausting, all that dredging. Looking for a ghost kind of pulls you down. Imagine trying to look for two. I had originally intended it to be a Seth Sieglaub/Colin de Land collaboration, but I just didn't have all that much free time to blow. Got to Sieglaub, too, a couple of times, but he just didn't cooperate much.

KA IV: Who is Seth Sieglaub?

LD: He put on a load of shows in the pre-poc, working with artists like Robert Barry, Lawrence Weiner and Bjork. I was keen to work out how he would work with Colin – like a Dream Team. We got them together a couple of times. It was fairly interesting, except that it always ended up revolving around some stupid contract that Sieglaub wrote. Like some obvious thing, about fairness, but everyone thought it was so radical. I think you can say it would have worked but it was just too much work.

KA IV: So, only de Land then. But how do you know it was him curating? [laughs]... Yeah, how can you be sure you didn't contact Maria Lind or Hinki Zeno by mistake? Maybe they were impersonating...

LD: Ha ha. Yeah that would be a problem. But no, the technology locks onto specific aura specs so it's not possible.

Once you pull the right coordinates off the spectral-film, the results are certain. As long as you lock on.

KA IV: And so the artists... that's a kind of weird mix... Isn't it?

LD: Well, I guess some of them are unknown now. I mean there are giants in there, like Rachel Feinstein and Claire Fontaine. Then, others who are not so well-known. I was particularly interested in Feinstein being in there. She was just so political in her day, hard-core fem-anarcho, funnelling her earnings to support the anti-globalization movement, hiding Black Bloc in her Palm Beach vacation house. Palm Beach wasn't always the necropolis that archaeologists comb through these days. I wondered how her polymorphism would translate in this context. The way she balanced a singular pursuit of feeling, a memory of unanchored beauty and timeless fantasy with political subtext. The way she presented history and romance, in two-dimensions, like a shadow of reality cast upon the wall of a cave. Fuck, anarcho-communist art was so good. Like, she was probably part of Endnotes.

And then Claire Fontaine, a Paris-based collective of artists, who pretended to be bourgeois rich kids, while being just that in a kind of negation of mimesis through mimesis – fuck, and named after the notorious area of Paris where a series of riots occurred. Their productions involved a denial of individual skill, authority and originality through the collective détournement of signs, symbols, images and objects available in contemporary visual culture. They didn't even care that the resulting artworks were actually shit.

I mean, Claire Fontaine also wrote prolifically – although not well, but you know – and her texts are crucial to understanding her project, including trenchant assessments of the artist's political role and her immediate responses to socio-political events in missives and tracts for example Parisian suburban riots which were first realized as piles of texts freely distributed to exhibition visitors. Rachel Feinstein worked with them on the idea of a 'human strike', inspired by Italian feminist groups to counter the poverty of collective political discourse and action with silence, and proposals to halt human reproduction. In the 'DEAD' show Colin included *Untitled (Thank You)* which is a red outline of Karl Marx's face superimposed with a blinking

white 'Thank You. Have a Nice Day' in neon semen-script, which was installed along with another neon work, *ALL FOREIGNERS ARE CUNTS*, written in Middle Arabic that so few people have a grasp of these days.

I talked to Claire Fontaine in the séance and she says she knows that works like these only function symbolically. She has no illusions about her political impact, no utopian vision, no nostalgia for the avant-garde. Quite simply, art-making is her way of engaging with questions that preoccupy her, individually and collectively, in the present. Those questions are political. She clarifies her position this way: 'We are like any other proletariat, expropriated from the use of life, because for the most part, the only historically significant use we can make of it comes down to our artistic work.' I like how they were so funny. Saying all this stuff...

KA IV: ... and so the show.

LD: Yeah... the show was amazing. The space was... like... expansive... very big... like maybe 20,000 square metres... if you translated it into terrestrial metrics... like big white walls... and the reception was mobbed... 10 maybe 20,000 people... like dead people... it was wild.

KA IV: ... but you didn't attend?

LD: ... well no, obviously not in person but... we were tuned in through the necro-enhancer... connected up using 'feel-it' technology. It was all relayed live at Head Gallery. So it was like you were there. And the Michael Jackson performance was wild. And now the gallery owns the screening rights.

KA IV: ... he does a remake of...

LD: ... yeah a remake of *Fear of a Black Planet* with Destroy All Monsters as a backing band... but kind of mixed up with Viennese Actionism. And there was a reanimated clone of Mike Kelley, Otto Muehl and some of those guys. There were like maybe 1,000 zombies all synchro-dancing and then Michael jumps out dressed up in one of his Kim Jong-il military coats with golden tassels and medals and starts rocking out a dance, slitting his own stomach with a metal hanger, country abortion-style, through the metallic blue coat. A jet of green glitter shoots out of him, as his intestines just start to slither out of his torso. With impeccable timing, Benjamin Buchloh dressed as Vincent Price jumps in and he's doing a voice over – he has the voice down – but with new lyrics

– obscene and magical. An incantation of sorts: 'Hermann Joseph Abs, Hermann Joseph Abs, Hermann Joseph Abs, Hermann Joseph Abs...' Michael starts crying. He gets it. He feels Benjamin's pain, the pain of no longer being able to be German – not after everything that happened – the honesty of the sentiment. And then Elke Krystufek – since Austrians feel no remorse for anything, ever – starts fistfisting Herman Nitsch, who opens his mouth and this turquoise slime-lava blasts out. Rainer Ganahl, in a fluoro-orange ski hat and ski goggles, ditzying his way out of having to deal with remorse altogether, is trying to translate into Chinese what Nitsch is saying, though you can barely hear him through the retching. And Thurston Moore is there as well... playing guitar. But not as part of the band. Off to the side. He is thinking of snow.

KA IV: And, so all this is all visible on the relay?

LD: Yeah. More or less.

KA IV: And how did the art... fit in...

LD: You get some shots of the work. Claire Fontaine's work *ALL FOREIGNERS ARE CUNTS*, you can see that flashing away. And Rachel Feinstein's also visible, sort of replying to this with some of her social realist photographs from the 'My Cock, Your Mouth' series. And Velazquez went super classic with a straight painting to which he added broken crockery and a still from a Bill Viola movie.

And Peter Fend's contribution was amazing: he dropped ten thousand feathers from a cloned/glitch-altered prehistoric species, from the ceiling. It was like soiled snow... like a dirty blizzard. A kind of blizzard of arche-fossils. Sublime! And the smell was so repugnant. It didn't take long for everyone to figure out that the feathers were soiled with fresh bird shit. Yue Minjun and Jason Rhoades's paintings got completely covered – but that was an improvement. It was a rank stench; waves of it whipped everyone's olfactory systems, eating away the nose tissue, searing the eyes. Nostrils began to slide off faces; they just ran like melting candles. The tissue hardened again over people's mouths, sealing them permanently. A sea of faces with gaping holes right at their centre. And so, in no time, a shallow layer of avian faeces and feathers covered the floor. It mixed with the glitter that was pouring out of Michael's slashed stomach and the slime-lava that Nitsch was vomiting and all the

melted tissue and skin. Thurston began to think of vanilla. Black beans, white scoops. The mystery of it.

Meanwhile, Michael was slowly surrendering the last vestiges of life, but the people in the crowd just went on pouncing on him. They began wantonly fucking him everywhere. In his mouth, his ears, his ass, his navel, his glove, his penny loafers. Some people ripped off his socks, slipped them on their cocks and began to jack off. They ejaculated rainbows of sequins. They tore open larger holes where his nostrils had melted. His intestines were slashed so that people would have places to penetrate. Some women fitted teak and bamboo strap-ons and went to work. Someone said that the strap-ons had something to do with Rachel Feinstein's hardcore politics, with postcolonial discourse and the liberation struggles in Southeast Asia. Other women began to violently fellate Michael. Thurston began to use the neck of his guitar to sodomize him. A rumour circulated that this had to do with the New Latin American Protest Song. And Thurston knew he'd shamed himself, striving in this unseemly way for deep reference. He began to think of cedar mulch. As this went on, one could read in the faint smile that disfigured Michael's face that he sensed something soft and sweet penetrating him – Life Itself. He felt it enough to release a whimper, finally relishing in the artful self-disembowelment he had undergone. He spasmed one last time. Orange jelly spurted out. Like a burp of cough syrup. Everyone fought savagely to get a turn at him, even after he was gone. Michael's music was replaced by the slushy sound of wood being pumped into slimy flesh. Thurston thinks about rain in the Andes Mountains.

And while the zombie gang orgy is going on, Krystufek is still fisting Nitsch, who is about to pass out. She's so deep in him, she can massage his intestines, knead all that coagulates there with a kind of deep love. She has already blown out his rectum and his haemorrhoids. And she herself is getting arm-fucked – with a stray zombie limb – by Rudolf Schwarzkogler. He'd tried to fuck her, but since his penis is split, it hardens in two directions, jutting out at forty-five degrees in a V. He's puzzled by it, but just lets two women fellate him simultaneously and rub him with ice cubes. The feeling of their tongues and the deep blast of cold on his split urethra are indescribable. His eyes are

blood-shot, veins outlined against yellowing balls. Colin, again with enviable timing, capitalizing on the daze-frenzy, starts playing some ancient DJ music, dims the lights, drops three rudimentary lighting systems, and warp-adjusts the reality-chords of 'Heaven' so that the scene morphs into a post-disco but pre-*Thriller* Michael vid-space. The zombie-dancers, puppeted by de Land, grow small Afros. Finely carved mirrors start to appear on their flesh. Each of the zombies is eventually covered in a gridded skin of mirrors, like a disco ball. Walking disco balls with Afros. They start reflecting a high tempo Morse code rhythm pumping out the text of the *Left Accelerationism Manifesto*. Thurston thinks of catfish.

At the centre of all this, the spiral configuration of Dash Snow's mattress artwork emerges, moving upwards, growing into a strange five-part form with five anuses, like an exotic fruit or seedcase. Shit begins to pour out of four of the arseholes – silver shit. It comes down on the art congregation below who have all returned to their synchro-dance. A flock of multi-coloured prehistoric human-birds that Fend had plucked for his piece burst out of the fifth arsehole. And by this time, the crowd has literally eaten most of Michael. With glittery blood running down their chins and pieces of skin hanging from their teeth and orange jelly coating their gums, everyone seems satiated. Signs of exhaustion multiply. Everywhere but on stage, where Krystufek has now both Nitsch and Schwarzkogler on their knees and their anuses have transformed into vaginas and she is violently fucking them with a trident penis. David Wojnarowicz, grinning luridly, is sewing all three remorseless Austrians together into one object. Thurston thinks of Rimbaud. Krystufek is going at it vigorously. Nitsch and Schwarzkogler are both vomiting slime-lava now. Thurston thinks of the Matterhorn. Krystufek is naked but for an immense wooden crucifix with spikes and hooks that she has swung over her shoulder. Thurston thinks of dad. The crucifix bounces up and down, pulling chunks of flesh off Elke's back, as she pumps into the two old men in front of her. Nitsch finally collapses. The spikes of the crucifix have written out the lyrics to 'Don't Stop Till You Get Enough' on Krystufek's back, in Morse code. It'll scab nicely. Thurston thinks of palm trees.

KA IV: ... and I saw on some promo images... those little flowers...

LD: Yes... that was strange. Once everything had calmed down, these kind of tiny, delicate, lilac-coloured flowers started to sprout – a kind of pale violet flower, very small about the size of a beansprout. I think it was one of Thurston's thoughts materializing. But not quite a thought... like that's his essence. Like, that's how he is inside. At first it looked like dust, covering everything: the artworks, bodies on the floor, the shit, the living people. Everything looked pink. We zoomed in with spectro-view and we could see it wasn't dust but tiny little flowers blooming out of each pore, growing out of the skin, or out of the shit. They grew fast and then we could see that a tongue was growing out of each flower like a stamen.

**'The working classes can suck my 10 incher'**

<http://headgallery.org/THEWORKINGCLASSES3.html>



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Fiat auto works, TURIN, 1977

*The working class will go to paradise (La classe operaia va in paradiso)*

This exhibition CAPTURES in full detail the scandalous sexual history of the operaista movement, particularly after Australian entertainer Rolf Harris and the cyclist Eddie Merckx became a fellow travellers in the mid-1970s. Cycle pedo-porn and operaismo melded.... collaged with contemporary oppression of Pakistani textile workers and other exploitations across the world.

Beginning with Merckx's victory speech at his last victory at Kluisbergen on 17 July 1977, where he has just been converted to operaismo after a MASSIVE ORGY at Paolo Virno's.

'The proletariat give me a fucking HARD-ON.' The words clung to his throat like semen. Luigi turned his face to the crowd, looking at the lined faces, bald heads and work jackets. The cheap acrylic of his

trousers stretched across his straining hardness – a precise crease which he had ironed in that morning:

‘And striking ... makes me HORNY’

Multitude=orgy group

radio alice=chick who is a screamer

the commonwealth=Tronti's massive cock

the soul at work=a big black dildo imported from America

In fact this actually recounts a participative performance, produced from a script found in a time capsule buried by James Lee Byars in Death Valley before the apocalypse and recently retrieved by the Head Gallery. The performance is called "Blowing Kisses in the Air, All Together" and it is also known as "You are the Only Question." The participants in this project are plugged, through a spider-electrode in their rectum, to an affecto-transference unit that pumps into them the feeling of 1977, so that they can collectively reenact the sexual adventures of the operaistas, what the latter coyly called their "other worker's inquiry." It is thought that Byars produced the script during an evening that he spent with Merckx in the editorial offices of Quaderni Rossi, after a hard day of striking at the Fiat plant. It was here that the shit-centered sexual adventures of the editorial board were first revealed to Byars. The shock of the what he witnessed and participated in was of such magnitude that two days later he had to be retrieved by the fire department from a tree in Cologne, which he had climbed with Martha Rosler. Invited to produce a performance in Bern in 1979, Byars attempt to produce "Blowing Kisses..." but found that the necessary technology wasn't available. So, he dressed himself in a golden suit and laid down in the lobby of the Kunsthalle attempting to imagine the pleasure of an spider-electrode in the rectum.

The exhibition shows the alienated labour, the machines, the rhythm of the assembly line and the factory that makes the workers ill and eventually kills them. The workers take the alienation and physical exhaustion back home where both contaminate their private relationships. The film criticizes the contemporary student activism at the 'factory gates', where 'student activism' is now advertised as a module, as well as the unions.

After the TEXT's first publication at the Mostra del Cinema Libero Head Gallery insisted on its destruction. But all, in the end, is a current, post-apoc orgy in which the participants are plugged to an affecto-transference machine....they have been plugged into the feelings of 1977....the smell the fumes of burning tires as it swirls up into their nostrils....so, the orgy is really at head gallery and it is a participative performance by James Lee Byars, full of golden dildos and marble butt-plugs, counter working class accouterments as what is secretly desired by workerists--this is why they all lecture in the artworld....

And so once they've welded the fire doors shut and started the fire it is obvious to everyone it is an artwork. Double screen installation. With a shot of the exterior of the building – relatively calm – and then an internal camera with all the textile working manically scrambling to get out and then the inferno takes over. And just as this was all going on ... well the perspective changed.

To the left, two other films are playing. One of them is a 12-hour fixed camera shot of a submerged Bjarne Melgaard fiberglass sculpture of a white woman where the cratered aperture of her eaten-off head is shrouded in a swarm of bubbles. She is sitting on a black woman, rendered in a sexualized fashion with her legs over her shoulders, but with her head replaced by that of a taxidermy ermine—more bubbles collecting around the rotting white fur and glass eyes reflecting back the void. With a Reena Spaulings flagpole—with a stainless steel weathervane - the head of a rabbit attached to it rather than a flag—planted in her asshole. At an angle - set against the stark horizontality of the seabed. The installation is semi-buried in the sand, as fish and crabs move across and the first coral takes hold. It seems the sculpture has been there for some time, its surfaces tarnished; barnacles partly obscuring the rabbit's face - factory perfection corroding. Lit in high relief it stands out against all the war junk strewn around on the ocean floor. At one point a

shark swims past. As the film develops the murky waters clear once in a while to reveal silhouettes of other artworks - the outline of a Cicciolina-Koons collab 'Made in Heaven,' but overlaid with a neon that reads "Since When is Police Brutality Sexually Unstimulating?" (This may be a collaboration between Monica Bonvicini and Claire Fontaine, both now in their therapeutic-autobiographical Reichian phase).

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Spreading his cramping hand as far as it will go, and raising his arm. Teardrops of jissum dangling tenderly from his fingers, waving to the rhythm of his clumsy stride, pulsing in the moonlight like blue gel. He unfurls one of his lizard tongues and expertly flicks up a dangly tendril. Then, as he continues on his way to the exhibition, under an intermittently black-to-orange sky and in the heart of a storm of jade dust (gathering strength), savoring the slide of the semen around his tongue. He is getting addicted to this: the rub against the walls of his oiled vagina and the slick afterward, the finger licking. Privately he calls it 'the Healing'.

In the middle of his chest, framed by an incomplete exo-ribcage, and proudly displayed (currently) in his cut-out cycling shirt. It's a cunt constantly feathered with olive oil to accentuate the intricate contours and subtle colors of labia and clitoris.

He is a casualty from the cataclysmic Apoc Wars of 86; a twisted-up reminder of the heights of brutality the conflict achieved and maintained for so long, fully paid up and sanctioned by the first world Mega cities. He is one of the famous mutated 'goblin-babies' from the Sino-Belarus peninsula, who survived by living in tunnels. He was brought to Nu York by wealthy charity-junky foster parents (following an emotional appeal in the media). To be fair, they tried their best to bring him up right for a few years. But in the end they got bored and sold him to a low-end pedo-ring.

But despite all this, Bifo is unstoppably cheerful. He never stops smiling. Spewing laughter. A grotesque kind of laughter - brimming with imprecise threats. Rising to infernal guffaws and guttural snorts. Bouts of laughter splitting his face without notice - contagious but aggressive, joyful, sick-making, with morbid vibes welling up in it and spiraling around - because, make no mistake, he is NOT a nice person. This much has been clear to you, ever since you met him a few years ago. Some of the things you've seen, or half-seen. And there are many rumors about his behavior.

As he gets closer to the gallery, five men are dragged out in front of the building. They are pulled by the neck with short rope leashes and clubbed and tied to posts (which have suddenly appeared). Bifo can hear the usual begging. One of the tied prisoners pisses himself. Urine stench fills the air. But the masked soldiers don't listen. They tie the prisoners impassively, but with firmness, to the stakes. Then, as the rain subsides, they pull glinting machetes from the bedazzled sheathes attached to their waistbands and start hacking at the screaming figures. Flesh is sliced. Blood splatters. Limbs fly. Filled meat flaps. Bifo walks right on through the scene. Cuts through the illusion-project, dulling the fantasy scenario. The illusion zaps minimally and glitches out momentarily, shutting off for a couple of seconds, to then flicks back on. He's sick of these Alonxo Delaware projectionz. This is one of his famous 'Conflict-Zone' critiques. It is cut with the usual footage of preteen-on-animal sex footage and random stuff off the TV - game shows and soap operas. He walks into the gallery space.

The exhibition is installed in a cavernous semi-derelict industrial-unit--or a simulacrum of one, erected with quartzed coral sponge-cinderblock and decorated with nano-engineered vines lodged in the faux crevices that continuously seep sap-clone, lime-flavored human cum as neo-margarita mix simple-syrup with a citrus twist hallucinogenic. The exhibition is organized so that a multitude of films are projected in the space - each onto a separate screen (there are innumerable screens hanging in the space, planes bisecting anything quadrilateral). And each of the films has the appearance of a series of separate bubbling aquaria - this is the curatorial conceit - each pumping endless tendrils of rising spheres, like animated hanging gardens in reverse. An ironic red, militant flag-parody curtain, embroidered with a thousand miniature white carnations and a political slogan,

tacked to a beam near the entry door using a bio-thread which vibrates at high-pitch. As your hand pushes it aside there is a looped acid house sequence.

You go up to the bar to procure a cup of neo-margarita at the ice-carved bar - the bartender is tall and her face is the result of one of the facial asymmetricalizing surgeries that were in vogue a few months ago. If the face works—and it does, but barely—it's because she has stretched the oval aperture around her eye sockets so that her head looks like a slip-cast white cherry. The brilliant part is that she has refilled her sockets with milky resin and reinserted her pupils, but in a surgically reduced size, and faceted, so that they look like talismans of carved ebony. Your eyes meet her small black optical beads – like lobster eyes, as you saddle up to the bar, in search of your own neo-margarita. You nod. She understands the request. Pours you a cup. 'Bonjour Comrade.' You smile as you turn, taking that first glorious sip, you meet Bifo's slightly squinted eyes. You greet him with a vacant smile. But he doesn't acknowledge it. You feel buffeted by the indifference. A few other visitors are milling about.

The film playing behind the bartender is a long-lost work by Chris Marker. It uses footage appropriated from a documentary about the geriactri-sex industry where ninety-year-olds pay 30,000 credits a shot for orgasm augmentation and Old Aged Citizen Units schedule twice-daily viewing sessions of tightly-trimmed young-flesh genitals. This young guy interviewed with a polarizing lens on the camera is saying: "Every time my Father cums that's thirty large off my inheritance." He is just a red, green and yellow blob with a nauseating personality. The film is bookended by old school animations of saber-tooth tigers running in a burnt city that has been appropriated from a video game.

Outside the exhibition space, shooting out in the opposite direction from which Bifo came, a Mexican night has been coded molecularly into an artificially proliferated cloudscape by the Second Weather Underground. You can't tell anymore, in the wake of the SWU's constant thermo-meteorological-phenomenological sabotage, what time of the day it really is. Or what time of year. Nothing as unimaginative as daytime to contend with any longer. No fucking dawns, no cycles of light and dark. No seasons, one behind another, in their predictable formation. Like a disciplined line of meathead soldiers. Instead, the erratic switching from day to night, often in high-speed flicker sequences. Strange flip-outs from devastating drought to beautiful autumn dusks. This arbitrary climatological re-sequencing has infused what used to be called everyday life with something grotesquely electric. New kinds of experiential impoverishments and new kinds of ecstatic release. It has certainly made perception no different from any other kind of neuro/sensory-stimuli. All is just manipulated data juicing up the synapses. Which means that eyes are now dead equipment. Optical infrastructure is carcass. The weather is less outside than a torrent of script slicing through you.

Algorithms fix what feels like late evening Mexican air—no other name for it and it occurs to everyone simultaneously—to the skin of anyone or anything walking around - a kind of evanescent sting riding lightly through it. Very subtle. We are on the verge of becoming Aztec communards, heart-eaters. Jade dust embedding itself in pores as receptor-blanket for the pulsations SWU is shooting out into the city. The stronger the storm grows, the more impact the SWU can have on individual neuro-epidermic loops. You like it. You like it when they unleash this Mexican atmosphere. Something nice about it, about the way in which it reels you out into some indeterminate remoteness.

Then a stream of cyclists pour through the gallery or a projection ... of the final stages of the infamous Paris-Roubaix race, across the cobbled roads and mud of Old-Belgium, through the reek of broken drains, raw sewage and the stench of rotting cattle. Trees with blackened, ragged stumps, and twisted branches pushing to the sky like the crippled arms of a dying man. And everywhere mud. The cyclists seem to be moving but somehow fixed in the same place.

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Still some distance from the show but approaching rapidly, along the curvy glide afforded by high-end hovva-travel, cutting through this Mexican night air, in their chauffeur-driven Li-moou-scene, the seven Hatori-hyenas are jacked into the Hindro-Fi. Their hooowling-laughter traces a hive-connect back to the tube-tank servers murmuring in the pyramidal towers of NeverBangkok. Synth-tears cut a path down their powdered cheeks. They are coming down from some designer-lube cranked high. Stretched out across the whole synapto-slide, melted in. Their edges are gone. Total de-parameterization. Flesh dissolved.

Carly7x Hatori, the most pretentious of the quasi-indivisible seven sister-sisters-hyenas-Hatori, looks out the window, shored up, as they say, and whispers in her low-pitched voice, which rises out of surgically implanted ostrich vocal chords, laced with chiropter sonar capabilities:

“It is said that this is where the working classes come to kill their own children, in Aztec rituals --- so that they might not provide surplus-value for future generations of Capitalists, to cease perpetuating the structures of Capital and let the whole thing implode --- A killing field where, after gouging into baby chests and extracting hearts that are set to ferment in mescal bottles --- on the way to sustaining all-night binges, the workers might smash in their heads so their brains become like shit mixing with the blood --- Battering rams against private accumulation; sliding neuromatter as allegorical mush of --- rampant currency devaluation.”

The rest of the Hatori turn mechanically to watch her, but seem unable to register any acknowledgement of these words. Its like a micro-tragedy of communication. And then the Hatori tune out again. Carly7x remains looking out the window for a few moments with her lips slightly open. Moisture collects at the edge of her eye. A tear falls. Then she melts back in. The Hatori, when fully plugged in, cannot determine where they each start or end or at what point they dissolve, each into the other -- epidermally and affectively -- multi-sharing a low frequency and ineradicable data-panic as “substrate feeling” across the whole lobe-zone and also a kind of pumped-out elation. They are unable to conceptualize or even sense where their collective body-sprawl ends. Or where their emotional interiorizing begins. Or what it is made of ... or into.

Someone says something about the glass being tempered glass. What glass? Who said that? Some random clip of conversation. Maybe it was the driver who is opening the door for them, now they have arrived at the Head Gallery. Maybe he said something a few miles back or a few hours ago about raising the glass partition. Or who knows. Maybe it's a fragment of a conversation that took place years ago, in one of their childhoods. Or something that they read stamped on a tray in their refrigerator, when they still ate solid food. But however it happened, the tempered glass has returned and its not nice. It has materialized as the colonizing advance of tempered glass, as the vicious stalking of transparency. And at this very moment - dilating - with the swish of the Limousine, to infinity. ‘What the fuck?’ the Hatori think in unison, the question ricocheting along the outer edges of their collectivized neurospacing, in what remains undissolved at the fringe—not quite them, but some vague thing-almost-them. ‘What the fuck?’ The question, its echo, melts into the hive, weaves itself somehow within, like the hand-eye coordination diagram of a crab. You can see it happening. You can feel it. As an index of absorption - of this new perturbation data plugging into their system—a jolt down in their labial-receptors. Tempered-fucking-glass. They can't move. Glass becoming predator. In the neuro-lines. Across the entire synapto-slide. They feel a kind of vitrification of their bones.

The driver just stands there holding the door, unshaken, kind of bored, waiting. He has seen this all before. It always takes the Hatori a few minutes to get their shit together after he opens the door. They sit stiffened-stiffening. Waiting for a new command for their collective circuitry to move. Some new disturbance-data that will rearrange things again. Finally it comes. Memories of their Mother(z) crying and looking down at them, as babies about to have their hearts gouged out. They recall the police raid that prevented this. And then, the tragic death of their parents, beaten to pieces with truncheons: And holding two limp pre-corpses in their arms, telling them they/we love them as they slide out of consciousness. But they are doing this still as babies, so the whole thing is perhaps only an animation coded for voluntary recall into their collective circuitry. They realize, prodded by

who knows what, maybe by the love in their dying mother's eyes, that although their bones are tempered glass, now stiff and transparent, they are also hinged. Like the Limousine door. Their bodies still have joints. Full mobility is possible. They slowly make their way out of the Limo. Adjust their polyester pink mini-dresses and rub their oversized prosthetic orb-flowerz, rimmed with stylized protrusions along their edges, and flick on the scent receptors inserted where their eyes once were. Turquoise looksmellz and other stylings. They feel the jade dust of the storm engulf them like a materializing serape. They begin to absorb something that makes them feel Mexicanized.

The Hatori make their way to the door of the gallery, but only to realize, double-quick - all at the same time - that it is not their bones that are glass. They have only become this, de-calcified and brittle, because a viral colony is coursing inside their bodies, a slimy amoebic set of capillary organisms that are slowly feeding on their wet insides and leaving behind not putrid slush but hardened glass replacements of what they consume and digest. But in perfectly carved replica shapes. Glass doubles slowly aggregating into a crystalline ocean.

The Hatori fear the amoebas will soon climb into their lungs and vitrify them. They will choke from the inside. They should panic at this, were it not becoming obvious to them, all at once, that the amoebas are uninterested in their vital organs. Instead, they have drilled their way through to the surface of the skin. Their epidermal layers are slowly turning to tempered glass, a sharp crystal savannah with tiny jade insets. They freeze at the entrance of the gallery, in the makeshift vestibule, hypnotized by the vibrating carnations, but somehow manage to waft their way inside.

Once inside, the amoeba colony dies. This viral holocaust was brought on maybe by the change of temperature or light or airborne pollutants inside Head Gallery. Maybe it was the Mexican air outside that was feeding the colonizing amoebas. No one can be sure. But they also sense a much bigger problem. Panic grows. Their glass skin is distending. Stretching, relieving itself of the contour-tyranny of their petite bodies. It wants more. To encase large expanses, interface with unexpected things. It wants to be *SPACE*. To wrap other bodies. And it's stretching itself as it chases this goal. The skin is becoming...has become the very substance that the air in the room is made of— not the same as the Mexican air outside, but a nouveaux proletarian atmospherics. An atmosphere like glass, but gelid and gelatinous now. More Chinese. There is something erotic about this, and the Hatori feel that they want to rub themselves with this slimy and sharpened atmosphere. They want to re-wrap themselves in their now-razored skin, prick themselves with its sharp barbs and decorate their thin limbs with rivulets of blood, some caked and some running perennially. Fountain-arms. They start to twirl-dance in order to fold again into their sharpened surface. Move in unison, choreographed by some inner command-section, shredding themselves with razor-air. They love this. They are twirling themselves from one orgasm to the next. Swimming in this vast aquarium. Their blood becoming its contents, rising tendrils of revolutionary blood bubbles.

After who knows how long, the Hatori grow exhausted with their dance. Now only in jeweled underwear and boots - with slashed arms - they move further inside the exhibition space.

It finally dawns on the girl-girls-hyenas that there are quite a number of films playing in the space. Hundreds. Maybe thousands. Each film projected onto its own screen. Hanging in the half-light.

The Hatori walk in front of you, as you slurp the last of your first drink. Bifo is rolling along a couple of feet behind, laughing every now and then. The few other visitors are scattered around - too dispersed to evacuate a sense of emptiness from the space. Bifo gives you a nod, finally acknowledging your presence, the low-vibe friendship the two of you share. He smiles weirdly. And then he laughs, crosshatching a sick vibe into the atmosphere. It seems in consonance with the ambiance of the structure/exhibition space itself, which feels military and proletarian, at once. The whole thing could just be the insane project of some mad, wealth-engorged oligarch zimploid like Anita Zabłudowicz, who, having just walked through the door, jacks into her own Hantri-Fi, wasting some credits to get onto the same wavelength as the Hatori. She links up with their authenticity-porn in order feel a little wet. She is touching herself. She knows that the Hatori's twirling, and the

ways in which they are scratching and tearing into their arms and shoulders, and tearing off their dresses - it may be pain, but it is also a (sort of) life.

You join the Hatori and Bifo and follow them toward what seems to be the centerpiece of the exhibition – a film projection looming vast in front - maybe 50 feet high - projected at inhuman scale - documenting the working day of a sub-aquatic, Atlantic ‘processing-squad’ as it tracks the dark form of a whale moving through the gloom of waters 200 miles from the toxic coastline of NuGreenland. At first, the camera focuses close-up on the whale’s pitted, textured skin, as if the animal were brushing up against an aquarium glass. Screen as glass wall; glass wall as frontal lobe. It feels live in such a deep and undeniable way. The Hatori feel the animal’s cold slide across them, through them. As they are disappearing into this sensation, however, they realize that the film has become a verité documentary, shot in archaic 16 mill subaquatic film and affecting a ‘handheld’ jitteriness. It captures the process of ‘cubing’ – that is, the on-site harvesting of exact 1M cubes of blubber from the body of the living whale, using the latest anesthetic hot-wire, vacuo-packing, and insta-portion technology to service restaurants across the US/Chinese delta. This involves simultaneous extracto-quarterisation (including auto-septic) and max-extract of the meat facilitated by the squad’s precise techno-bank of organ-persistence. The whale continues, oblivious to the removal of its body-chunks - tracing its prehistoric-trajectory through the darkness - as its form is progressively staircased out as a flesh cut-out, zigged - across its body like the spread of a geometric virus. Silhouetted from below against the feint purple glow of the sky above, it moves like strange gothic archetype.

The Hatori, in unison, glitch out for a moment. This registers, to anyone looking at them, as a high-speed facial tic that they all suffer at the same time. They glitch in and out in this way because, on the one hand, they begin to feel that cubes of their own flesh are being extracted. Parts come out as glass bricks. Tempered glass bricks. And, on the other hand, they feel themselves covered in a soothing coat of whale fat and felt. A coat of blubber, like a large and slimy mink coat. Mongolian. Or Northern Chinese. The Hatori squeeze it tight against their flesh. Begin to roll in it. Roll it into them, as they roll out of the glitch. It works until they realize that the fat has an agent that is eating away at their skin, extracting cubes. Cubed-out twice. Instant panic that leads to full paralysis. From glitch into glitch-loop. The soothing of the fat, the terror of the extraction, the soothing of the fat of the terror of the extraction. The Hatori stand stiffened in a corner - faces contorting at high speed as a flickering repertoire of grimaces.

After about 50% removal of whale flesh, the squad checks their life support monitors before moving into the terminal phase, with the hot-wire process-coordinated according to a ‘last breath’ checklist hierarchized around retaining whale balance-momentum mechanism operative for maximum retrieval. One of the divers moves towards the viewers. The Hatori howl as they feel him splash up, the cold water hitting their faces, snapping them from the glitch-loop. He gives a thumbs up (as if he knows we’re here and that the sister-sisters-hyenas are OK again).

With the premium blubber now removed and reconstituted in Nu York processing plants, the divers move on to harvesting organs and muscle tissue, working upwards from genitals to lungs to heart. And finally, after approx. sixty percent extraction of body mass, the whale’s nervous system goes into shock. They slice off the tail and fins as whole slabs, allowing the still convulsing whale - serrated flesh now resembling a badly pixelated image of a post-digital artwork - to sink away from camera into the depths.

As you snap back from being mesmerized by the film, you turn and look at Bifo, who you can hear sobbing behind you. Whimpering. He is curled on the floor holding his head in his hands. His alabaster skin is pressed between his grotesque fingers, like kneaded dough. This is odd because he is not usually given to this sort of emotional display, not if you judge from past behavior. But something about the scene has cut into and defiled whatever it is that he protects ... and interiorizes. It has reached some limit. And whatever it is that has unmoored itself from his pain and become— how to word this right?—a desperate inaudible frequency, a momentary atomic densification or

concretion, formally imprecise but somehow affectively micro-focused—wrapping around you and squeezing in. You wince, feel bifurcated. You know there is more than empathy's flimsy connection assuming shape here. It's hard to say what. It's bewildering somehow. Words refuse to come. Until a thought finally clots: you are a proletariat. It's hard to explain: you know, because of your own shape and your deep and secret pains, what it feels like to be working class without being one yourself.

The camera tracks the whale's recession into the lightless void until the screen breaks up into pixelated black, except for the haze of plankton and the odd iridescent fish-body. Plaintively, a squid floats across the screen. Its giant eye seems to catch sight of the viewers in the exhibition space. It moves purposely up to the screen/picture plane, and then looks down as if searching for its whale friend, then back at us, as a kind of accusation. Hatori make eye contact and flip out into collecto-hysteria, as they think they can read its thoughts. Start mewling. A new osmo-ride. But it's not quite that they read its thoughts. It's that something is bulging on the surface of the screen, something is blistering, releasing a strange and unmistakable odor to announce its presence. The squid's thoughts are articulating themselves through their very rotting, in putrid stench. The Hatori read its mind through their olfactory passages. They begin to understand how the animal is uploading an antagonistic strain into a work of straightforward documentation. As a critique of art-as-critique of art as vanguard of non-reproduction - politics cancelled, radical pseudo-negativity & Bourriaud style market utopia back as we repeat the 90s in normcore paralysis? Are you complicit? It demands to know of the audience. Are you voyeurs? Enervated, the Hatori imagine that they may write a review of the show - for Anita's blog, because no one is picking up on the squid's critical demeanor.

The building is larger than one imagines: Head Gallery may have expanded since its last exhibition, or maybe this is an offsite project. As you move around this large screen, now all black, like a block of a 'cubed' Reinhart monochrome, as the squid's eye presses against it, the scale of the installation becomes clear. There are hundreds of screens stretching off into the distance— the furthest so far away that for a moment it seems like an optical illusion. And located some distance away, there is another, smaller, projection which seems at first to be simply an octopus floating in a tank. The scale and perspective of the projection conforms exactly to the experience of standing in front of a tank. This effect is heightened by the lighting (slanted upwards from below with blue-inflected tonalities). A line of seaweed fringes the bottom of the screen and a black border bolts in the image – as if the edges of the screen are the edges of a tank. You watch the octopus and its strange intermittent jerking movements. The Hatori watch it, too. They feel compelled to imitate it. They tune into its strange dance of propulsion-paroxysms. And slowly begin to mimic it, slowly putting more effort into it.

Bifo has recovered from his cathartic breakdown and joins in, flinging himself into a series of moves of his own, rubbing the crotch of his leather leggings, and then, after cracking open his zipper, squeezing his engorged penis and rubbing it raw, over-enthusiastically. 'The Healing', he thinks. 'The Healing'. The whole thing is like a crazy puppet dance, or epileptic marionette ritual.

Behind the octopus, instead of ink, a strange pink-to-crimson plume spirals upwards. After five minutes, the octopus starts to slowly rotate (either that or the camera starts to move around it—it's not clear), and with the Hatori and Bifo and you, now collapsed in exhaustion, prostrated before the screen as if worshipping an Octopus God, a human figure becomes visible behind the octopus. Once the rotation is complete, we see it is the figure of a young man. A Palestinian freedom fighter. His torso is crisscrossed with whip marks, nailed through the wrists to the octopus's back. We are informed by a caption that vintage crucifixion-era nails have been used. These were discovered recently during an archeological dig in Gaza and purchased at Sotheby's in what was a vicious price war that involved off-planet Neo-Vaticanists.

The crucified figure is a fiberglass reconstruction/reanimation produced by the artist Helen Marten. Finely carved in extinct zebrawood with an animated look of optimism, expressed through the eyes looking upwards and lips minimally parted in expression of joy. The naked body is carved with detailed musculature and a penis represented by a large wooden tubular wind chime (poplar) and oversized shiny plastic purple glaze cherries hanging beside. The cherries wittily inject a sense of

genital ambiguity or even a sense of (non) castration. The playful un-phallus of the un-presence; or presence as stand in for 'lack'. The arms are depicted in a cubist-style, in a quiet nod to Art History. And the blood coming from her wounds turns out to be cherry aid. This is why the plume in the water is pink-to-crimson. And also why there is a certain sweetness in the air. The artwork is titled: 'In the Art world no one can hear you cherry poppin' (2026- on-going).

The octo-cifixion seems to float closer to the viewers at one point. The super HD res allows you to inspect the intricate carving of the wood-face. It includes skin pores, eyelashes - and as the expression of the face changes through material-manip-programming we see terrified eyes, and even a detailed version of the interior of the screaming mouth (the tongue is made of chair canning). You can even follow the progression of individual bubbles emitting from the man's mouth (which are doubled in the space, you just noticed, by glass orbs suspended by monofilament from the ceiling), upwards to the top of the tank/screen. The Hatori realize, in unison, imbued with new energy, that they are inside the crucified figure's mouth; that the gallery IS this inside, a wood-lined Victorian drawing room. And that we, the rest of us viewers, are like unmoored teeth, cratered molars with exposed nerves, maybe able to walk on exposed roots but often dragged by saliva-currents. And after five minutes the octopus rotates, slowly again, and we are re-presented with the frontal image, this time armed with our knowledge that there is a figure nailed behind and that we are teeth. Or like teeth. Hard, enameled bodies. But with arms and root-legs and wooden face-masks.

Suddenly, a gigantic dead octopus on a hook descends from the ceiling, cutting through the sea of glass orbs. Is it real or is it in the film? It is unclear. The animal is studded with crystal minerals. The light hits it and it is shot back as beautiful rainbows of darting beams. The animal twirls like a disco ball. As its tentacles touch ground, at the end of the animal's first full rotation, we—everyone in the room, including you, is now jacked into the Hatori lines and feeling like aggregated calcium clumps--see it is gagged, but still alive, with a vagina-penis-beak refurb. Plastic cherries coated with glycerin dangle beside the prosthetic. A multitude of scorpions crawl out from around the cherries, from two small incisions that look like whale gills. They are blood-stained and swarm between the cephalopod's tentacles. The climb into its vagina-penis-beak and the prosthetic swells up and splits. It turns transparent and glistens like a sun. The Hatori, and everyone else as well, moving as though lobotomized, cannot help but start licking, like a litter of hungry pigs, the octopus' broken vagina-penis-beak refurb. Licking it intensely, you in particular, you and Bifo, spitting on it and biting it and rubbing it with our thumbs and digging your nails into it as blood drips down. Blood and fluoride. Bifo is digging in, beside you, in a particularly ferocious manner, with both of his tongues, allowing others to finger and lick his chest cunt, and jamming his finger into one of your rectal orifices. After about ten rotations, everyone realizes that the film is looped, although it is not possible to identify where the cut is - the looping of the film's narrative syncs perfectly with the physical movement of the octopus. Everyone has been licking the screen.

When you look around you, you realize that the Victorian drawing room is again an old industrial-military folly and that the Hatori have moved off, unplugged everyone from their lines. You feel grounded again, but unsure as to where the sister-sisters-hyenas are any more. You hear their howls every now and then. And Bifo's laughter booms out from one dark corner and then another. The cold dampness of the interior clings to your face, to your eyes and to the inside of your nostrils as you look around and acclimate to the interior, appreciate its vastness. It's the closest thing you know to the lightless void into which the cubed-out whale was lost.

Moving on, deeper into the space and into neo-margarita drunkenness, you find a series of linked projections titled 'Nauman 1 to 6'. It is a re-screening of Nauman's classic studio-series projected blurrily onto the side of the Titanic wreck in its location off the coast of Newfoundland. But the Titanic is really a remake of the Costa Concordia with Godard's sarcophagus supposedly chained to a bedpost in the captain's quarters. (The insufferable JLG was finally buried alive by a group of paratroopers hired by the descendants of the cyclist Eddy Merckx.) An oscillation between historical reconstruction and cinematic entropy, complicated by our realization that the bubbles from the cameraman's breathing equipment are streaming up in front of both projection and hull of the

shipwrecked vessel - a complex layering of gaze, perspective and surface. It also slowly becomes obvious, in the decipherment of cinematic syntax, that these are not the actual Nauman pieces, but fuzzy 'remakes'—that is, torture videos downloaded from the 'Blows of the Apparatus' blog. Truncheon rape sequences mostly, with various sections subtitled—'Algerian Pleasure Howls', 'Black Out (and In) and Sometimes Red Right After', 'Africa on a Stick'...

At this point, deciphering these downloaded and degraded images, you feel a series of small creatures brush past your feet. When you look down you see it is a massive flock of some kind of beetle or scorpion, the size of a human hand, with green witch-fingers instead of stingers. They are the creatures that fell out of the octopus's penis-vagina-beak refurb. Although disconcerting at first, it is clear that the beetles are harmless, scuttling back and forth beneath the screens. Nevertheless, it is not a pleasant experience and you decide it would be a good time to leave. Looking around, however, it is not easy to locate the exit. The screens block your view and you are not sure exactly of where you came in or where you are. Some of the screens are projected on both sides, sometimes with the same film. Some of them, on the other hand, seem to alternate with the projection of a series of different and unrelated films. And now you notice that it seems as if some of the screens rotate or move slowly around the space. All of which makes orientation problematic. As you move in what you think is the direction of the exit, you grow aware that you are going exactly the wrong way. There are further projections that catch your attention and fend off any despair around the possibility that you may be eternally trapped.

To the right, a projection of Bill Viola's 'Ocean Without a Shore' (2007; recovered 2189) onto the body of a swimming dolphin. This rearticulates Viola's lyrical meditation on Life and Death and the Mystical River Beneath into slapstick comedy, as the diver/projectionist struggles to keep the film projection legible on the side of the fast moving dolphin. The dolphin joining in this game of high-jinx, twisting and turning erratically to make the job as difficult as possible - at certain points completely losing the projectionist and coming up to the screen to perform its bobbing head laughter and flapping its fins in pseudo-applause. Like a comedy character's aside in a Shakespearean play. Or Jerry Lewis. But this may be no Viola film at all. It may be a Ryan Trecartin—who, it was finally revealed in 2082, never existed, being simply Viola's alter-ego, side-projected as the final distillation of his Maimonian thinking—the video moves from the dolphin to a school of jittery mackerel, further fragmenting the already fragmented narrative of white-trash ventriloquism/mystical-contemplation-through-hidden-messages-in-hideous-voices onto the million silvered bodies of the fish swarm. The fish, at irregular intervals, reconfigure into a number that marks the exact time that has elapsed in the film—1:17; 2:39, 5:44, 9:12. This self-referential time-stamp marks, as the critic Nemamin Nemanon has insta-reviewed XV\$XV\$ XV4 Journal,

'the apogee of the purging critique of the residual dimensions of representation and narrative. This systematic restriction to the elementary principles of a critique of representation combines all the strategies previously applied separately in the pictorial, sculptural and filmic conventions of representation: in this manner the real time principle is combined with the principle of self-reflexivity; the indexical gesture is superimposed on the language of pure performativity. Filmic representation in this advanced state of tautological self-reflexivity recognizes only the temporal and the kinetic dimension of its medium as the essential conditions of film (not its narrative conventions or its illusionistic representations).

"In this rigorous reduction of the filmic image to its elementary functions (pure duration, pure recording, pure indexical presence) the dialectic of late modernist rationality suddenly appears: that the elimination of narrative and agency, of representation and the imaginary from the (filmic) image, driven by the desire to dismantle the ideological conditions of media representation, makes manifest the very order of technocratic and media rationality that the calculated and industrially produced forms of narrative and myth conceal. Stripped of narrative's compensatory function and of representation's substitutional effects, the actually governing conditions of vacuity and separateness, the absence of sociality and communication ruling public space, appear now in undisguised violence within the restrictive prohibitions of the aesthetic structure itself.'

As you move on, the objects in the distance you were looking at, without much comprehension, come into focus. At first they seem like strange trees or cacti or some kind of strange desert flower. But you quickly realize that they are crucifixion-like structures. Each one is lit from below with a strange mauve light, more substance than just waves and particles. And at the top of each of these structures, there is a human figure, seemingly tied to it and squirming in agony or ecstasy. It's not clear which. Only the level of animal intensity at which it is happening is easy to understand.

Suddenly, a figure moves in from the left. A large figure. A large version of the beetles that you saw scuttling by your feet earlier. Now that the creature is standing erect, walking on two legs with grafted oversized gorilla feet, the green witch-finger that was its stinger is transformed into a giant, fluorescent and throbbing phallus, the unpresence materialized and frightening. Lack undone.

'Please come this way,' the beetle says to you in a strange metallic voice, gripping your shoulder with a claw, at once sternly and reassuringly. You try to say something, but instead follow subserviently as the beetle, moving beside you, wrapping his arm around your shoulders like an understanding pastor, explains the predicament you now find yourself in.

'I'm glad you finally arrived. I'm sure you must have had prophesy-dreams about this. In some ways this is what you have always desired. First, we insert a flesh root in your rectum and another up your vagina. The whole process will be lubricated by cherry cough medicine. We will castrate and insert the flesh root directly into your digestive system, with subsidiary life support insertions into your nose and mouth. Then, we have to extract your eyeballs. YOU WILL no longer have responsibility for your own experience which is obviously a curse.'

The beetle turns to you, gazes into your eyes tenderly, and says 'These are wounds of love.' And a strange emotion, a kind of mystical awe that words could never capture falls over both you and the insect. You feel can feel this in him. You can feel each other; feel yourselves inside each other. He kneels before you as if you are a little child again, the child you were when your parents died, during a police raid on an Aztec ritual ceremony in which they were going to extract your heart in order to ferment it and drink the essence of what was left of you. This is like a fault-line in the moment, in time, through which you are freefalling. The bliss would be complete if the shadow of a worry that you will eventually be snapped back into a miserable and barren existence could be eradicated.

The beetle says, "You let me play once in your garden, to-day you shall come with me to my garden, which is Paradise." And the shadow of the worry is drained of something vital. This is your Healing.

Hoisted up, you feel nails-tentacles slide through your hand and wrap back on themselves. Then, you feel your eyes scooped out and vortex nerve cut – black - as your penis and vagina are gutted out. You are sliced up your chest. Insects move into the cavity left where your viscera once sat. The beetle orders you be hoisted up on a green and fluffy cactus-cross. Its spikes dig into your back and come out of your torso, around the crevice-wound through which the insects are crawling in. The tips of the cacti spikes are crystal. Or they are just polished tempered glass. They glint. Your disfigured dwarf body has been invaded by the sensations that are impossible to remake as words. A collapse of language. These sensations are overtaking you. Extracting you from the banalities of life. You can remember exactly where this happened before—at the Fiat plant in Turin. Eddy Marckx was there. With the light playing through his sideburns.

And then the light is returning and you see the crowd in front. Crude features of workers. Odourous bodies and hairy limbs. You look down and the Hatori and Bifo are looking back up at you. The beetle is nowhere to be seen. You may be behind a screen, part of a movie in the exhibition. This sounds right. The crowd are stripping off and masturbating. Bifo is laughing, as he furiously pumps his penis into his cruciform vagina. Bifo is about to explode and heal himself again. Heal us all.

# CHATEAUSHATTO