

VECTOR

VECTOR ISSUE 1 - 2008

Founder/Editor: Peter Gregorio
Managing Editor: Valerie Garlick

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David Ambrose
Antonino D'Ambrosio
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Valerie Garlick
Paul Selesko
Gary Stephan

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www.vector.bz

Vector Productions Inc.
Po Box 7746
New York, New York 10116, USA
info@vector.bz
917.797.4438

The Mint Print
print@themintprint.com
201.645.0258

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Contents:

Introduction	5
David Bernard Ambrose	6
Erica Baum	9
Sarah Chacich	15
Damien Crisp	17
Leo De Goede	20
Cheryl Donegan	29
Mike Egan	42
Valerie Garlick	47
Hadassa Goldvicht	57
Alisha Kerlin	69
Jason Bailer Losh	75
Drew Lowenstein	76
Justin Mata	85
Bertold Mathes	90
Klaus Merkel	93
Lars Norgard	100
Lucio Pozzi	111
Seth Price	115
Ted Riederer	120
Gary Stephan	129

Peter Gregorio: *Introduction*

The speed of image making has grown far more advanced and complex than Walter Benjamin could have imagined since he wrote, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" in 1936. In addition to photography and film, we now have digital video and photography, copy machines, fax machines, printers, video projectors, and scanners. We even have video and photography in our cell phones. These new technologies have changed the way art is made, as well as the content of the art itself.

The artist Kelly Walker works with recycled images from art and culture. His work is a post neo-mechanical reproduction. He is taking images from media; already a visual sound bite, removed and isolated bits of reality, and then printing them into a poster. He uses images that have been used in art before. One of his photographs comes from a photo used in an Andy Warhol artwork. He is recycling an already appropriated image to make his work. It is an appropriated appropriation.

Walker using a scanner scans the wall of the gallery he has a show at and creates a new virtual wall made out of printouts of the scanning. This is a removal of authenticity into the image of the real. It is a manifested virtual world. This virtual world has become our world. We are playing video games, communicating with people on cell phones, being entertained by recordings of music regurgitated into computer codes then recycled back into sound and images. This is our world. We may spend a majority of our day in this reproduced world.

In the case of my work, I am making paintings on canvas out of oil mixed with pigments on cotton canvas with a plastic gesso base. This in itself is a form of advanced technology. To arrive at my content I use photography, which I then scan through a film scanner to digitize the burn of the image. Then I manipulate the images using advanced computer programming. This image that has been pumped through various forms of technology then becomes the template for the imagery in the paintings. I tend to think of this process the same way a mathematician puts numbers through a formula and receives a different set of integers, which can then be grafted at the conclusion of the metamorphosis.

We now arrive at the moment of the multiplicity of layers, which I think is actually closer to the nature of reality than we have ever been. Even now there are theories that state the possibility that the nature of reality is a holographic one, in which the information of things is different than the way things are perceived. Thus there may not be this three dimensional reality that we live in. In effect, it could be a reproduction of the state of things formulated through our senses, a form of [bio]mechanical reproduction.



David Bernard Ambrose, *Man of Sorrows*, Video Still, 2007

David Bernard Ambrose: *On video art and transcending the medium*

Video art is inherently tied to its medium. Video requires the same technology used to view movies and television, but video art has developed its own language different from its technical predecessors because it is created to explore and analyze subject matter that the mass media does not. This is the video artists responsibility.

It is difficult for the video art viewer to look at a television or a projection and separate video art from the medium in which they watch on a regular basis; this being reality TV, narratives, dramas, news and commercials. The expectation when viewing video art should be different. Video art usually does not employ the same timing and editing style that mass media uses and the production style has much less importance, but more emphasis is put on creating high concept artwork. Video art takes the cerebral approach to the viewer's senses and imagination.

Video art has been primarily conceptual. Video has in past broken the rules and conventions of the medium, but will it continue to in the future? Since its inception not much has changed. In 1965 when Nam June Paik showed hour old footage of the Pope parading down 5th Avenue in a Greenwich Village Café and Yoko Ono the same year showed the world a film of her sitting silently on a stage and inviting the audience to cut her hair. The video art world is still occupied by documentaries like these of events and art performances.

Consider the master works of art from the past in painting, sculpture, and photography, an emphasis has been put on aesthetics and challenged our sense of design, form, and beauty. Video artists have not immersed themselves into this tradition of visual art that has created the masterpieces. The majority of video artists have gone the route of conceptual art, which grew to popularity around the same time video art was born in the 1960's.

The next step for video art is to continue to progress from experimental films and documentaries in order to develop a new visual language that will further challenge mass media. Will video take on the challenge of an evolving aesthetic? To do this, video must transcend the medium.

When the viewer perceives video art and all connotation to mass media is irrelevant, then the artwork will exist on its own terms.

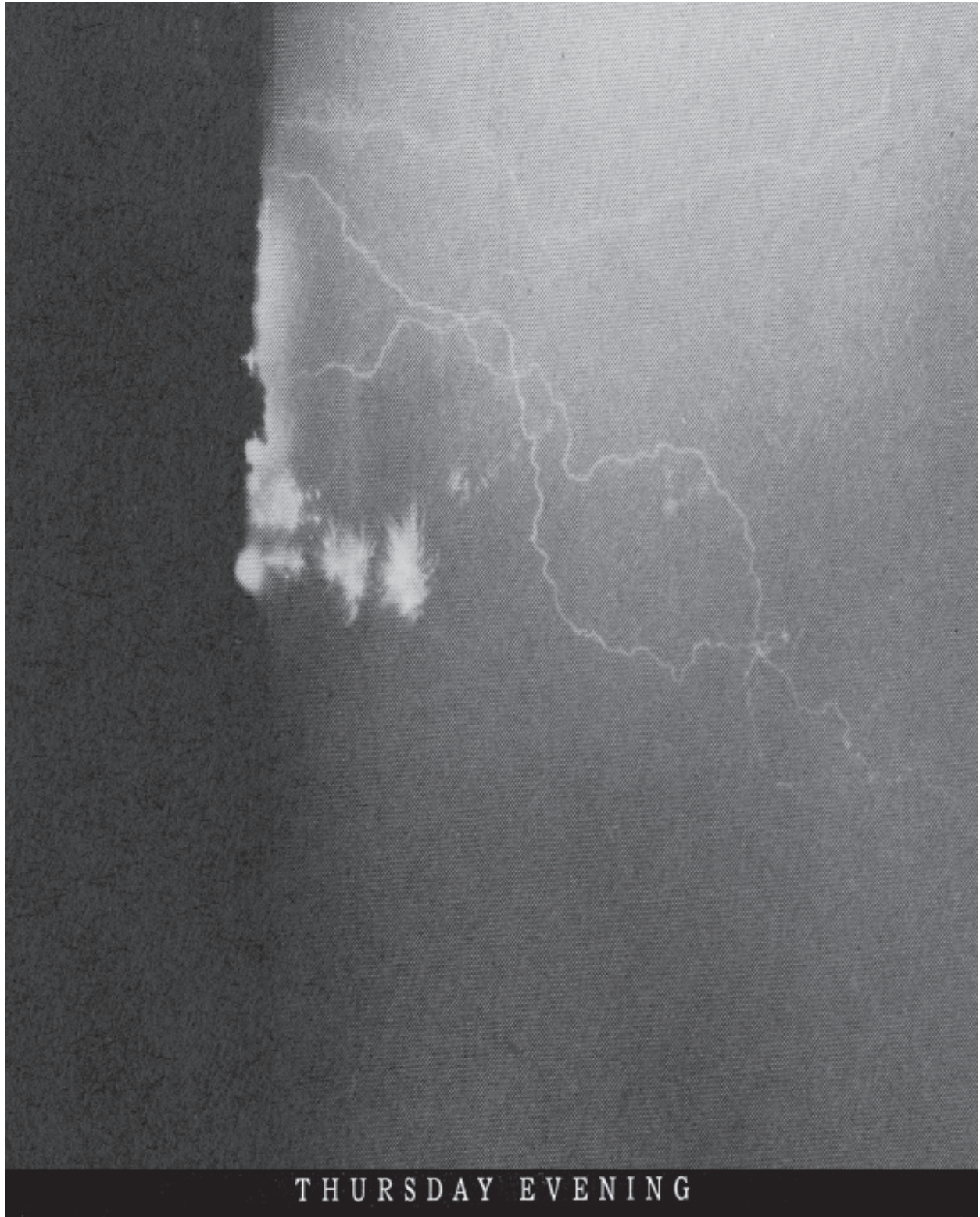
SIGHTINGS –

Erica Baum



AFTER MIDNIGHT SUNDAY







FRIDAY AFTERNOON

A white egg shaped object was observed ascending into a fog bank and descending again at a greater distance before moving away. It had pulsating white or pinkish lights around a rim which look like a flashing theater marquee.
Humming.

Two bakers observed a slow-moving, glowing, red-tinged white globe glide noiselessly over a bakery. It hovered about 20 seconds before moving out of sight.
Hissing.

A bright blue glowing object was seen flying in circular and zig-zag patterns. At times a green light could be seen pulsating at tree-top level.
Whirring.

An oval object with rotating balls of white light was sighted. It passed first in front of and then disappeared behind low cumulous clouds.
Clicking.

A silvery thin object issuing an 8-foot colored vertical exhaust and carrying an orangish light descended with a falling-leaf motion and disappeared behind trees in a large swamp.
Buzzing.

She glanced outside and saw a red glowing object with a point on top and a blue glowing square on it's underside flying with a fluttering motion toward and then over Duck Pond. It circled and wobbled momentarily and then reversed direction without turning.
Ringing.

An object was sighted which looked like a white dish inverted upon a dish with a dark ring around it's perimeter. The light was first a dim white light which brightened and dimmed to nothing and was replaced by first a purple then a blue and back to a white light again.
Sputtering.

A driver left her vehicle to get a closer look at a ball of fire hovering low over snow-covered trees. When she approached within 150 feet of it with a flashlight, it accelerated away at a 45 degree angle, causing snow on the treetops to swirl.
Rattling.

The object was described as being oval with a dome and surrounded by a ring of vapor. It glowed violet when it was stationary but turned to a greenish blue when it moved away with a dancing motion.
Swishing.

A green triangular shaped object with its blunt end forward hovered over a farm before accelerating away at great speed and disappearing over the horizon.
Whooshing.

12/12/08

Dear Rachel,

How's it going? Same old same old here in New York. You were the wiser to get away for a while... I've been down lately... I'm wondering if I'm ever going to "make" it. ~~Wow~~ Get this, Jenny gave Brian a solo show, can you believe it? Also, that ass hole curator John totally ignored me at his last opening at MoMA Hassan. Apparently it was more important to talk to that bitch Jenny. I can't help but wonder if she gives good head. Anyway, I believe in my art; that's what's really important - I totally miss MIMOSA Saturdays!

Yours,
Sara

excerpt from **Identified As An American**

DAMIEN CRISP



→ Manhattan



G.M. Building

ON the seventh hour of his 8½-hour shift at a Midtown office building, Laz, 41, looks weary as he stands with his hands clasped in front of him.

“The standing is the worst part,” says the security guard of three years.

Invisibly tethered to his post, he paces back and forth a few feet from his original spot to keep the blood moving in his legs. Listening to music is forbidden. Dispensing directions to lost guests is the extent of his socializing.

The good part, Laz says, is meeting the celebrities and athletes that come through, though “meet” is defined loosely, considering he never gets to converse with them, just nod and open the guarded glass gates with a smile.

West Village

Four girlfriends gather for lunch at their favorite spot. One produces a huge engagement ring on her left hand to a chorus of squeals. Another whines about her own romantic struggles, having gone through an ambush breakup just that morning. “Sorry,” she grumbles, “I’m having trust issues with men right now.”

Three well-dressed women wander through a wonderland of designer shoes with three-figure price tags. They drool over spiked heels, platform wedges, patent-leather boots. One complains that she doesn’t have enough money, but asks the salesman for a few different pairs in her size anyway.

Keep a Low Profile. Your dress, conduct, and mannerisms should not attract attention.

BLOOD-LAND



◀ MOVIE EXECUTIVE

He hasn't worked in two months. "No one is doing films anymore. People are afraid." "You can die of hope in Hollywood. They're not helpful at all," he says.

If you do not need bodyguards, do not use them. If you must have bodyguards, keep them to a minimum and ensure that they blend in with the other personnel around you.

Someday the tables will turn. You'll tire of having your picture taken. You'll snatch the camera from an unsuspecting photographer and start snapping away at will. Till then... smile!

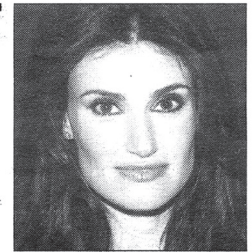
MORE THAN 45 YEARS AFTER HER UNTIMELY DEATH, Marilyn Monroe is still the talk of Tinseltown.



MARILYN MONROE
Madonna photo mix-up.

Perilous pleasures *Theaters like the Shabistan Cinema*

NIGHT TO FORGET

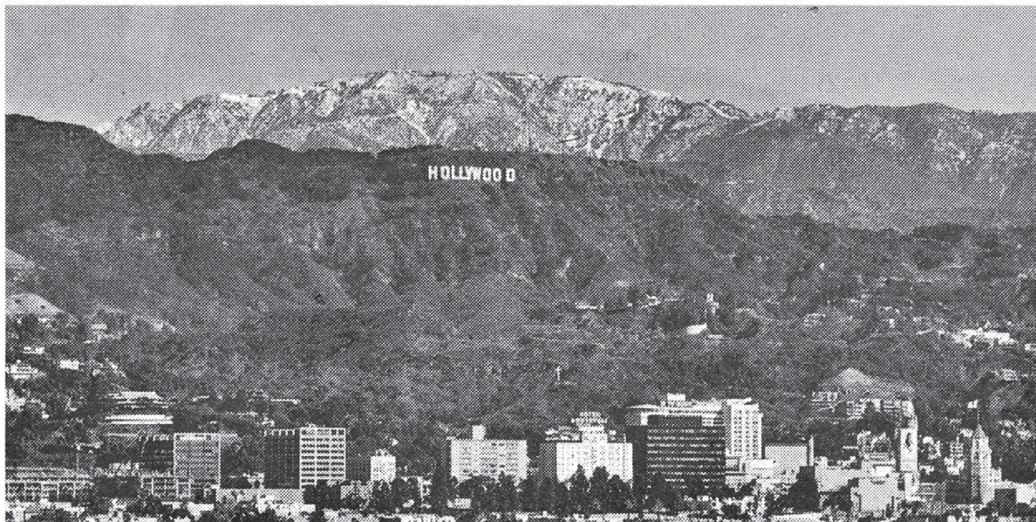


As the lights dim before the show begins, a pregnant **Cate Blanchett** rushes to her front-row seat.

Sick with the anxiety and stress of the situation, she's spent the past few days in bed out of fear her fragile state could harm her pregnancy.

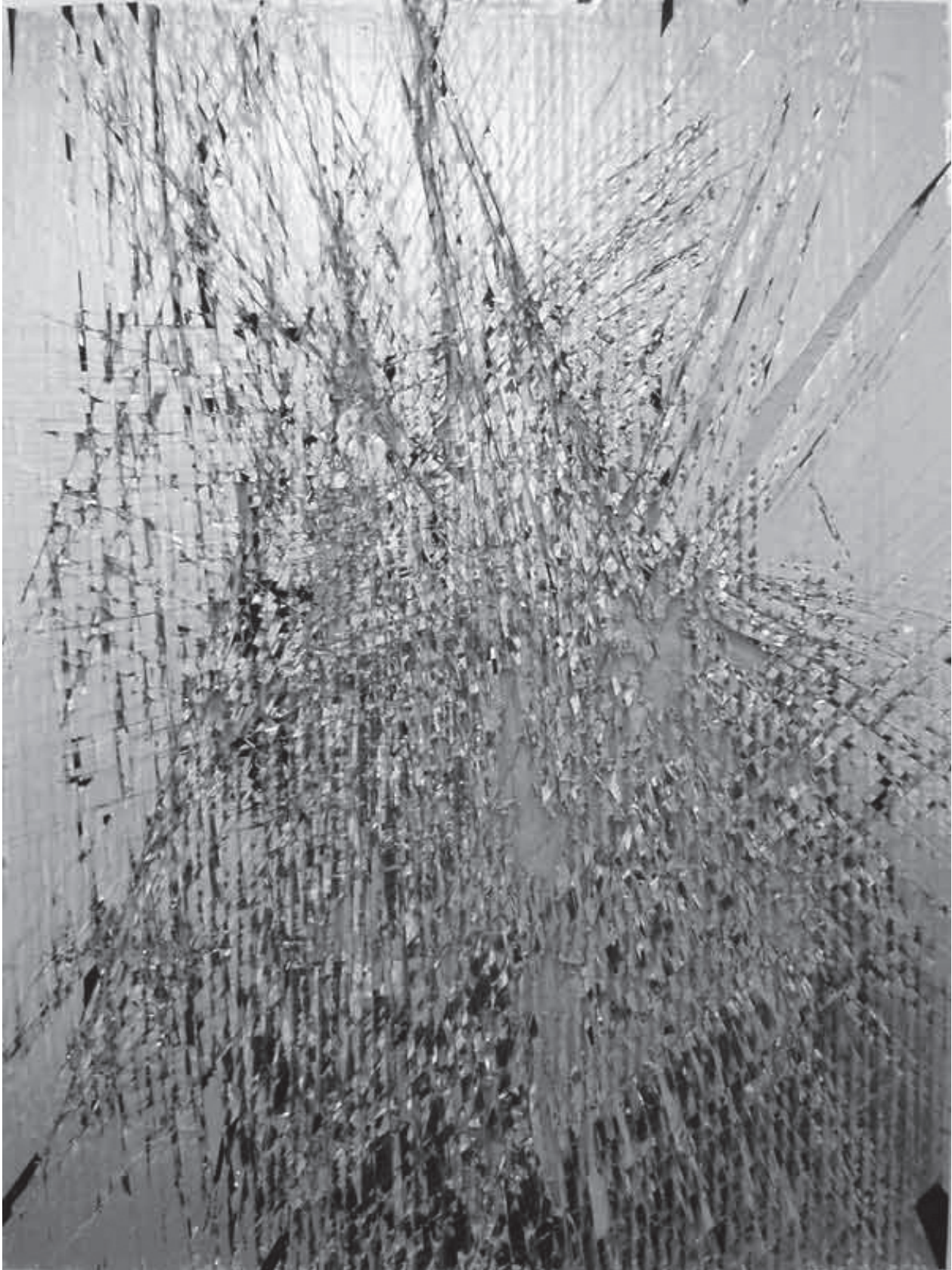
"I'll probably lose the babies over this."

Though she plans to go back to work in April for the film *Love and Other Impossible Pursuits* (in which she'll play an overweight woman), her top priority is, naturally, motherhood.



Lohan to work in morgue

You are always bringing something into yourself when you are playing a character. And if it's a dark soul, you carry that weight.



Cheryl Donegan, *Luxury Dust* (Gold), 2007

Leo De Goede: *Through the...*

"He called mirrors leaks. It amused him to pretend that mirrors were holes between two universes."*

Leaks. Mirrors. Holes.

What of paintings?

They used to be windows. Windows until their surfaces got clouded over. Mottled. Speckled. Color falling apart in small little dots placed evenly next to each other. Disintegrating. The surface asserting itself. Or maybe they still are windows. Just that the world seen from those windows is no longer the world paintings used to open onto.

Or maybe they're mirrors. Leaks.

The surface of some of Cheryl Donegan's paintings is silver or gold foil. Mirroring. She scratches into it. One cut at a time. Criss-crossing. Opening up. Wounding the surface. Making an opening. Drawing the viewer in. Peering. An inverted vista.

Branden Koch makes paintings that look as if they are retrieved, brought back up. From a hole in the floor of the studio. Looking down into a well, finding, gathering, collecting. Materials he picks up on his way to the studio somehow, miraculously, come back up out of this well and appear mirrored onto the canvas.

Jasmine Justice. Looking up from the full clutter of the everyday surrounding world, the sky, the limit, becomes a leak, an open space, never a void (Skyline, 2007) A decorative-almost pattern holding a prussian blue flat fullness (Skirt, 2007) A stage curtain pulled back to the 4 corners, of the world, of the canvas, opening a hole as a shutter onto the world of possibilities that exist nowhere outside of painting (Buzzbomb, 2007)

Another almost-decorative of folded cloth becomes a swirl of eyes, dervishing around a centered hole in Suzanne Joelson's painting.

Actual cloth, cheesecloth, muslin, strips of cotton, pushing into the space the viewer is in, out of whatever is out there on the other side, the other universum. Built up, tentacled, gridded, arranged. Making the space in which the painting is experienced the hole. Dona Nelson.

The built up, there as well, in Louise Fishman's camouflaged grids. Slowly. Over time. Filling up the hole that is the white canvas by circling around the holes left between the marks, the brushstrokes. Those small openings sending out rays of light, picking up color from around them. Each opening the tiny moment in between the two tides of breaths.

Gary Stephan hiding in plane sight. The in-between. The possible. Letting the stage do the acting. Making actors of the props. Folding onto multiple perspectives, opening up holes, leaks. Leaking.

Through the mirror of my eye.

In 2007 I brought together 8 painters under the title 'Unlikely'. Here I propose another grouping called 'Evidence' : painters reporting on the presence of the invisible.

*The opening quote is from Kurt Vonnegut's Breakfast of Champions.



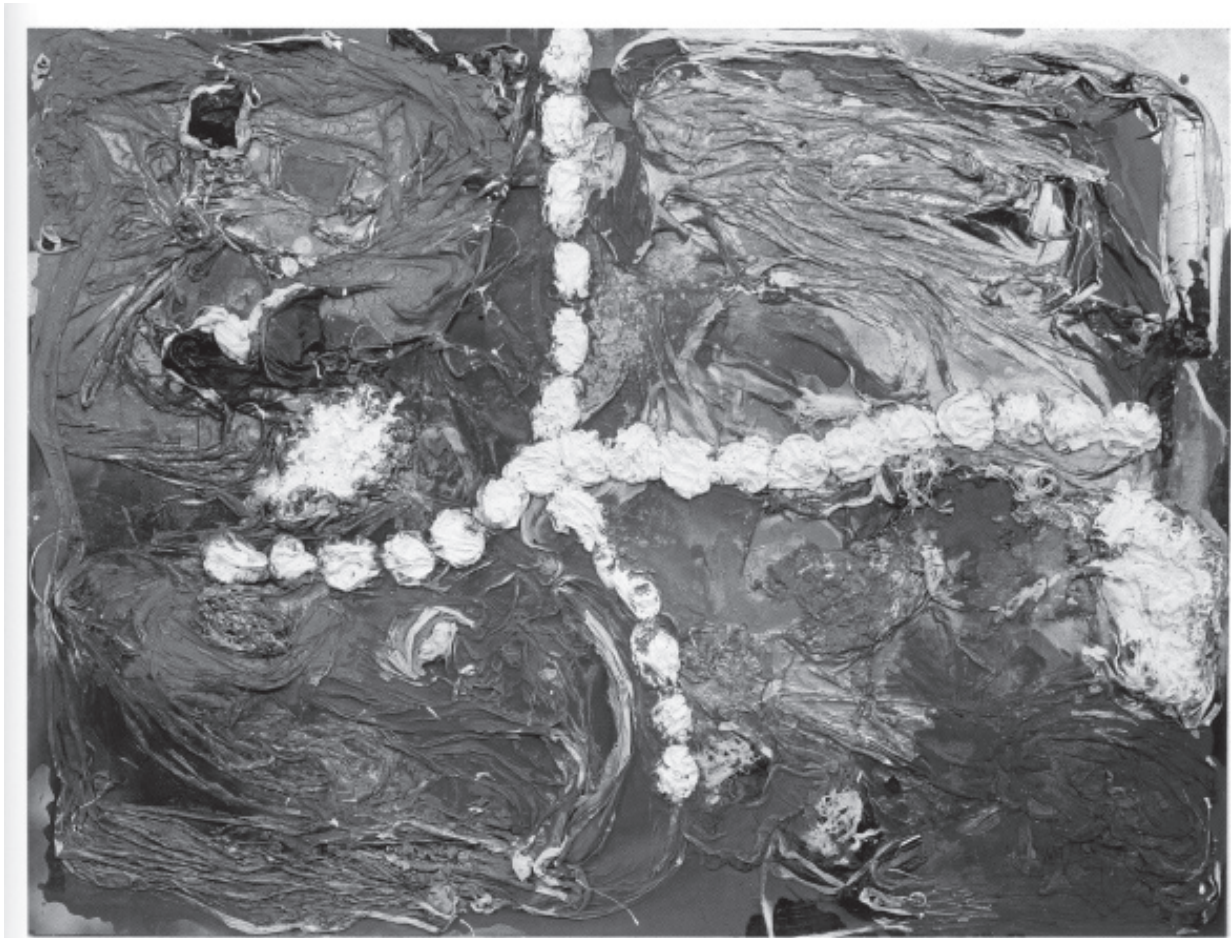
Branden Koch, *The Fear Of Others*, 2007



Jasmine Justice, *Buzzbomb*, 2007



Suzanne Joelson, *Ollie*, 2007



Dona Nelson, *Watery Arrangement*, 1992



Louise Fishman, *Hiding In The Ebb And Flow*, 2007



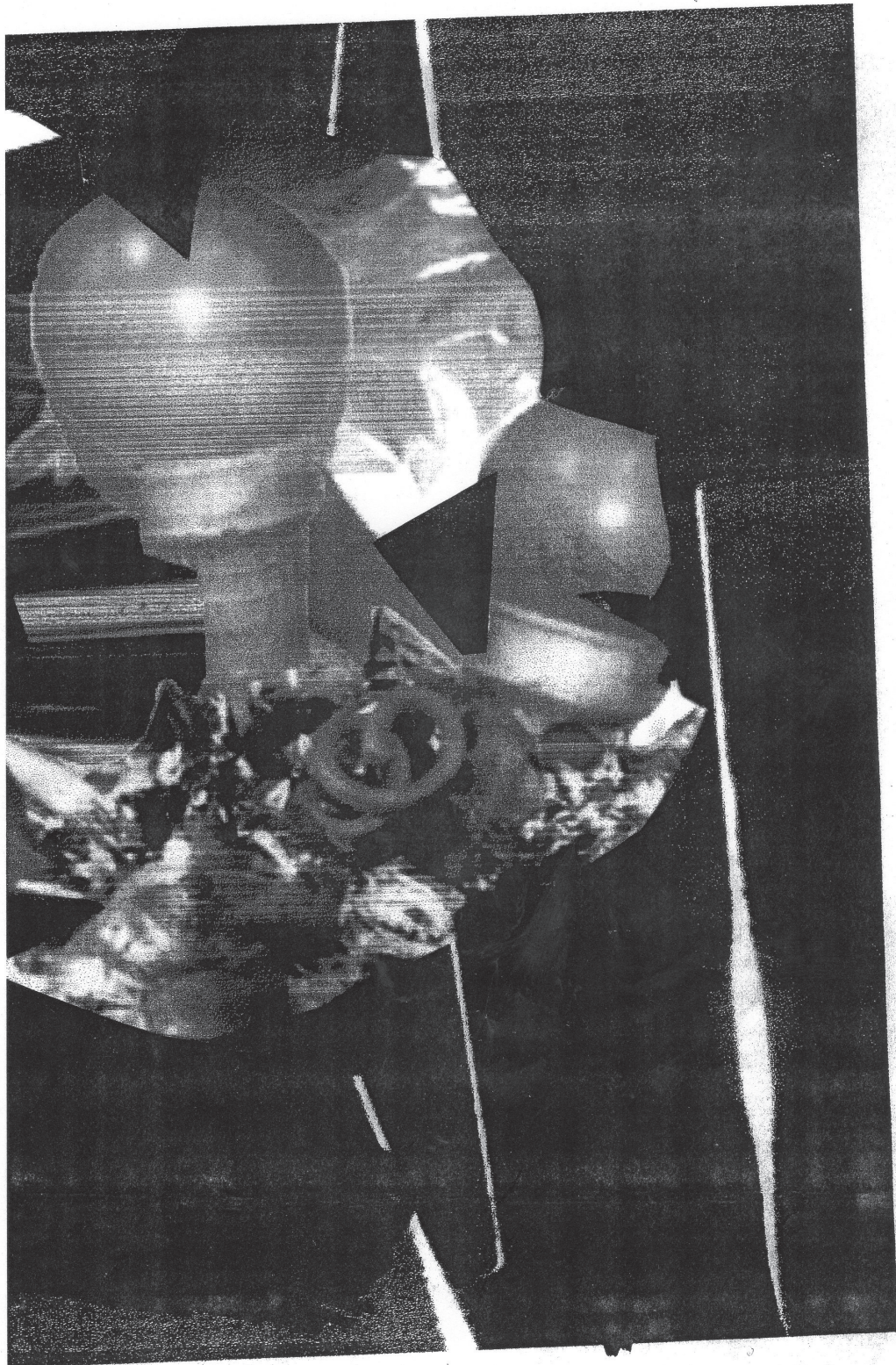
Gary Stephan, *Untitled*, 2007

Mouchette



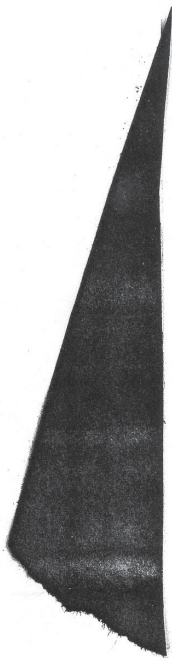
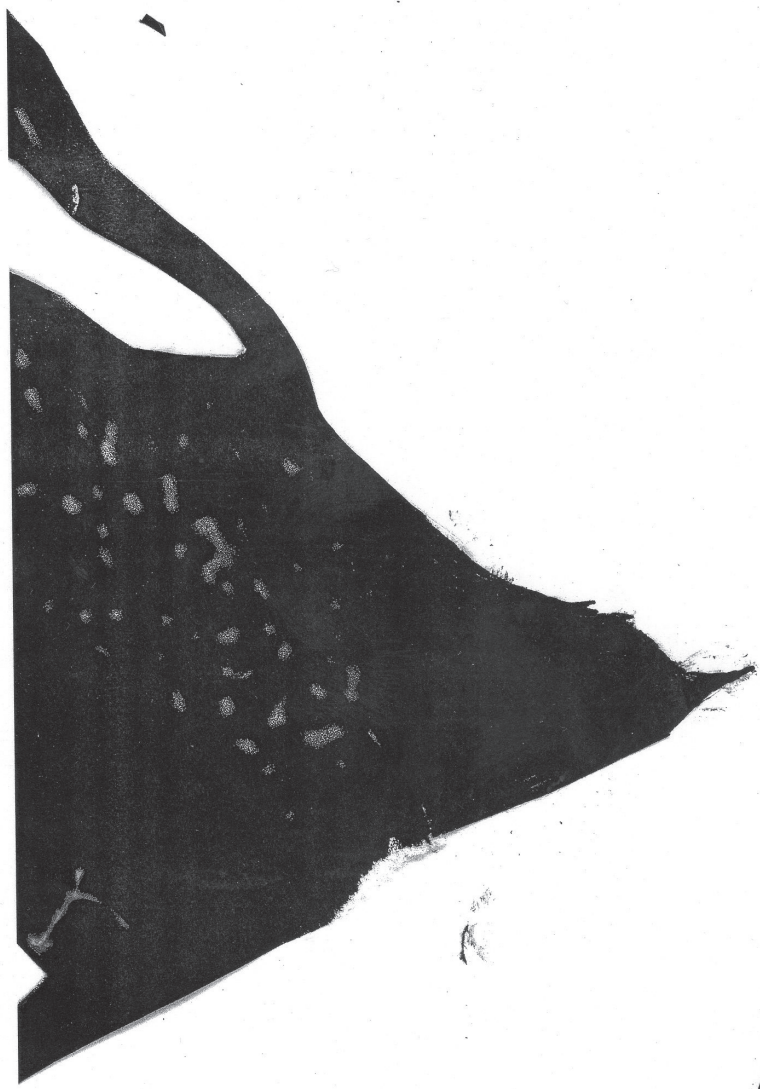


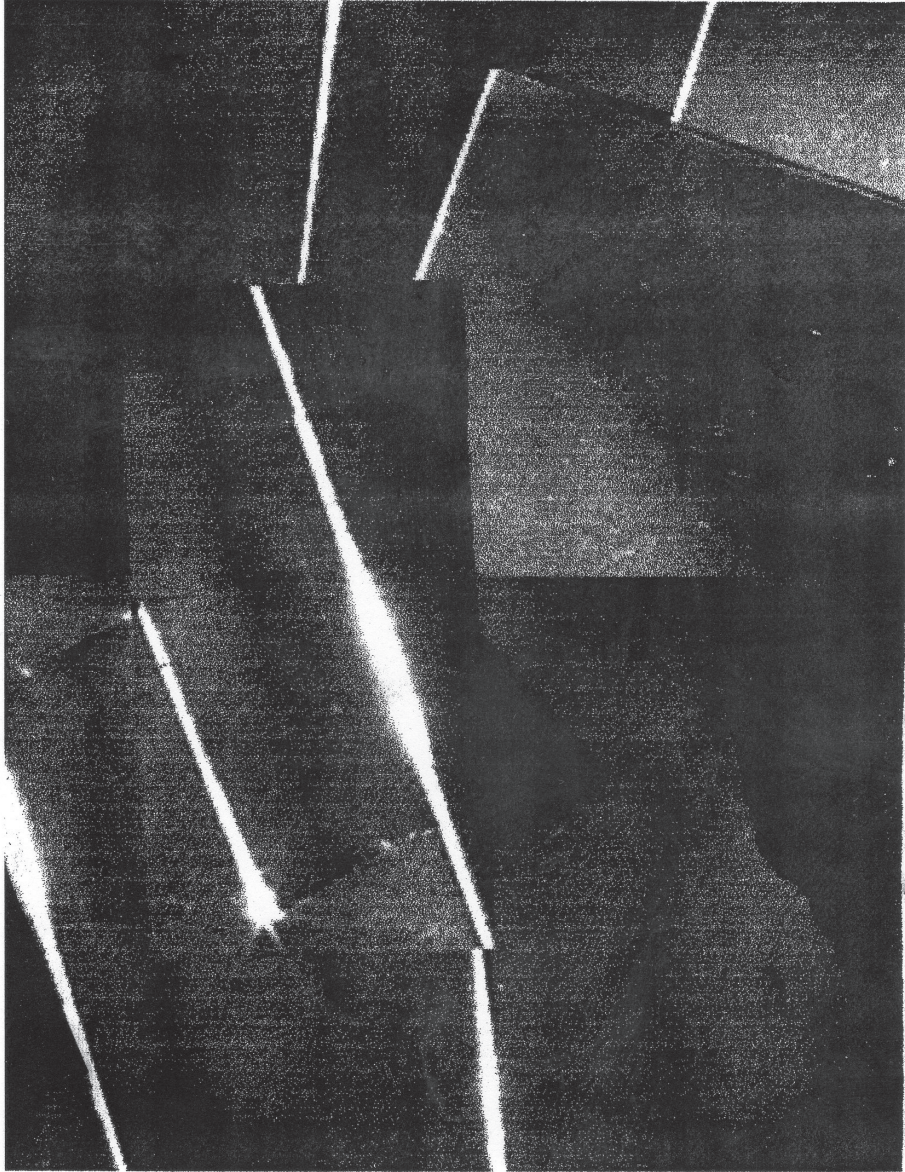




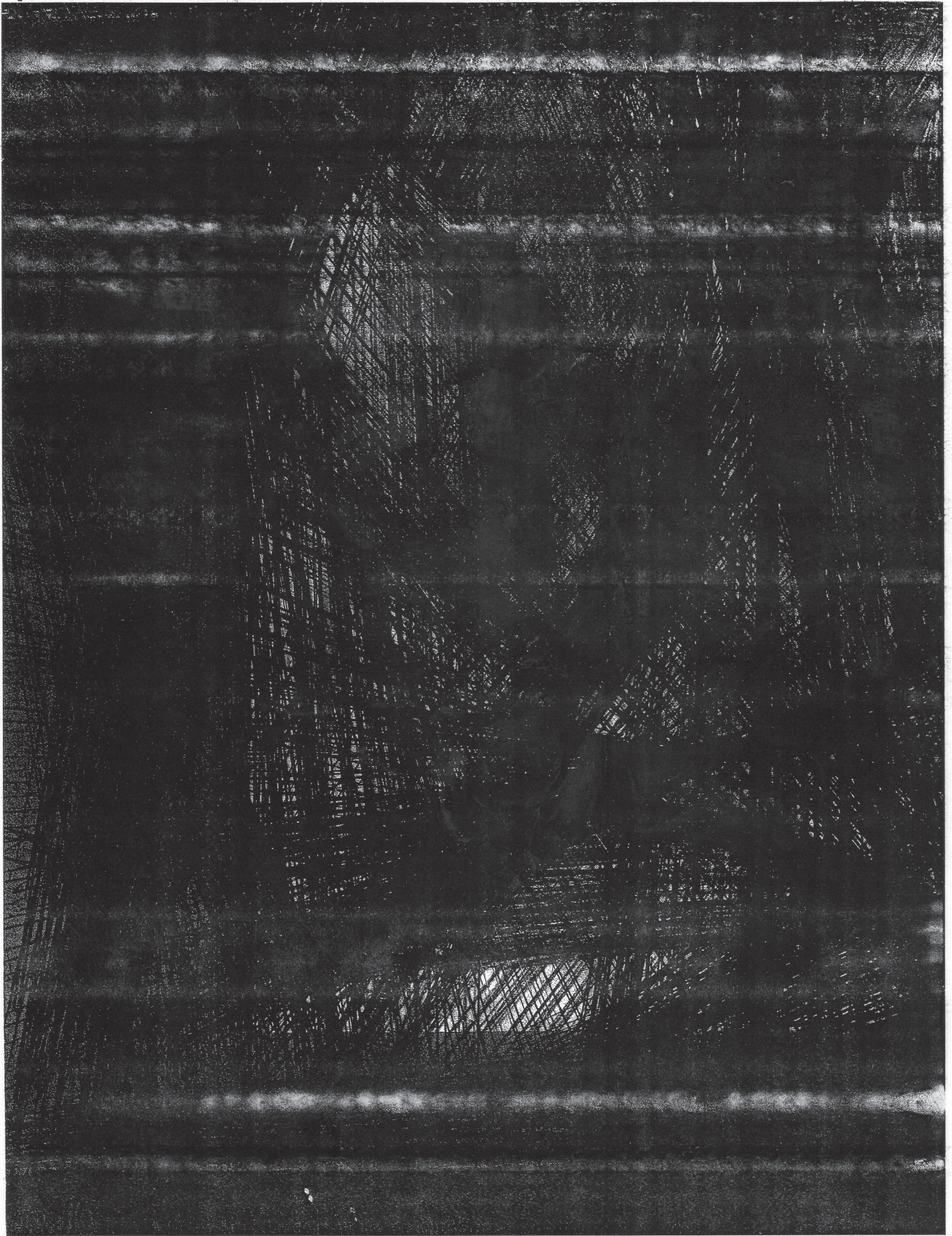


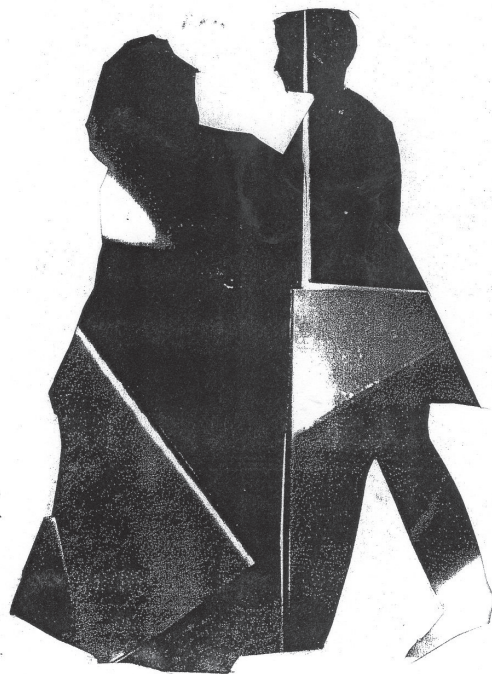














Mike Egan: *Artemis In Heat*

"The work turned everyone into beasts, animals fucking each other and fighting over scraps of feed, and that was why it was good, it didn't spare time for bullshit, it was rapid, voluptuous prose, something more akin to the density of a salty lotion because it fills in the cracks but it burned people off to it, a lot of them got angry and screamed about the injustice of so many paying attention to such a sordid thing, but the situation demanded attention, this was something that you just couldn't even take your eyes off of, it was like watching supermodels fuck in the Whitehouse while the President jerked off, something your subconscious had always suspected of being possible but a lack of precedence had never allowed such weird puzzle pieces as these to fit together in just the right way but someone, somewhere, had whittled their wood long enough and somehow had produced this – this aberrant mutant without fear or pity that you just couldn't not look at, and it fucked everybody up big time, there was really nothing to say afterwards, it was over, it had fucked everything up. So people were mad, but pussy mad, the kind of mad that is really just defense rather than offensive momentum, a conservative impulse to preserve rather than to explore, a denial of the risk that someone else had sacrificially given themselves over to, more jerking off. It wasn't really a question of better, but it did make everything else seem like a waste of time. All of those assholes who had never given it all truly over to the work but had kept some for themselves looked like the narcissistic posers they were, wanting to play the part but never truly taking it the hard way. So the whole thing was a big "FUCK YOU" to everything that sucked."

As she finished that last sentence of her art history paper, she was forced to stop, even as her manic momentum charged on. She had heard a noise.

She left her desk, and because the illuminated screen was the only source of light in the room, she left her laptop on. The noise had been unmistakably the sound of something fucked with; her intuitive sense of noises had not set off an unwarranted alarm. There are the ambient sounds of the inanimate, and then there are the sounds of animals, fucking with shit. There are also sounds that trick your mind. Who knew? She sure as hell didn't. She had a moment of fear. The hair on her arms and back stood up, she stopped padding her way toward the door to her apartment and stood very still. *What the fuck am I doing? THE DOOR TO MY APARTMENT IS LOCKED! Why would I go outside to "investigate?" Am I fucking stupid?* These thoughts were only the most literal; she had others, but why? She was confused about whether or not she had heard a sound in the first place. *This is precisely the motherfucking reason I can't get any fucking work done! Every time I have the least bit provocation my mind wants to flip away from the task I've attempted to focus it on, and outward towards some bullshit that has captivated my momentary improvisational imagination! This is why people need structure, to enslave their minds, because the nature of ideas just isn't powerful enough to inspire industry in the lives of humans! We need money and fear and oppression to make anything good, otherwise we just lay around and jerk off –*

She heard another fucking noise! *Oh shit, FUCK! Okay, still, door is locked, someone is out in the hall, go back to your computer, you don't live in this building alone.*

Then a key started turning the lock in the door.

The door opened just a bit, and she could hear the person now, it was a man, and it retreated away from the door as it cracked slowly open. She was on the other side of the door, and as the opening widened, her view was still blocked. She tried to peer through the crack at the hinges, trying to get a sense of what was on the other side. Nothing. The best chance she had of evading detection by the entering foe was hiding behind the door, since as soon as whatever or whoever was waiting in the hall cleared the threshold her whole studio loft would open up for visual inspection – except for the space right behind the door. That would also fortunately place her close to the door, but as she slinked up into the acute angle inside the door, she realized that also put her as physically close to the intruder as she could get.

Fuck it, I'll wait until this asshole is inside my apartment then I'll smash his fucking head in and run out, jump down the stairwell and start screaming until I get to the lobby. That's the plan, mother-fucker. She reached down into her umbrella holder and was instantly emboldened by the rough grip of her old field hockey stick. *It was time to get rough, bitches.*

She heard a breath behind her, in the crack of the door. She turned around and there was an eyeball and a noise, aimed right at her face. She jumped sideways into the door, throwing as much dead weight as she could into the air and against the door, slamming it closed. There was a crunch, and a gurgling scream, and a surprised, panicked flailing as the now distinctly male attacker fell back against the door and lurched back into the apartment.

She was on the ground, getting up, as her laptop screen powered off, eliminating any visibility as the door bounced off the hinge stops and slammed shut. As an angry, "WHAT THE FUCK..." came from somewhere to her left, she jumped up and swung hard towards a dark shape a foot above her head a few steps away. She couldn't have asked for better target, and she heard the stick hit jaw and then that bitch was down. She flipped the lights so she could unlock the door, and as she flung it open she glanced back.

"ohmigod," she said very quickly. It was Paul.

She'd fucked him up bad, but he still looked hot somehow, almost like how Mel Gibson looked after getting beaten and smashed by the evil road cult in that movie where he drives a semi truck filled with sand with that raw little kid with the razor boomerang. But Paul wasn't getting up and going home after this one, at least not right away. *Fuck ME, this is fucked up.* His nose was broken, kinda crunched and bent at the end, and there was a big gash on the side of his chin where she'd hit him with the stick.

She picked up her phone, and put it right back down. She decided to take care of it herself.

She could tell he was breathing because he kept blowing blood bubbles out of his unsmushed nostril. She ran to the bathroom and grabbed all of her towels, which she threw out on the floor into a large nest and then gently rolled him over and onto, so that he was laying on his back. She didn't want to move him too much, so she ran hot water over a towel and straddled him lightly, dabbing at his face. She knew he was eventually going to have to go to the hospital for his nose, and maybe for some stitches on his chin, and he'd probably be disfigured for life, but she didn't feel like having an EMS crew invade her crib asking what the fuck had happened. She figured it would be better if she just took him in a cab over to St. Vincent's.

She wasn't wearing much, just small lo-cut lace panties and an old t-shirt. As she moved around on top of him, she started to think about sex. Paul was hot. She liked it on top; that was the only way she could cum. She pushed her ass down into his crotch a little more firmly. *That feels nice; I wonder if, if I could get him hard right now?*

As she cleaned the blood off his face, she started to rock, ever so lightly, up and down over his dick. And even though his eyes were closed and he didn't seem like he was waking up, she thought she felt him stiffen – ever so slightly. She decided to check.

By this point, her pussy was past moist, more like soaked, and she had become unalterably horny. She wanted to fuck. So she gently moved her torso down his pelvis, until her head was at his waist, and unbuckled his trousers, pulling them down to his knees. Then she started massaging, running her fingers over his dick, over his balls, and he popped to a semi. It was on.

She pulled his dick out of his underwear, and lightly ran her fingers up and down the shaft. He got a little stiffer. So she bent down, holding his balls lightly in her hand, and starting sucking on the tip, then working her lips down the shaft, until his whole dick was in her mouth. She sucked it as slow as she possibly could, taking big licks up and down, lubricating it with her spit, sucking on it, trying to fill it and suck the cum out.

She was banging sloppy wet now, she reached down into her panties and starting massaging her clit, which was already swollen and throbbing. He still hadn't woken up yet, and she pushed her panties down to her ankles and stepped out of them. Then as carefully as she could – by this point she was tripping hard off the idea of fucking an unconscious person – she straddled him again, this time sliding his hard cock straight into her glisteningly wet pussy. She sat down on it, fully pushing him inside all the way, she leaned back and he was all the way up in her, she was fucking him and his dick was so fucking hard! She started working it out slowly, because by this point every slight tense movement was sending shockwaves through her pussy and into her tits and her ass and up through her delicate collarbone and beautiful neck and her skin was tingling, now she raised up and down, sliding him almost out of her, but catching the edge of the tip of his dick in her slick, swollen lips, sliding back down on top, grinding her crotch into his, rocking fast and light back and forth. She was so pumped full of adrenaline, so scared, but so psyched on this moment, she felt everything, no sensation was getting away from her, this was her time, she had no insecurity because HE WAS OUT COLD, there was no HIM to get in the way of HER, his body was obviously enjoying it, and she could do whatever she wanted, and it all felt like some sort of strong upper, something vital and clean, and she was going to cum, she could tell, she was letting out little moans and squeaks, she felt no anxiety, no need to say anything, no need to reassure her partner – because her partner was as good as dead. But she wasn't focused on that, she was an animal now, and she was fucking, and she was rolling it out, and she was cumming and cumming and she could barely breathe and she kept cumming and she was still gently rocking back and forth when Kelly walked in and screamed, "What the fuck are you doing YOU'RE FUCKING MY BOYFRIEND YOU CUNT WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING YOU ASSHOLES STOP! FUCKING STOP IT!"

As her beast self receded at the behest of her more literal mind, she felt the warm spurt of Paul blowing his unconscious load inside her. Kelly starting smashing her in the head with her purse, and as she got up and off his still inert form but rock hard cock, his semen started dripping out of her and down the inside of her long, supple leg.

pink haired girl near Union Square - m4w - 28 (Union Square)

Reply to: pers-626988782@craigslist.org

Date: 2008-04-01, 8:21PM EDT

I was on the phone and you walked towards me, once you passed you turned and we made eyes... it was today (tuesday) around 6:20 pm; you are a beautiful blonde-pink haired girl... then I walked after you, lost you, found you again near the subway entrance close to t Whole Foods, and lost you again... it would be nice to have a cup of coffee with you...

- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID: 626988782

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this is about you - m4w - 25

Reply to: pers-622249775@craigslist.org

Date: 2008-03-28, 6:21PM EDT

you always show up in my dreams

- . Location: New Haven
- . it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID: 622249775

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you were by the window looking at your phone - m4w

Reply to: pers-625261879@craigslist.org

Date: 2008-03-31, 1:59PM EDT

And you smiled as I walked out-

- . Location: Hamden
- . it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID: 625261879

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smiling crossing street 9:30 ... - m4w - 36

Reply to: pers-625745178@craigslist.org

Date: 2008-03-31, 8:21PM EDT

Yesterday Sunday night we both smiled at each other while I was with a friend crossing west on Smith (at Sackett). You were heading up Smith toward Union and beyond, with a friend, wearing dark clothes... You had your hair loose, beyond the shoulder...

What's your name, do you want to have tea, walk around the neighborhood, ride bicycles...?

- . Location: Carroll gardens
- . it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID: 625745178

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pink hair on the F train at Carroll street – m4w

Reply to: pers-619171947@craigslist.org

Date: 2008-03-26, 10:11AM EDT

Who are you? You were wearing a brown bomber jacket and white scarf and are gorgeous. Can we meet again? I asked you the time and you guessed it was around 8.

- . Location: Carroll gardens
- . it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID: 619171947

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pink hair between 145 and 150 on Broadway, 5pm – m4w – 24 (Harlem / Morningside)

Reply to: pers-622365278@craigslist.org

Date: 2008-03-28, 08:09PM EDT

I was walking uptown with my friend on Broadway around 5pm when I saw you at a distance. You had pink hair, wearing it up (do I remember a yellow -- or at least colored -- tie?) and earth tones (though I don't remember PRECISELY what you were wearing because we were making eye contact).

You spotted me at about the same time and we watched each other as we approached, eyes locked (yours were green, I'm pretty sure). At the last moment you looked down and then back up at me and smiled. I smiled back. My friend, when you were out of ear shot (or were you?), immediately commented on what he saw as a connection between the two of us, and suggested I go back and talk to you, but I didn't (I was with friends, after all).

Me: Redhead, longish hair, brown jacket, lighter brown shirt, blue jeans.

My friend: Shaved head (stubble), goatee, gray Columbia sweat shirt.

Just wanted to say that you were the high point of an already great day. You made me feel great.

If you wanna shoot me an e-mail, feel free. Otherwise, feel good knowing that you made me feel really good in that moment.

Hope to hear from you.

- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID:622365278

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pink haired girl near Union Square - m4w - 28 (Union Square)

Reply to: pers-626988782@craigslist.org

Date: 2008-04-01, 08:21PM EDT

I was on the phone and you walked towards me, once you passed you turned and we made eyes... it was today (Tuesday) around 6:20 pm; you are a beautiful pink haired girl... then I walked after you, lost you, found you again near the subway entrance close to the Whole Foods, and lost you again...it would be nice to have a cup of coffee with you...

- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID:626988782

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to the girl reading a book on the couch - m4w

Reply to: pers-541251260@craigslist.org

Date: 2008-01-16, 11:31PM EST

I was not attracted to you, at all. Our eyes just kept meeting by chance. Stop being delusional. You're not hot. You were the disheveled chick at Starbucks.

- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID:541252260

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pink hair, black nails, uptown 6 train - m4w - 27

Reply to: pers-620319083@craigslist.org

Date: 2008-03-27, 8:17AM EST

I stood in front of you on a packed subway car. You had long pink hair and short pink nails – wearing jeans and black jacket. Your face was beautiful. I wanted to say something. Instead, I got off at 77th Street. Would you like to go for coffee?

- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID:541252260

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**CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE OTHERLIFE?
(MICHAL GOLDVICHT, MY MOTHER)**

This Otherlife. I never really stopped to think what it is exactly. Sometimes I feel it is living like Hemingway on a deserted island. Other times I feel like it is living on a Greek island or an Italian one. A simple fisherman's island on the Mediterranean Sea. These are images that come back a lot. It is mostly a feeling of living on the border of the sea, among strangers. Peasants. Simple and nice. To live in a hut with the sea and the quiet.



Once in a while this Otherlife seems to mean having a lot of money. In the sense of not having so many limitations. That I can go around the world to different places. It was always connected to traveling. But also urban traveling, theaters, streets of cities like New York. But most of the time it is a beach with sail ships and simple huts. Eating simple food like black bread and butter and tomatoes and salty cheese. And a lot of scents of basil and garlic and pasta.



When I was a girl we sailed once on a ship to Italy. And then we traveled in a car between the villages and passed the Alps into Switzerland. Every night we slept in a different guest house, in a different village. I remember how we slept in a wooden house with feather soft, soft,

we were put in bed and I felt so good, like I'm in a place that was not home but full of sweetness... I remember this dinner there, in a kitchen with a wooden thick table, dark and rough. Years later I saw a rough wooden table like that, with chairs. There was something that raised the memory and the feeling of... There was something there that always pulls me towards it.



So this guesthouse represents in some way the Otherlife. This place in Italy, in the villages we slept in. Or maybe it was Switzerland, or maybe it was on the border. I can still smell the tomatoes they cut for our salad. You know I love that feeling of foreignness. In the sense

that you can imagine that there is a life there, which is harmonious and calm. This intimacy that you watch into. Now when I stand in the doorway of the balcony of my room I see all these lights from afar. And always in the darkness when these lights are on, the city, or the village in the distance seem so serene.



Now I see all of Jerusalem, but sometimes you see one light, separate, or a ship. When I see a small village, just a few houses, it always seems to me like this is what real life is. This is the correct life. With order, and security, with the right connections. A connection between heaven and earth. Between you and the earth.

And a calm acceptance of the situation you live in, of the things you know and do not know. A completeness. The other life is always these distant lights. When you only see it from the distance it can't betray you. You continue to miss it. Not because you think you will go there, and find that place of happiness. It's just having the ability to look at it and imagine and dream it. That might be happiness. A fragment. It doesn't have to be in contrast to reality. For me, it is like a magnet that is always there and keeps you pointing at it. Do you understand? Sure you understand.



**CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR FLYING DREAMS?
(MICHAL GOLDVICHT, MY MOTHER)**

I had a dream once. I was flying. Like a bird. It was in my late teens or early twenties. One night I dreamt that I began to fly. That I was rising like an airplane, but with ease and weightlessness of a bird. I remember my arms moving like wings. I remember being on a beach that looked like a postcard my father once sent me from Africa.



The beach was round. There was a strong light. The water was bright blue and so was the horizon. I began to rise. There, was all that glory of the view, the sand and water. At first I wasn't sure. I was surprised I could actually fly with such ease. But then, I thought, I'll first try to see if I can go back down. I had to make sure that I could control my landing. As soon as I saw how easy it was, I began flying even higher. Suddenly, all the colors transformed from day to night, and I saw myself between the stars, in one of those Israeli summer nights. The skies were dark, blue. I could see myself, flying among those shining stars, but mostly, I felt the view around me. It was a magnificent feeling. Such wonderful lightness.



I felt that I could go anywhere. There was a sense of control, not of others but of myself. I felt as if I could circle the world.

I always wanted to travel like that. And my body was so light. There was a connection to nature but from a very high place, where I could see everything from above. This kind of a perfection. I was something between a bird and a plain. There was a sense of power, as if I could go wherever I want. There were no boundaries or limitations. From the second I understood that I could land, I was free to go as high, and as far as I wanted. It was a very important feeling to know that I could go far, but always land back. That I won't get lost up there. That there is still a ground, a home. The stability of the place from which you leave.



Many years later I had another dream like that but I cannot remember it. For years I really wanted to return, and dream it again. Dreaming I was in that African view from the postcard my father sent me, was very meaningful. My father was an adventurer, and I always wanted to be like him, with courage and energy. He would travel a lot and I was always jealous of his travels. I wanted to travel too. Africa was unknown and mysterious. It's not by chance that I dreamt that view. The beach in his postcard looked like a bay. B A Y. Open but circular. A half of a circle.





The second flying dream I can remember was not a dream but more of a meditation. I was going through a difficult time. I tried to imagine myself getting out of this stressful situation. I had a book that gave me guidance. You imagine the situation in which you are in, and how you physically find your way out. Suddenly I found myself- I can't remember how it started- in the NBC offices in Rockefeller Center where I had worked for this producer in a time I felt I was going to break through. It was a beautiful time in the beginning of my career. Sitting in that office, I felt that I was closed in a container. I was caged. I started to imagine. Suddenly the container became this flying vehicle, like a spaceship, or something strange like that.

It was made of a clear plastic and I could see all of New York around me. And the skies! I could see the Rockefeller ice skating rink I loved. All of a sudden I began to rise within this tiny space. With that same feeling I had in my youth. Only this time I didn't feel like I was flying with my arms, with my body. It was the heavy vehicle that did it. I felt I succeeded. I was flying again. I freed myself from a situation I thought I couldn't get out of. It was a grand feeling.



FROM
TO

FROM	TO
TO	FROM

FROM	TO
TO	FROM

NOT

FROM: _____

FOR _____

NOT

FROM: _____

FOR _____



Britannica Concise Encyclopedia: Iowa

State (pop., 2000: 2,926,324), Midwestern U.S. Bordered by Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, and South Dakota, it covers 56,276 sq mi (145,755 sq km). Its capital is Des Moines. The Des Moines River flows across the state from northwest to southeast. The Mississippi River forms its eastern boundary, while the Missouri River and the Big Sioux River define portions of its western boundary. The Sauk, Fox, Iowa, and Sioux Indians lived in the region when French explorers Louis Jolliet and Jacques Marquette arrived in 1673. The U.S. acquired Iowa as part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Following the Black Hawk War and purchase of eastern Iowa from the Sauk and Fox Indians in the 1830s, white settlement advanced rapidly. Iowa became a territory in 1838 and was made the 29th state in 1846. After the Civil War, railroad expansion drew large waves of immigrants from the east and from Europe. After World War I population growth slowed. Its economy is based on agriculture, and Iowa is a leader in the U.S. production of livestock. Iowa is dying. What little remains of the family farm have been eaten away by the corporate farm. Immigrant workers fill the packing plants that sustain local economies, and in turn, lower the minimum wage with a surplus of manpower. A water tower in the town of Denison (pop., 2000: 7,339) reads "It's a Wonderful Life" in homage to Donna Reeds birthplace. In Iowa, residents sustain life with Nostalgia, if they stay in Iowa; they will fight the change because it's all they know how to do.



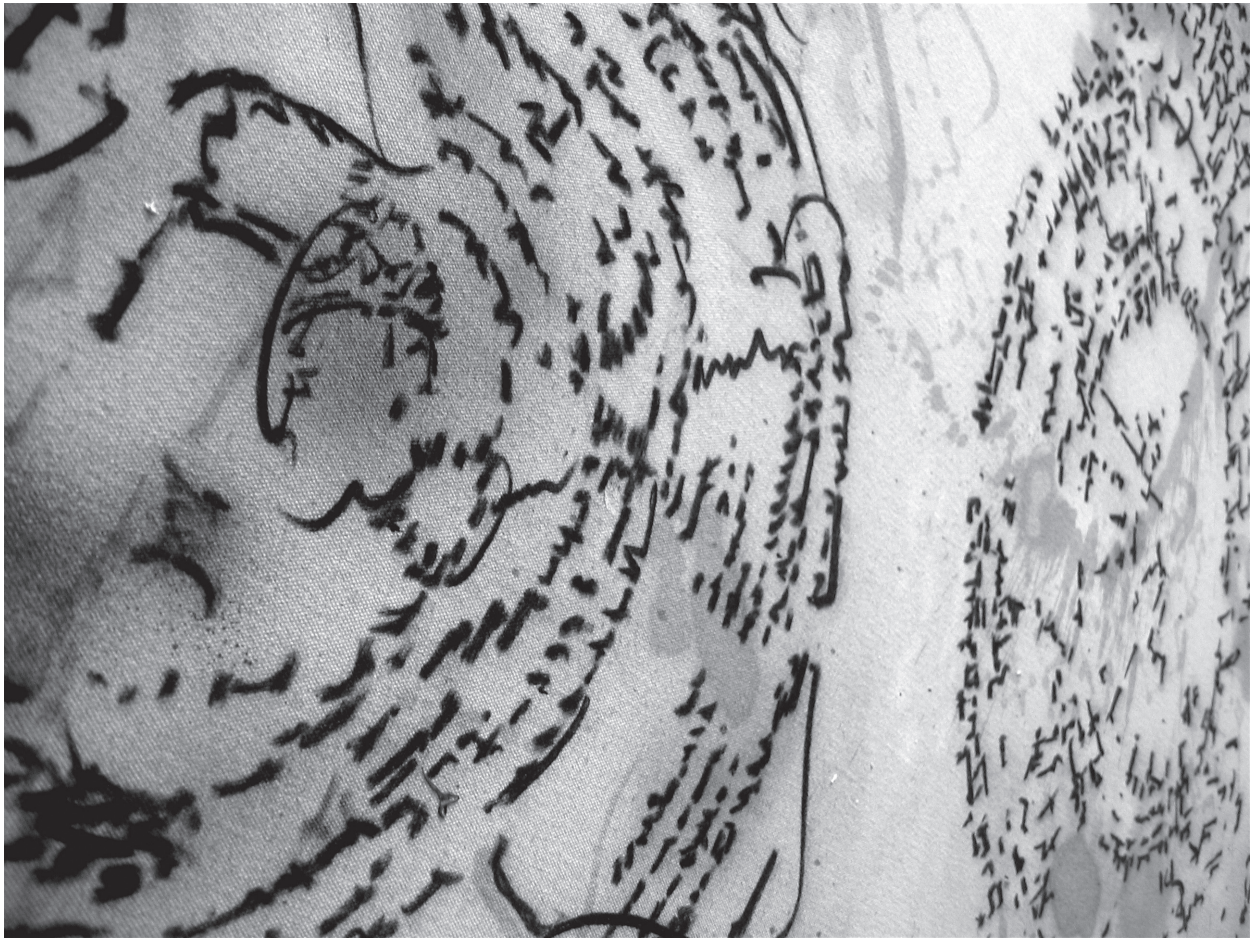
Sprung from the head
in Crown Heights
skipped to Rockaway Beach

Blissed out on the seawall
Its firework Wednesdays
From Coney Island and Playland
like the apotheosis of Pegasus
Bugging out on Callisto and Diana by day
It's a good copy, travels well
to 256th street minus one

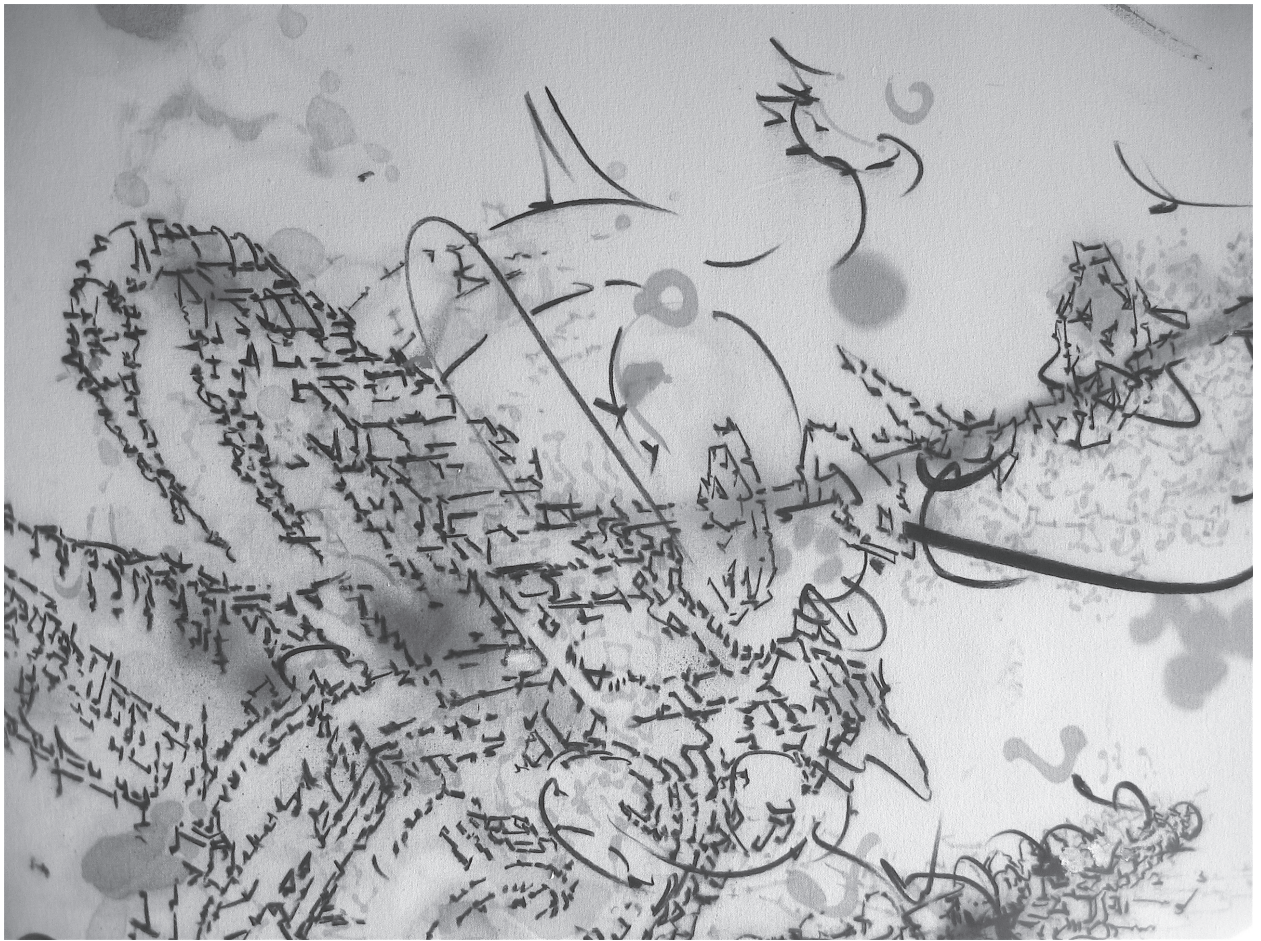
The Sicilian gas pumper makes the scene
say it ain't so
we spiral down
to hot Bronx nights and echoing catwalks
flat dead rat in the gravel pit
it's a stickball double
glass milk bottles explode at nite

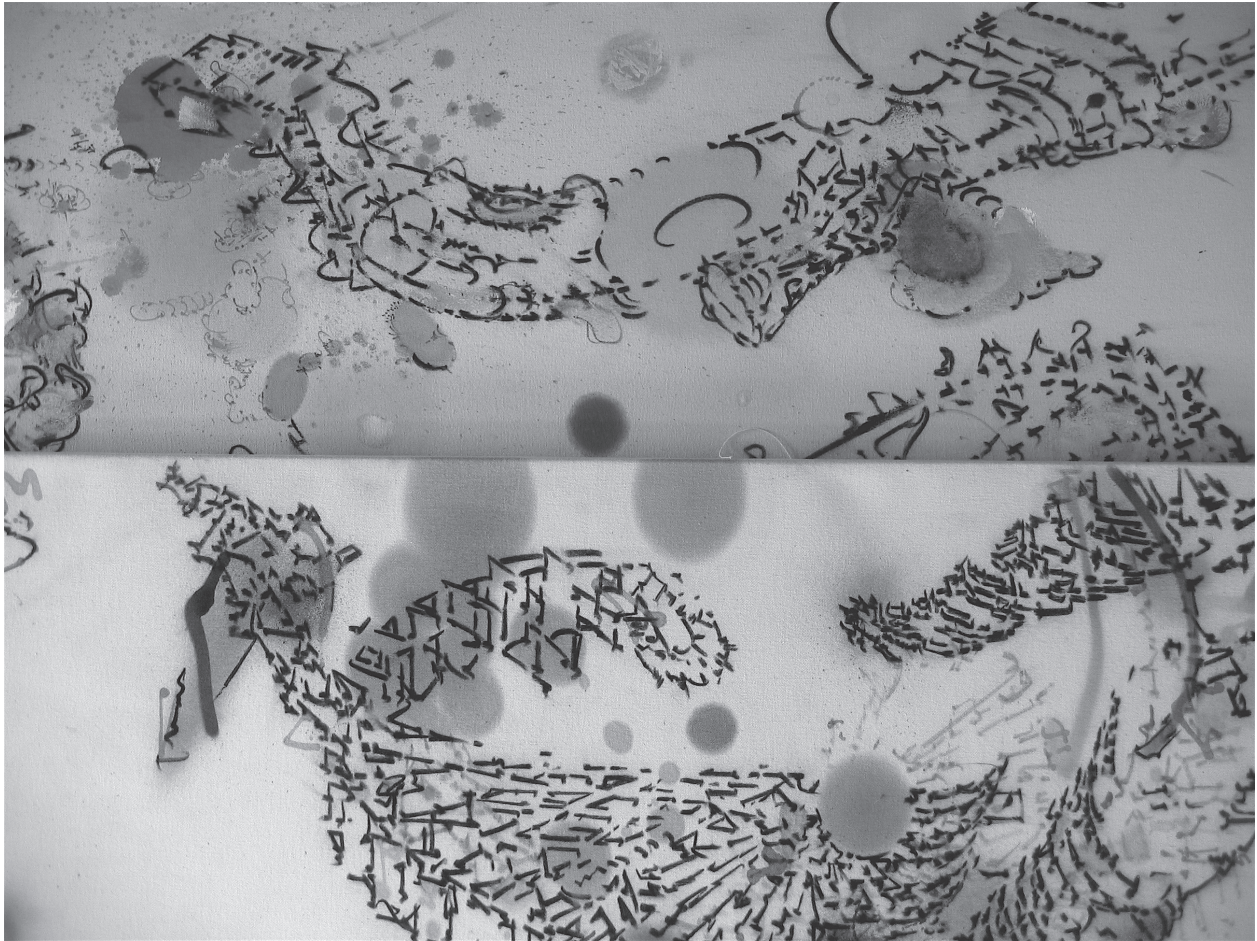
its first floor heaven
Smell the pit. lazy fucks
can't make it to the incinerator











an arcadian Tempest flashes
the Fifth Seal bathes the Bathers
Laocoon dances the Dance
Tinted canals flicker
Midas still judges
all over

vertiginous Apotheosis
whiteout on the Heath and the mast

Chimeras Like Strange Balloons
hover over Loveds
mannered suicides migrate
buck up or fuck up
like a little hunchback
at Swines Gate

Justin Mata: *Got My Mind On My Money And My Money On My Mind*

No one will be able to say that rapper Snoop Dogg ever lied about his intentions. He lets you know right off that he's thinking about getting that money. The first time you heard "Gin and Juice," from his premiere album "Doggystyle," did you even question it? You think he raps for the girls? Check the chorus: my mind on my money. For the fame? Check the chorus: my money on my mind. He is going to tell you three times at every single listen to that track. Sometimes when I gallery hop and see art, I wonder if the artist has their mind on their money. I wonder, were they engulfed by some kind of euphoric creative frenzy that demanded they keep working until the piece was finished? Or did they have their money on their mind? It's hard to tell. Purists might say that art and money should not even be mentioned in the same sentence. The rest of us might say that they are undeniably linked. How can we understand how money and art are linked?

In *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), linguist George Lakoff argues that the conceptualization of an idea involves relating the idea to real physical entities. Abstract ideas need to be grounded due to the fact "that we typically conceptualize the nonphysical in terms of the physical¹." Lakoff exemplifies the metaphorical constraint with the use of the verb "in."

Harry is in the kitchen.
Harry is in the Elks.
Harry is in love.

The first line is the only form where Harry is truly "in," the others being metaphorical constructs. "The concept of IN of the first sentence emerges directly from spatial experience in a clearly delineated fashion. It is not an instance of a metaphorical concept²." Let us apply the same analysis to the meaning of an artist. In relation to our conversation, we will say that an artist is someone who makes art. This definition relies on defining art, which we know is not merely an object but rather it is fluid and takes "form" through its context. Because context is also metaphorical and relational, we will say that art is contextualized by its presentation, its externalization from the self. So to remove the metaphorical constructs and ground the perception of artist in the physical, let us say that an artist is someone who presents or displays. By being manifest outside the body, art will have the potential to generate value and be commodified given that we are in a system driven by markets. From this point, we conclude that all art has an intrinsic relation to money that cannot be removed from the art making process. The only way to exclude oneself from this system completely is to remove oneself from it. When art enters the world, it will always have the potential to be sold in some form or another. The market is "smart" enough to find a way to generate revenue through a myriad of direct, secondary and tangential possibilities. The artist as a non-object creator has historically been ineffective in preventing art from being commodified; in fact the trend has been a broadening of the idea of how art can be sold by making use of what Martha Rosler dubbed "art world currency³". Regardless of the degree to which an "art piece" is sellable, whether it is the more ephemeral "work" of Rirkrit Tiravanija or the very permanent objects of Joel Shapiro, there is always a way to generate revenue.

The inclusion of money in the dialogue of the creative process is not new, especially of late. Increasingly more and more literature has been circulating from the east to the west coast touching on many variations of this topic. This dialogue should however, now extend itself into the "studio" as well. In the same form painters consider the quality of their paints, the archival nature of their canvas, or the strength of their brushes, we must all now consider the "market" as both a tool and content.

1. *Metaphors We Live By* George Lakoff, Mark Johnson pg 59

2. *Metaphors We Live By* George Lakoff, Mark Johnson pg 59

3. "Lookers, Buyers, Dealers, And Makers: Thoughts On Audience," Martha Rosler, *Exposure* (Spring 1979), Pg 22

Although it might be easy to take an antagonistic stance toward the situation, instead I would argue for an objective one. In what way, in what form can the business of art be effective within the work? Lakoff notes that “there are real things, existing independently of us, which constrain both how we interact with them and how we comprehend them⁴.” It is this force of market and capital that should be a goal for our artistic community to comprehend.

This imperative may be even more important to younger emerging artists, as the formative years can be stunted by a caffeinated market eager to draft the most promising rookie. Curator Robert Storr among others has written recently about those relationships in detail⁵, which to legions of graduate students and young hungry artists is practically taken for granted. Storr writes, “the artists are driven by many factors besides dreams of fame and fortune, not the least being the fear that in a generation-oriented culture you will miss your moment if you don’t stand out quickly⁶.” Our responsibility must be to solidify our practice in the face of these forces, to remain cognizant. How do aesthetic, content, and other creative choices lead to a market compromise? A sculptor that chooses to use bronze has already inherited an artistic compromise in that the continuation of traditional methods posits them in established roles. However, recognizing the role of the market helps us understand in what manner it will come into play in regards to the thought process.

In October, Jerry Saltz wrote “before pointing fingers—or meting out punishments—we have to remember that artists generally have nothing to do with what people spend. You can’t blame Richard Prince because someone paid \$2.2 million for one of his paintings.” For those of us on the other side of the fence it may be easy to demonize those artists who may benefit greatly from the influx of capital into the art world, or those artists who may cater to it specifically. We shouldn’t. But, neither should we hold indifference to the effect that seven-digit figure price tags play in the perception of art or how we choose to make it. When Kara Walker has shows opening simultaneously at the Whitney and Sikkema Jenkins, does it deflate the work to know that the Whitney retrospective will undoubtedly increase the selling prices of her solo show and guarantee their purchase? Both shows were incendiary exhibits, two of the best I have witnessed since moving to New York. I left the Whitney moved and confident in the transformative power of art. At the same time, the monetary value associated with a show at Sikkema Jenkins becomes the context, develops the lens through which her work will be viewed. For better or for worse (for the work) the two will be inseparable in a historical read of the artist. Does that play into her studio time, affecting her decision making process? Does she accommodate or compromise because of this? How much compromise is “ok?”

Cabinet magazine editor Colby Chamberlain recently expressed similar views when he called for “artistic practices that take their relationship to power into full account, for artists who work with the market but don’t wholeheartedly or uncritically embrace it; rather, they regard the market as yet another tool or material to be examined⁷. ” It may be appropriate to consider the market power and capital as a contextual element within which we locate a contemporary piece of art while viewing it. As antagonistic and difficult as this may seem, when participating as an audience, we must develop the proper tools with which to engage an artwork. A common form of relating to a piece in contemporary dialogue revolves around the notion that neither the artist nor viewer can complete the interpretation. It is problematic to use an artist’s bio or statement as the Rosetta Stone or comprehension tool in the same way that the viewer’s baggage can misinform a “read.” It seems more suitable to address the work for what it is in that moment, its identifiable characteristics. A price tag most definitely will be one of those characteristics. In the same manner that the Romantic tradition will historically be seen in relation to the Industrial Revolution⁸, or Renaissance painting to the church and skilled tradesmen, so will our time be seen in the context of the rapid commodification of everything. This will be the contextual backdrop that future historians will use to illustrate the artistic terrain; shouldn’t we develop a discourse for using price as a component of critique?

4. Metaphors We Live By George Lakoff, Mark Johnson pg 226

5. http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/haste_makes_waste/

6. http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/haste_makes_waste/

7. “What Sissy Spacek Done Told Me” Colby Chamberlain, <http://www.theartistsguide.net/>

8. Metaphors We Live By George Lakoff, Mark Johnson pg 191

Contemporary philosopher Elizabeth Anderson questions whether “market norms do a better job of embodying the ways we properly value a particular good than norms of other spheres⁹” such as family, friends, clubs, professions, etc. Does an expensive painting suggest superior quality to inexpensive documentation of say a performance? The obvious answer is no. Anderson writes, “since [the market] offers no means for discriminating among the reasons people have for wanting or providing things, it cannot function as a form for the justification of principles about the things traded on it.¹⁰”

When critiquing art in relationship to its commodity status, a common thing we question is the artist’s “sincerity.” How much did the artist compromise, if at all, in order to make the work more accessible and possibly more sellable? Only the artists can make the final decision regarding what is off-limits. As we look back at the power potential of art, it is important to assess what the aspirations of the piece are and the realistic possibility of that intent. Rosler writes, “if producers attempt to change their relationship to people outside the given ‘art world’ they must become more precise in assessing what art can do and what they want their art to do.¹¹” Allan Kaprow detailed this futility when he highlighted the loss of power relating to the transition from non-art into the Art context. When something becomes “art,” it also becomes less influential than non-art. I doubt that there are still many artists who believe that their art will change the world. But I do believe that many artists hope that it can.

As the presence of monetary demands and influences become more apparent, some of the most exciting work deals with this directly not as external to the work but as content. The Warholian legacy of superfluous production and exchange value is just as exciting a thematic element as painters relationship to the photo. In the same way painters could potentially be viewed in both relation, contrast, and complicit with the camera, so can art now be seen in the same relational dialogue with the market. How can money be used not just as measuring stick but also a theme for contemporary work? Where does the market come into play? The power moves associated with Damien Hirst’s purchase of his own sculpture, *For the Love of God*, as head of an “unidentified” investment group indicate a manipulation of the market that stands not as content provider, but straightforward investment.¹² Alternatively, the group show *New Economy*, on view last June at Artist’s Space provided several intriguing examples of the market power as content. Kader Attia’s *Halal Sweatshop* and Carolina Caycedo’s *Day to Day* deal with money’s play in art in varying degrees. *Day to Day* documents Caycedo’s year of bartering during which she lived in New York without using money, *Halal Sweatshop* has an actual functioning sweatshop within the gallery space. Attia’s relation to money is more metaphorical as the sweatshop grounds the content in the exploitive power of production as exemplified by clothing manufacturing. The sweatshop produces goods for populist consumption, but the placement implicates the art community in the same system as those outside the art bubble. In Caycedo’s performance, capital is the content by its very omission. The subtraction of dollars as median exchange object emphasizes its importance in our daily lives. The success of the piece has nothing to do with critique or opinion; the exposure of the structure is the real strength. When faced with the possibility of a year without money, the viewer is intrigued and baffled as to how one can operate in this society without it. The Freegan movement¹³ as an artistic endeavor makes the viewer contemplate the role of the dollar in every portion of our lives. We are left to adopt our own opinions.

At a lecture given in 2007, Blake Rayne spoke of his interest in painting as something more than object, as more than art article. He detailed an interest in paintings as mediators for value: the notion that paintings, and all commodities act as vehicles for exchange value. In other words, that value can be produced through labor power, transferred to money, exchanged for a painting and so forth as a kind of energy that makes its way through several mediating elements.

9. Value In Ethics And Economics, Elizabeth Anderson, Pg 143

10. Value In Ethics And Economics., Elizabeth Anderson, Pg 146

11. Lookers, Buyers, Dealers, And Makers: Thoughts On Audience,” Martha Rosler, *Exposure* (Spring 1979), Pg 11

12. http://www.artnews.com/issues/article.asp?art_id=2367

13. <http://freegan.info/>

Similarly, Santiago Sierra's art directly deals with forms of the market, capital, commodification and how these relate (and marginalize) the worlds' citizens. When Sierra paid four Spanish prostitutes 12,000 pesetas apiece to have a continuous line tattooed across their back¹⁴, the money involved becomes as much a tool for creation as the tattoo gun. Like Caycedo, the content becomes a social and economic structure where this work finds a home. Through Caycedo, the structure is emphasized by omission, with Sierra, through maximum exploitation.

Undoubtedly there are many more examples of work being created in a similar vein. Money is on a lot of people's minds and will continue to have a place there. It is unfortunate that we cannot responsibly claim naiveté to our relationship with the business of art, but the business has been (and will be so long as this global economic policy maintains) inextricable from our reality. We should mine it for all its "worth".

¹⁴. http://www.santiago-sierra.com/200014_1024.htm

28 Bilder von Bertold Mathes

(BESTAND / AUSWAHL / ZUSAMMENSTELLUNG)

- o. T. 180 x 160 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 1987
- o. T. 60 x 50 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 1988
- o. T. 120 x 90 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 1991
- SONG ABOUT THE MIDWAY 90 x 80 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 1993
- o. T. 220 x 140 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 1995
- o. T. (IAIBIIAIIIAIVAVCVVA) 100 x 100 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 1997
- multiple choice-2 (IIDVD, 152) 90 x 60 cm Gouache und Acryl auf Leinwand 1997
- STRUKTURVERBESSERUNG 160 x 100 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 1998
- PENSUM-9 (ZIP-ZAP) 180 x 120 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 1999
- PENSUM-14 (DeziMal) 180 x 120 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2000
- o. T. 100 x 90 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2000
- optional-3 60 x 60 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2001
- screen-1 90 x 90 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2001
- dezimal-58 (transversal) 60 x 40 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2002
- TRANSFORMATION 180 x 80 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2003
- DARSTELLUNG-9 180 x 160 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 2003
- DARSTELLUNG-12 180 x 160 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2003
- ProVision-4 (BerlinBild) 120 x 80 cm Acryl und Graphit auf Leinwand 2004
- ProVision-5 120 x 80 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2004
- IN SIDE OUT 200 x 200 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2005
- Provision-2 (Dezimal) 60 x 40 cm Graphit und Acryl auf Leinwand 2005
- PROVISION-2 (PENSUM) 180 x 120 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 2005
- Bild-2 60 x 80 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 2005
- Bild-4 60 x 60 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 2006
- Bild-7 110,5 x 45 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 2006
- Bild-23 90 x 80 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 2006
- Bild-32 60 x 80 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 2007
- Bild-36 (multiple choice-35) 90 x 80 cm Acryl auf Leinwand 1999 / 2007

28 Paintings by Bertold Mathes

(STORAGE / SELECTION / COMPILATION)

untitled 72 x 64 inches acrylic on canvas 1987
untitled 24 x 20 inches acrylic on canvas 1988
untitled 48 x 36 inches acrylic on canvas 1991
SONG ABOUT THE MIDWAY 36 x 32 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 1993
untitled 88 x 56 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 1995
untitled (IAIBIIAIIIAIIVCVA) 40 x 40 inches acrylic on canvas 1997
multiple choice-2 (IIDVD, 152) 36 x 24 inches gouache and acrylic on canvas 1997
STRUKTURVERBESSERUNG 64 x 40 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 1998
PENSUM-9 (ZIP-ZAP) 72 x 48 inches acrylic on canvas 1999
PENSUM-14 (DeziMal) 72 x 48 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2000
untitled 40 x 36 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2000
optional-3 24 x 24 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2001
screen-1 36 x 36 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2001
dezimal-58 (transversal) 24 x 16 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2002
TRANSFORMATION 72 x 32 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2003
DARSTELLUNG-9 72 x 64 inches acrylic on canvas 2003
DARSTELLUNG-12 72 x 64 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2003
ProVision-4 (BerlinBild) 48 x 32 inches acrylic and graphite on canvas 2004
ProVision-5 48 x 32 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2004
IN SIDE OUT 80 x 80 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2005
Provision-2 (Dezimal) 24 x 16 inches graphite and acrylic on canvas 2005
PROVISION-2 (PENSUM) 72 x 48 inches acrylic on canvas 2005
Bild-2 24 x 32 inches acrylic on canvas 2005
Bild-4 24 x 24 inches acrylic on canvas 2006
Bild-7 44 x 18 inches acrylic on canvas 2006
Bild-23 36 x 32 inches acrylic on canvas 2006
Bild-32 24 x 32 inches acrylic on canvas 2007
Bild-36 (multiple choice-35) 36 x 32 inches acrylic on canvas 1999 / 2007

KLAUS MERKEL TALKS TO CHRISTIAN MATTHIESSEN

TEXT FOR TWO SPEAKERS / TWO ACTORS

Christian Matthiessen: What would you like to talk about in general? About your work, about painting?

Klaus Merkel: I would say, about what painting can do. Painting is a special field in itself. I always say it is limited. I see that as an advantage.

Let's start at a very simple level. Why does painting have to defend itself against the catalogue?

Barnett Newman's attack has become famous. It claims the battle is aimed at the catalogue and, from his point of view, he surely means the copy-like character of reproductions. He feels the catalogue as such works against painting because the sublime, pure picture we see and are meant to perceive is destroyed by its reproduction. But I would like to intensify the issue for the present debate. Painting today not only has to defend itself against the catalogue, but it also has to internalize the catalogue in order to maintain its hold on pictures at all anymore. From my point of view a catalogue is thus the extension of the whole machinery of pictures and exhibitions as a consequence of pictures. The catalogue as such would then be something like the final container for pictures. On the one hand, my "catalogue pictures" formulate precisely the distance between picture and reproduction and, on the other hand, they produce that very farness that generally comes from cataloguing. As soon as a catalogue has been treated like painting the pictures are free again because they no longer need their nostalgic reproduction. But the meaning for the pictures is then on a completely different level. They have to be taken down from their previously high standpoint to the lower level of the text. Through this transformation they lose everything they had before and are changed to the core. From then on they are actors, playing cards, currency, or text. I'm assuming from the start that the pictures involved are not only the kind that are able to carry on a true dialogue, but also the kind that are only able to speak when they create their own discourse. That is only possible when the pictures have their own base, are able to formulate their own overall view. This framework, if consistently pursued, can, in the final stage, bring forth the picture as a generation.

Is that still painting? Is that still a picture?

Yes. Painting certainly. And a picture at best.

Or is it, through painting as a means, principally a contextual, conceptual piece?

We have to make a clear distinction at this point. What I mean is pictures are only able to make any appearance at all because they are contextually thought out to the very rim, a consequence of the fact that painting today is under tremendous pressure to become something. nevertheless, this is about pictures and not only about context. Otherwise I would place my emphasis elsewhere. I want it to work through painting because it has to be done; it's not only a matter of the mind. The framework is fixed, even the construction of the picture is fixed, but a picture does not simply become a picture because you conceive it, but rather because you allow it to appear in a series, as an object, as a discovery, as something "new," if anyone would even like to use this heavily laden term.

What does the audience see on these pictures?

I cannot answer that question. I don't want to describe them right now.

What can the audience see at best?

They can see nothing other than that which comes across, so to speak, by way of a subjective mood. At the moment you see them, you do not perceive them to be the teller of a story or the assimilation of previously mastered attempts at abstraction. You can either perceive them with your body or you can reject them.

We are currently in a certain historical context that can generally be characterized as the postmodern era. The pictures exist within this theoretical context to the extent that they have to show knowledge of and contain all the progress of the modern era plus the deconstruction of the postmodern. The classic modern era is indeed much more old-fashioned. It worked out problems immanent to the picture as such, the issue of extension, overcoming perspective, all of the work-inherent issues pertinent to methods that the classical modern era achieved in contrast to modern painting. Your work doesn't have anything to do with these questions of immanence, does it?

It has nothing to do with that, but it is readability you are talking about and readability is surely an art history issue. Readability is only of interest to a person who observes art from an art historian's point of view. An observer, I assume, is not necessarily an art historian. He is either an artist or just a passer-by. I don't address art historians. If anyone involved is an art historian, then it is I, the painter. What I find decisive is that a picture, through its achievement as a text in a chain of pictures, must carry meaning as the creation of a world, as a personal picture. I used to use the term "bastard" when talking about this very issue: a picture must undergo a type of mutation during this entire process in order to assert its personality. It's not enough for pictures to provide references. At this point I would like to mention a concept by Doreet Levitte-Harten, who says that, in the end, pictures have a somatic character. The concept of somatics reaches levels beyond simple theory. What each observer actually sees is insignificant. The decisive factor is that I want to prove that the aspect that binds me to a picture lights up, an aspect that could be ancient, from the Middle Ages, for example, where I see certain bonds, in the language of pictures, and bonds which are not often found in the postmodern debate.

Medieval forerunners?

Yes, in certain cases I would say so.

Could you give me an example?

I have always referred to one very important artist, Nicholas of Verdun, who did an altar in the twelfth century, now to be found in Klosterneuburg, a cloister near Vienna. He worked so slowly that he produced, in ten years' time, a change in style that stretches from Romanesque to Gothic. It is a very clear reflection of how long a process takes and how clearly the process can make a statement about a certain work. The time filtered by the process is a part of the painting, but in the end the process actually arises like phoenix from the ashes, not due as much to a conscious effort as to the way it supports itself with the task of fine-tuning the grammar of its work. What we value so very much today is that, via the loop it makes through time, something like an authentic work of art comes forth under extreme circumstances.

In a certain way, a gesture opposed to art history?

Yes, although artistic work is, in this sense, never a product of art history. Of course, it cannot ward off art history and, nowadays, it is not only art history but also the problem of art systems that complicates the situation.

Fine, but you attempt through your work, which has a certain model character to it, to estheticize the objections that restrict painting. In other words, you try to step out of the shoes of a mere producer of work who enters the business of art, is subject to its rituals, from the exhibition to the reviews, the reception, art history including catalogues, out of the role of the restrained artist figure. You want the entire process within the final work to shine.

I believe that is the most essential trait a work can have in this day and age. In other words, if the consequences of the work do not come to light in the final piece, the work is invisible. What you describe as restrictions to painting constitute the manifestation of circumstances in which painting is found. This is where catalogue pictures begin. This subjective art is grouped together around a central theme and, at this level, enormous potential for the entire work comes into play. The theme, the segment forms a pedestal that reaches so far that, as long as it is there, you have to observe the entire work differently. Thematic grouping forces a change in view and makes comments on my pictures as a whole text, which they always were.

Do these catalogue pictures create some kind of order?

That is one thing they do. I think it is less a concept of order than a concept of structure that is hinted at. Sheer order would lead only to what is achievable, what is doable. That would simply be a linear way of thinking. This thematic grouping is ordered in a linear fashion; however, it also gets to the bottom of concepts in a way that a normal sequence of possibilities, of processes, of exhibitions could not.

Do the large paintings take on a sort of specimen character for the catalogue pictures? I mean, the catalogue pictures form a pedestal for the large ones. The large pictures thus could possibly become specimen copies for the catalogue pictures.

That depends on how you look at it. A conceptual artist may see it that way. It is, of course, always the other way around for a painter. It would become problematic if artists painted large pictures just so that they could be reduced afterwards. That would be a joke that would wipe out the system of painting. The decisive factor is this: the catalogue pictures add value to the system and I never feel tempted to produce the miniatures, the tin soldiers that are actually nothing more than models, in such a way that they could add anything at all to the large pictures in the way of quality. They are, in fact, painted down pictures. If you like, copied letters.

But they still draw away from each individual picture and towards work complexes and work as a model, even so far as to biography as a model. Biography as cartography, as you once said.

That idea is not mine. It is from Markus Brüderlin, who coined the phrase in light of the way I work. That is, to seldom show pictures as individual works, but rather in a sequence, like an accordion display, in a complex or a wall development, in groups or in sequences. The term is correct in the sense that it rejects development that is usually seen in a linear way and points to a particular spot which says: this person is interested in something else, in a continuation of the process and this continuation is produced through painting. You create a panorama of meaning and that is in itself the construction of a biography. Otherwise we always get hung up on gestures. Of course, you can produce as many gestures as you'd like and write as many short stories as you'd like in the art business, but it has become clear that you can do a lot on the outside, but on the inside you are only allowed to do less and less.

Why is construction of the biographical so important?

Because, due to the danger posed by your normal biography, you might slip into the dilemma of a subjective artist, an artist who always has something to say about God and the world. And then you're in a hot seat. At first it takes you into a feigned authenticity, but then it gets you no further. You burn up and have at any case lost at this point. Nowadays authenticity, just like pictures, has to be broken twice before it can show itself at all. The further away you go from subjectivity, the more you know about your means, the more clearly you can see the shape of your non-discovery, the greater the distance between you and your original idea, the more pronounced becomes the spot, when you approach it in painting, that is able to assert itself and to appear as a picture. It is in this way only that subjectivity can be shown to its best advantage throughout the entire composition. I would compare this process with literature in a construct novel such as "The Man Without Qualities" by Musil. Or take Ornette Coleman's music. There you find a link to my character, the authentic artist, who finds ways to deal with life and work in some sort of a model-like manner, like an organism. That is why this story must be constructed.

In this day and age contemporary man suffers from hyper-reflection. And it is in art that many contemporaries expect to find relief from their ailment. Society demands too much hyper-reflection, and people expect to reach a certain point of authenticity in and through art, a point where they can finally experience spirituality firsthand again, an occurrence in which hyper-reflection is no longer required.

I think societal expectations are always very bad advice. Expectations for art mostly come from sources that do not have any direct connection to art through work. The type of painting that I deal with always, in the end, has something to do with an original picture. I find painted hyper-reflection uninteresting and extremely weighed down. But, conversely, it is true that no picture can exist without reflection. At this point it might be good to say a word or two about the type of reflection. To my mind this type of reflection only works if it is inherent in the piece, reflection through painting, with painting methods. Every kind of art that wants to claim to make a contribution to the active art debate must go through this process.

On the other hand, you don't need to see the reflection in order to see what condition the work is in. This can be seen in particular in the works of the great artists. One painter I would always refer to here is Jan Vermeer van Delft. You wouldn't guess by looking at any of his pictures that his painting is developed through models, that the whole thing is a construction in its time. Just as all of Dutch painting from the 17th century, in its interiors and genres, is merely the state of a hyper-reflected society. I see here a strong link to the present. I would like to split your question into two, one about the picture as an occurrence and one about the theory that requires the picture as its material. This is where I think it comes to the crunch. It is imperative to separate the two, and I would invariably decide in favor of the picture.

You still believe in the picture itself?

Yes.

And your belief is related to somatics? But the objective status of existence is still "argument in discourse." That is how it is received, circulated, regardless of how somatic it is.

But that is always the second level.

You maintain there is a somatic, a direct level. So you still have hopes of some sort of recipient, hopes of effect?

No, I wouldn't say that. The pictures do not harbor hope of a recipient. However, he is there. The somatic, direct level is, for me, the only possible form of realization as a producer. Other wise you end up in arbitrariness. If I cannot decide why a picture is a picture, then I must quit.

The question of whether it is good or bad, or, even better, right or wrong, is not reflected theoretically. It is reflected via the picture, that is the difference.

The catalogue pictures form a pedestal that the picture needs these days. May such pedestals be put on exhibit too, by themselves?

My catalogue pictures do not contradict artistic work; they have a different status because they illuminate a model-like scenery. But they are, of course, art, if we want to use that term here, and as such they process the aspect of painting stronger perhaps than the pictures themselves. The tack we have taken in our conversation is not completely insignificant: I mean the point where a concept automatically places itself above a picture as proof of a theory because the whole concept of material that we're talking about is contingent on one question: Is it only material I am producing at all anymore, or, of what quality is the material I bring into the discourse? I think these are two levels that have to be separated. They are not compatible. They are mutually dependent but they do not share the same problem. The way this conflict is solved at any on time will always be the appearance of art. On the one hand, a theoretical viewpoint is easier because it simply has enough material at its disposal. However, this viewpoint starts at another level, the level of overview, the level I must maintain in my work and by means of my pictures. As a painter I am not allowed to generalize.

Surely our view is altered by the media society and, to a certain degree, you also react, in the aesthetics and in the somatics of your pictures to visual phenomena of our societal surroundings, to the aesthetics of products, to media aesthetics.

During the reception for my exhibition in Cologne this year, Erich Franz posed this anxious question: Where do we stand as recipients if we can no longer concentrate on the individual picture? And he asks: Can painting testify to its elementary divergence, to its unity – not on canvas, but exclusively in mobile vision? A wonderful expression – mobile vision! The historical point of view really requires individual pictures. Today we have the added aspect that, from the point in time when you start working with a computer or see certain pictures in media, the phenomenon of the individual picture can no longer be sustained. That doesn't mean that you should necessarily repeat media aesthetics in your work. But this changed view definitely has an effect on your work. The situation does not become any easier as a result, but the structure of thought in relation to pictures has changed radically. All of a sudden, you are faced with phenomena that work via mechanisms of perception that simply did not exist ten years ago, and that cannot just be easily fit into recent art history, for example, the conceptional picture, Minimalism, serial repetition, etc. You are, in fact, a troubled human being, and the question is: Do you leave your troubles behind – a plausible possibility even for a really authentic piece of art –, or do you let yourself get involved with your troubles?

In what way could you leave them behind?

Leave them behind by withdrawing, by, for example, working on one painting for twenty years. That would be one conceivable model.

You mean a sort of counter model to the artificial image?

The artificially authentic picture would be the more appropriate expression. That lies well within the realm of understanding at the end of this century. My models can be more intensely appreciated via mobile vision. By that I do not mean uncontrolled vision, but rather vision that wants to see it all, but is not necessarily capable of being unified in one picture. In principle, of course, vision breaks up. A similar phenomenon can be found in Cubism, where the surface suddenly shatters into umpteen facets, theoretically derived from Cézanne – but actually there's something completely different going on. Cézanne is not interesting to

Picasso, but more correctly to Matisse. Picasso is a phenomenon of the atomic age, the age of nuclear fission.

In early Cubism, but not later on.

Just in this early phase. I find it comforting that there has been a shift in viewpoints. I am glad I don't have to choose the path of switching off, but rather the path of switching on, completely. The question is whether I'll be able to do so in this fossilized medium. It is a true challenge for me.

Your statement about the fossilized medium of painting could be explicated using the concept "work". You could come up with the following: Artistic work has a model character to it, as it were, a utopian, critical model character in relation to normal capitalistic work and normal capitalistic goods. If you follow up on this thought, you could say: artists are, in their entire working process, and in their understanding of their work, counter models, per se, opposing capitalistic work and capitalistic goods. On the other hand, particularly in the modern age, the craftsman-like traditions of painting have been systematically dissolved. Let's take Andy Warhol's Factory as a well-known example. Do you, with your painting, uphold the authenticity of the trade right in the middle of post-industrial society?

It is my aim to establish a claim that is technically more pre-industrial in character. This style is more workable for me than that of industrial reproduction. For myself I would prefer to introduce the term imitation at this point because reproduction, to my understanding, resembles a type of writing occupation practiced by the Chinese, who, for hundreds of years, developed certain shapes for plum trees and no longer need to invent a single picture. My attitude does not so much culminate in the criticism of goods, but rather asks the question, what actually changes? I am far more interested in an inner primitiveness in regard to objects that underlies all activity. The Chinese model of pattern books has the advantage that, over a long span of time, changes slowly take place. It is, as it were, a homeopathic, ecological path. You can only raise big carrots if you have gotten to know pests. In that sense, I believe that painters are still the gardeners among the artists. Painting should not spend too much time with the idea of expansion, but rather with how intensely it can organize itself on the inside. And in today's world, that is quality. Material will always be consumed, but even in productive thought there is, at best and in the end, internalization if you see it as a formulation, as the intensification of text, as an implosion.

To the subject professional painter. Are too many pictures also being painted because a lot have to be sold? There is a wonderful analogy by Ad Reinhardt referring to prostitution: first you do it for love, then you do it out of habit, and then because you have to. He calls painters like that pickpocket painters, swindlers.

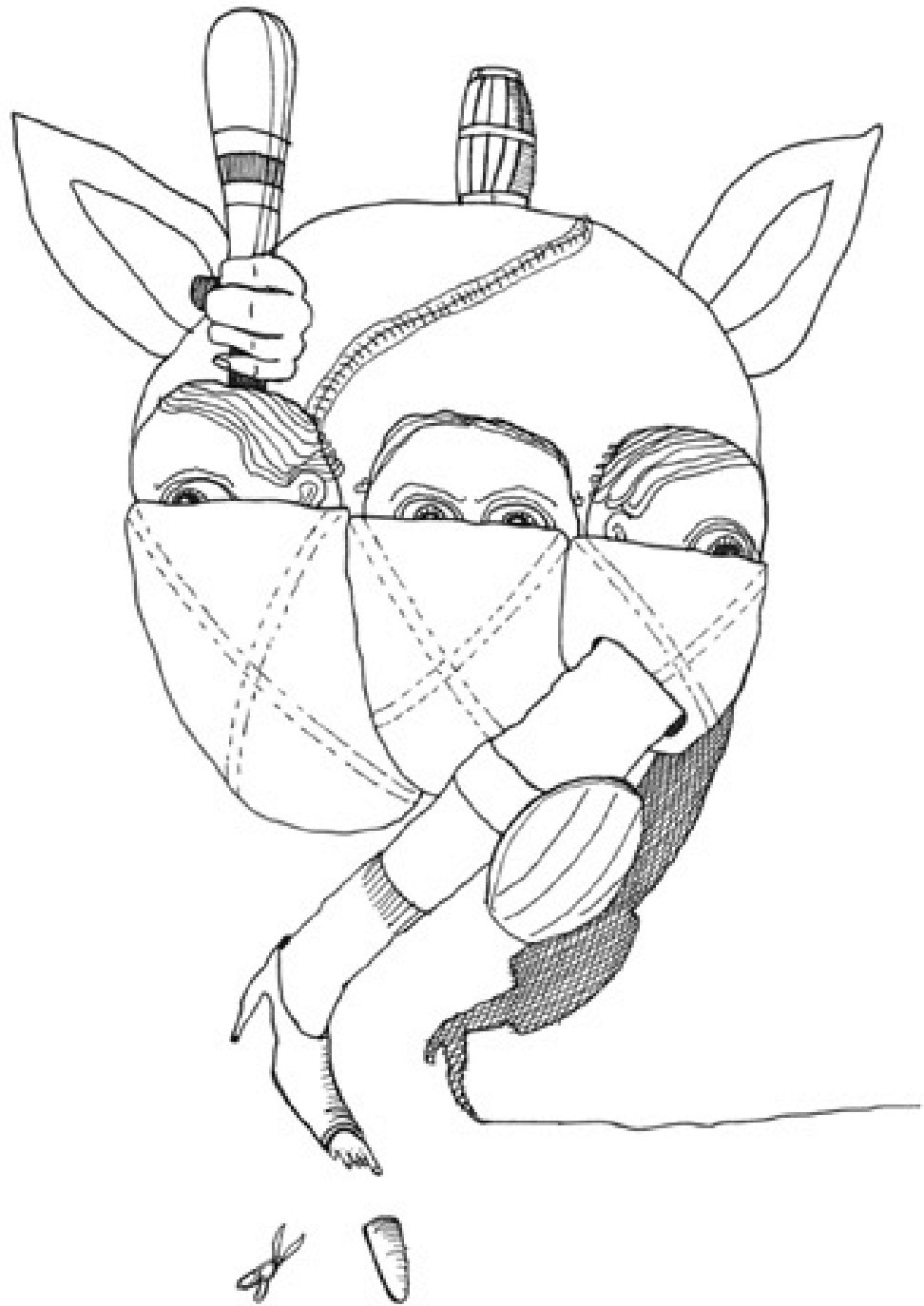
He is the first to have taken the next logical step and to have painted over his pictures with the pictures themselves. Better put, the motifs were painted over with themselves. If you take that thought further, it means the quantity of pictures is only interesting in application. I have to assign something to my pictures, so that they are always able to write my text. That is the non-commercial use of these phenomena. Thus, the logical consequence that, at some time, there will no longer be any originals. Not in the sense that there will be no more original paintings, but rather that the original of a picture will mutate into other pictures, and a decrease in the value of market originality will take place. Nothing more that devaluated pictures that characterize their own currency.

As Martin Heidegger would have it: Cultural policy is the zenith of Nihilism. What does the term "cultural policy" mean to you?

I understand that this question was inevitable. But it is, of course, just a result of the principle of popularity. Cultural policy means nothing more today than that you need an audience. In only the most seldom of cases have I witnessed thoughts on something like work. In other words, there is something like a shifting mass that, on the one hand, bestows value on meaningless things, and, on the other hand, constantly decorates existing things. What makes a lasting impression on me is that the only goal remaining is the creation of boxes, the hardware for the masses of art that take turns showing off to the appropriate audience. Cultural policy can only make decisions regarding money or certain results. The contradictory concept is that of collecting, a concept I would always call idealistic. Collecting requires you to step down from any political structure to a position where relationships are made, familiar, responsible relationships. Collecting as a utopian concept, from an assembly of things that are important, that generates an optical climate, that gives a name to a made-up place. That is something cultural policy cannot do.

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Translated by Elizabeth Schüth 2001, Freiburg, Germany



Lars Norgard: *Danglish*

February, 2008

A couple of weeks, "written in danglish"

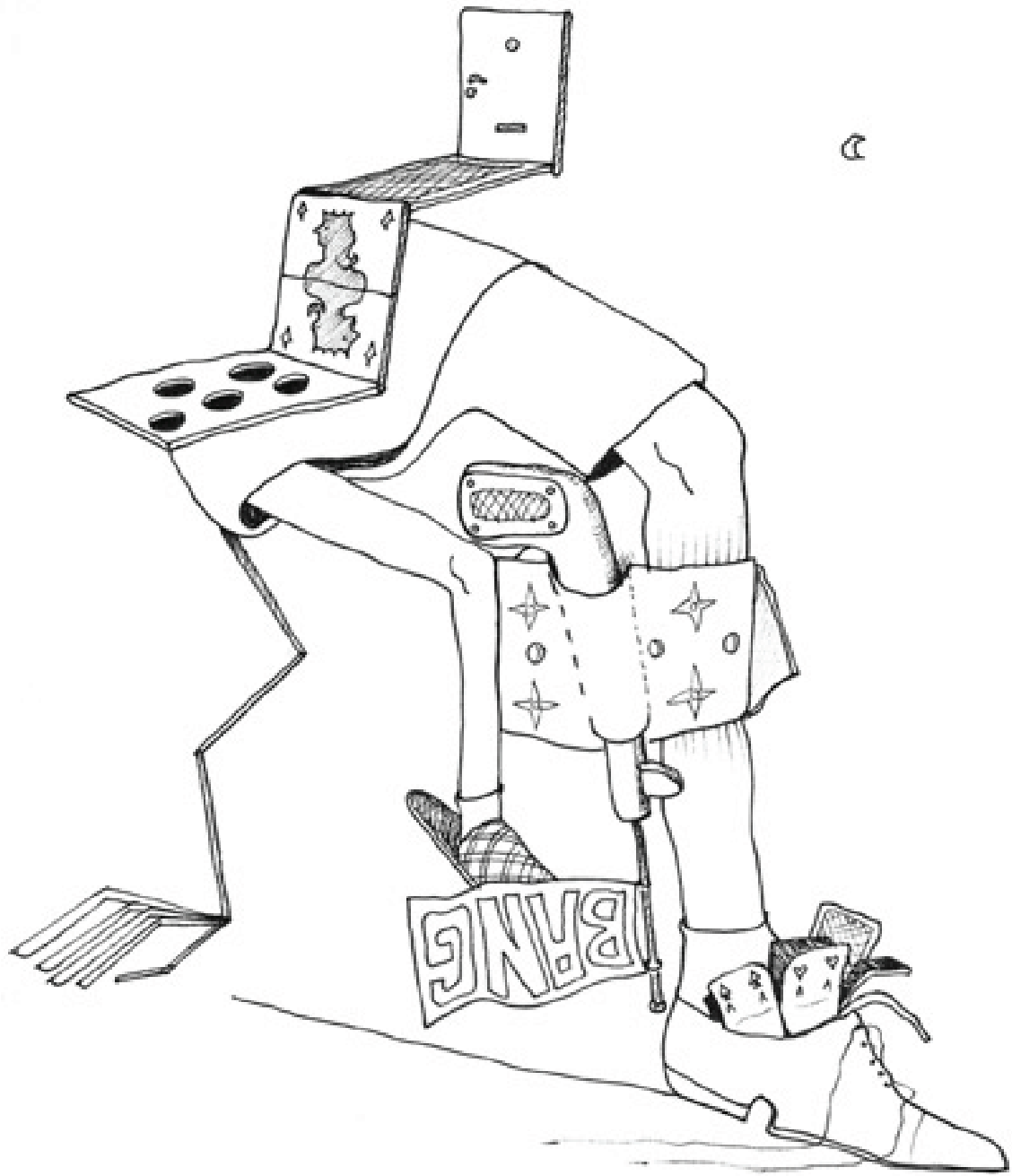
Saturday, 16

12.00 PM

Adding Carla Bley's "Musique Mecanique" to itunes. Sitting in my basement office, watching the neighbour cat shitting right outside the small windows.

Adding Carla Bley's Sextet to itunes. Marie-Louise (pregnant in 7. month) downtown, meeting friend Countess Alice Wassard, discussing child stuff. Alice and her husband the only ones from that region of my social life, that buys art. Just sold her a hunting rabbit in clay. ML collects the money from Alice and then transform the cash to shoes and jewelry. Recording Carla Bley: Social Studies. Reactionary Tango. Daughter Rebekka, 11, 12 i may, turning really beautiful, calling mobile. Home from Harzen, winter vacation with her mother. No snow, but swimming pool. Got a rash from the chlorine. Mountain walks, finding pink crystals. Sending her snapshot of ML's stomach. Jesper Gam is calling. The day starts. Gam's friend, the muscle man, wants "1000 Ties", another large painting. One of the last non sold paintings from museum show, "Bad Nerves," at Horsens Kunstmuseum. While recording The Orb, the OCD shows its ugly face. Will have to clean cloth hanger or it will cost terrible diseases or even dead to my family and me. The fight starts with the neurotic fantasies and I'm slowly losing concentration. Getting the first wave of depression. And its only 12.44. All the sad things in life comes up, the psoriasis,.. Thinking about the 10 trips to The Dead Sea, the unfaithful situations with flaking girls in the tar camp. Particually the young italian who I met on the float, showering our salt of, still out on the float, in the burning sun, with Jordan in the horizon, the tar turning lighter and less smelly. After about 30 minutes of silent walk towards the hotel, her hand in my trunks in the elevator, her father being out from the hotel, watching some ruins in the Sinai desert, from a rented Fiat. Why didn't I look this fresh shoe selling girl up in Italy? Other memories, all of them including females. Will have to clean the cloth hanger and find some concentration. Also: ML will be back soon. The pain from the psoriasis starts to hit my spine so I need to stand up. Mobile: The muscle man thinks the painting is too expensive and want to turn the situation into a persian market place. I'm writing back that the price stands without discussion, but that we can add an genuine Mont Blanc fountain pen (somebody forgot in the atelier month ago), -stupidly testing his humor. He agrees on the price, anyway.

Back from the terrible OCD cleansing of an completely innocent cloth hanger, had lunch, two pieces of rye bread with a thin layer of cheese. ML called on the phone, on her way home. Hope for a little intimacy later on, a little foot massage might be awarded. Checking incoming mail: The mechanic found my missing summer wheels for the MINI Cooper S, that I just sold, which again means that the car dealer can make the final order of the new Audi A4, 3.2 quattro, that I will have to pay a fortune for, with a 180% taxation on cars in this country. But with no sign of a catastrophic situation in the danish art market, I dont think much of it. Another mail: The library who were interested in "Can I have a Spoon?" sculpture in bronze, is backing out, suits me well, will rather sell it to Mr. Mathiesen, the founder of "Mathiesen Watches", in that way the royal family will get to see it, close friends, as Mathiesen are, with the queen and her prince. My shoes are hitting the wheels of my office chair and there is now a new OCD problem. My shoes are not supposed to hid the wheels of my chair. Could be dirty with "something". Second wave of fear and self punishment: Why didn't you stay in San Francisco (27 years ago) when the oppurtunety was there, You could have been the new Richard Diebencorn, the italian shoe girl and her tits like spikes, Should have gone to Italy when she called and told me that she was sitting in the bed wearing white stockings, do I spoil Rebekka with the endless line of gifts when the pocket is full of gold, and so and so on. Can hear ML upstairs. Will have to clean office chair wheels. Watch "Lonesome Dove" or something. Running up the stairs. ML had a haircut! The long red hair is now short and sticky from all the gel. Looked better before.



Sunday 2/17**11.00 PM**

Walk in the "Dog Park", a park close buy, where dogs can run free. Sun is shining. Conversations about name for the girl that will arrive in may. Kiki my no. 1 name. Or Mikkeline. ML in doubt. Lets see. Back home: Lunch, DVD, ML suddenly goes on top of me, rubbing my tights, getting an "girlschoool orgasm." More DVD. Not so much OCD. Quiet sunday. Sleeps all through the night.

Monday 2/18**9.00 AM**

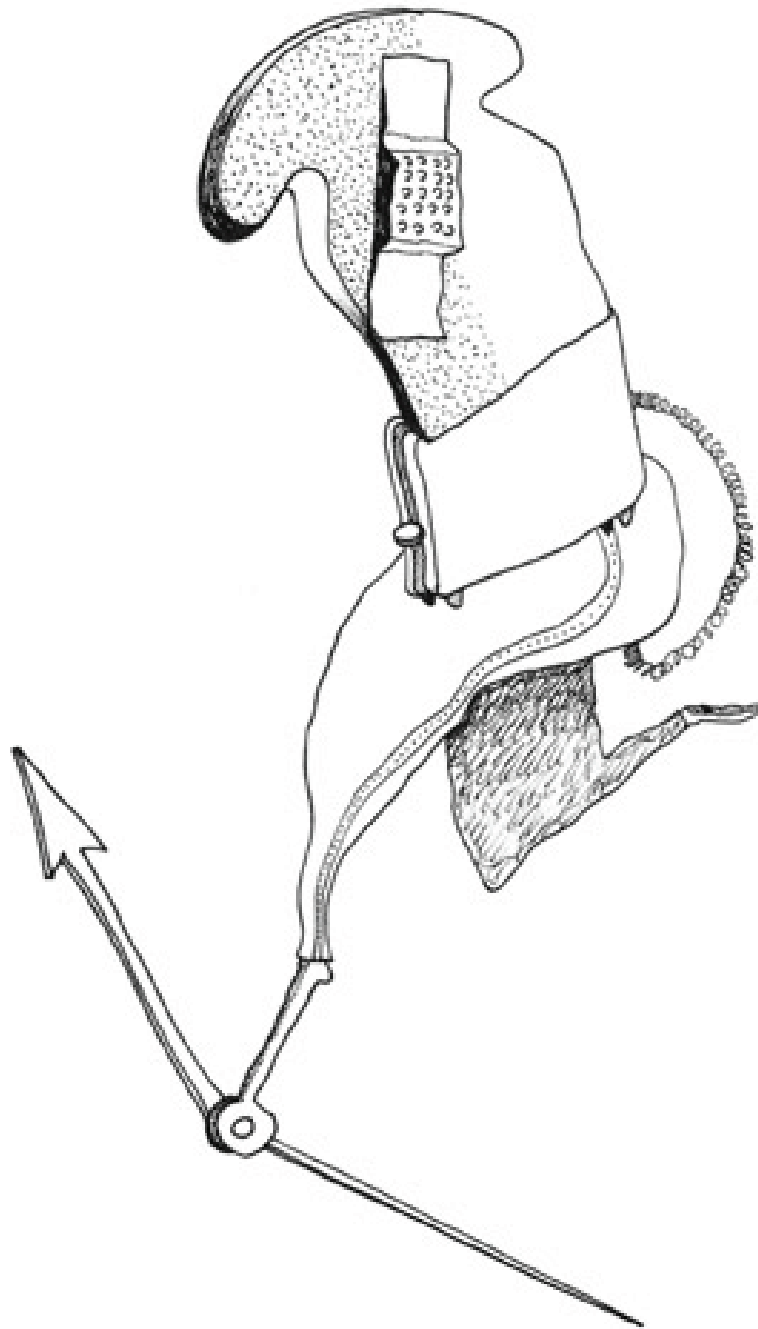
This will be a great day. No doubt.

In the atelier. Been here for an hour. Mobile call: Mr. Gam will arrive with muscleman Kim, at....NOW! Fortunately everything is in place. The painting "1000 Ties" are ready for Mr. Kim. They arrive, and in something like 45 minutes I'm selling 4 paintings. Everybody is happy. They pay in cash, so it's like real money. My tongue feels like a carpet after the speed talk about the intension of the work. I'm now literarily running around like an frustrated predator in the Zoo, up and down the stairs in the 2 floor workshop. Lots of, TONS OF OCD cleaning, but in a tempo like a whirlwind. Gladly done. Takes me only 30 minutes. Around 11.00 AM, the 4 new bronzes arrives, and they are just so beautifully done from the caster, who also delivers the work. The patina is even more perfect than I ever expected, and the caster is just so friendly, he sits on the floor and explanes about the process, how the iron chloride works, the yellow brown base, and so on. I dig these handcraft guys with all their material knowledge, and the way they can sit on the floor, and later on maybe smoke pipe tobacco in the car. I sign up for 10 more sculptures, a big economically decision, but it will work. Calls up the Mathisen family. Positive. This will be easy. Lunch, and ready to go home and rest, but after lunch I start to dig into a half finished painting, and the hours slips away. Another painting finished, and then another. Got the work fever and I'm walking on air, nobody can beat Me! No OCD, just fields of colors. Next costumers will be here at 5.30 pm, very late. At 4.30 I'm again rearranging the place, paintings on display. This time its The Carlsberg Foundation (Carlsberg Beer). Great responce, 2 works sold, each 6x6 ft. What a day at the races! Leaving the building, shaking from all the pressure. Home, having 2 glasses of red wine as the first thing, drinking it fast to make it hit more. But then the OCD wants its bite of the cake. And it wants a big bite. In front of ML.

The fight starts, and ML gets all upset and scared, stop it! Get help! I'm pregnant, you'll have to put an end to this MADNESS before the kid comes! But the tiny flakes of psoriasis that I just discovered on the floor will have to go. GO! Later on: Bad sleep. Paints in the sweaty dreams. Rushes of adrealin. Wakes a 3.45 AM. No more sleep. This is a nightmare.

Tuesday 2/19**10.00 AM**

Lars MøllerWitt from Gallery MøllerWitt calls. When he calls this early its usually good news. The Golf club in Jylland accepted the scetch I did for them, a figurative drawing of a golfer, constructed from golf balls. They want me to change the male golfer into a female golfer, which is easily done with 2 extra balls, hahaha. The job is in house. They also buys 2 7x7 ft. abstractions. Going to the studio. There are this half done painting that I can do nothing to. I'm placing the minor energy from half a night of sleep, in a tiny little canvas with My back to the 8x10 ft. large one. In this situation the solution suddenly comes out of the blue. Tried it before, sometimes this "blue" feeling, this "running on empty", is very constructive. With the right color on the bruch I turn myself to the big one , and a little later the work is done, as an supernatural incidence. Because its been done rather fast, compared to the other paintings that stands around in the workshop, its very fresh, almost like an gigantic comic strip colored drawing. Eating lunch with the photographer Niels Jensen, next door. His costumer, this day, burned him off, so he can take shots immediately, at 2. 30 PM the fresh painting, and several other works from the last week, is in the box. Home. ML announces that her sister, sisters son and their mother will arrive the coming week-end.



I´m now getting bad tonsils. Grumpy the rest of the evening, not so much because of the family visit, which for sure will be good news in Rebekka´s ears, but more this feeling of being sucked out, all guts gone, I don´t no. Goes to bed early, with bad tonsils and no guts, although My stomach sticks out like an oriental fruit, bad boy, baad boy,..bad night, up at 4 am, no more sleep. The thoughts about the OCD and what to do, works like a drill in the head. Strange images appears, like a freak show with living furniture. Hungry. Goes down in the kitchen. 3 cops of Nes and some rye with cheese.

wednesday 2/20

Bad tonsils turns into the flu, its epidemic these days in Denmark. I´m really sick. Bad timing, shall pick up Rebekka from school. No sleep, the flu, Rebekka already talking about new shoes. This needs a strong back. MLO stressed about the family, me being sick, and so on and so on. As another idiot I goes to the atelier to meet a trucker who will be there to pick up some of the sold work. And I´m in the paint trap, while waiting for the transportation, I start to work. 5 hours later I pick up Rebekka and friend Frederikke, and goes home. I know this will cost me a little week in bed.

thursday 2/21

7.30 AM

So sick that I can´t drive Rebekka to school, we agree to take the day off. She is a 100% sweetheart, serves breakfast and helps ML baking cakes and watering the flowers.

friday 2/22

7.30 AM

Gets a shock when I see Myself in the mirror: Face like a mouth breeding fish, an infection in the psoriasis, tried it before, but never this bad. Back to bed with a good book, sleeping on and off. Suit me well, in a strange way. Know I will recover soon, and also that I can stay up here while the house is full of people. Later on, 2 PM, I can hear the car door slam outside. The 2 women in big black furs, the mother with the biggest hair in Denmark, but surely a former smash hit. The sister being the copycat of the 2 daughters. The 2 women look like black bears, a strong wind blews and everything is in grey colors, sand in the air, biting cold. Nicolai is there and Rebekka and him will be playing on the Mac in a few seconds, and I will be able to hear them through the bedroom door, so nice and cozy, slowly drifting into the fever sleep. Happy.

saturday 2/23

In bed.

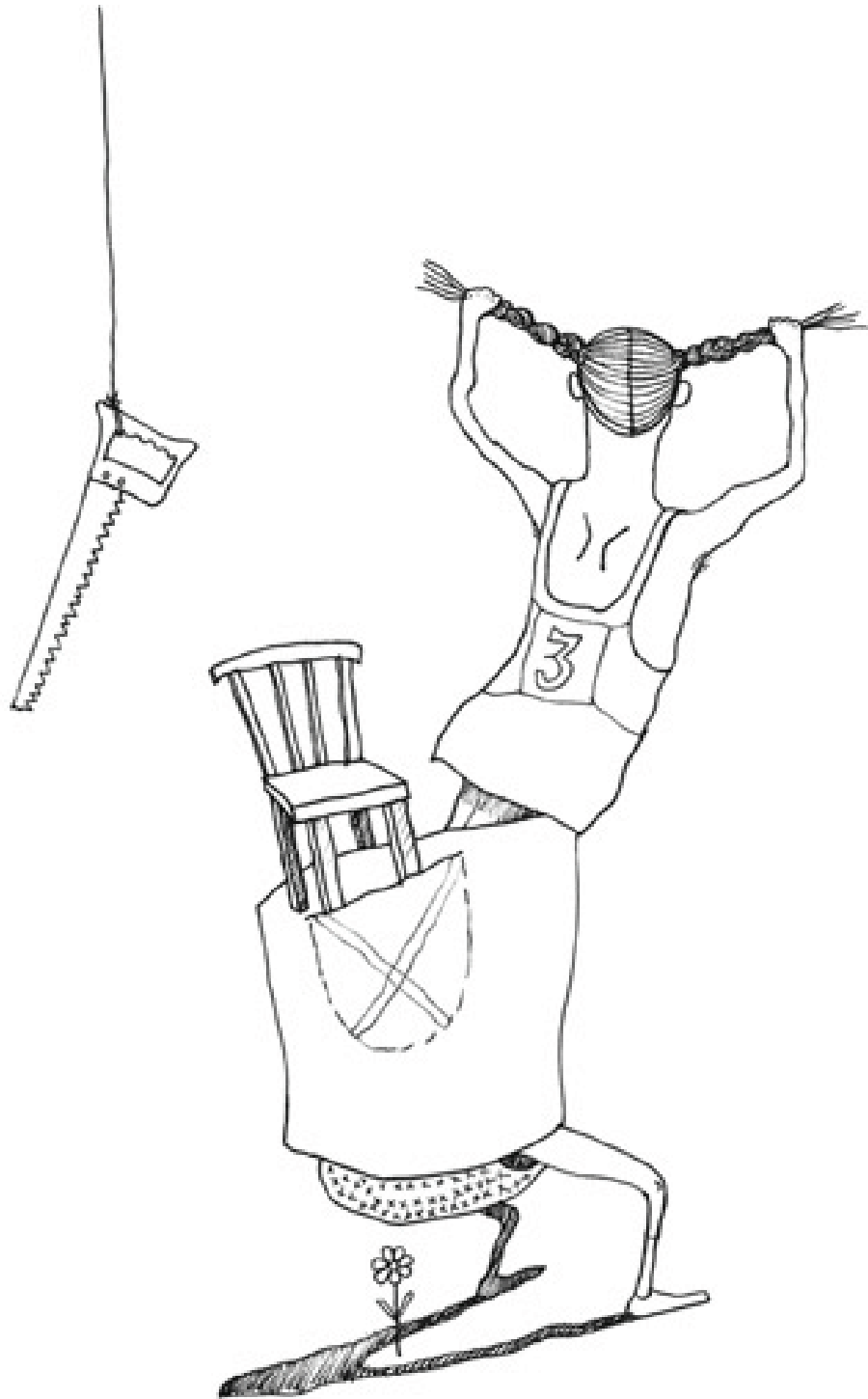
sunday 2/24

In bed.

monday 2/25

7.45 PM

Feeling much better. Adding The Tony Williams Lifetime´s "Turn It Over", to itunes. John McLaughlin on guitar. Dark ages seems over. 100% nice day at work. Started up 8 new canvases, 2 of them big size. Floor work, the dripping fase. Kindergarden. On penicillin, My face start to look normal. Called up a shrink with a speciality in OCD. The BEST in this matter, he said. What a jerk. Told Me that HE started painting when he was 8 years old. So he´s also an artist. And that his heavy smoking would be a challenge for me (I hate cigaret smoke), and other crabby stuff. He´s out. Trying to make drawings, but there´s no connection between brains and paper. Better finish for today. A pile of curled up paper money, in a shoebox standing next to the computer must be hided somewhere. Feeling like a boy scout Soprano. There´s 2 workers ripping our garage to pieces, right outside the window. Their money soon. Drops by accidence Radiohead´s "In Rainbows", on the floor. Dirt and hair on it. Throws it away instead of cleaning it.



tuesday 2/26**5.08 PM**

Sold another painting. The success with the sale is a good tool, makes the work look more sharp, because I trust in Myself. And I'm taking more chances, which is also good. But there's no international success, unfortunately. Tal R got out, maybe Michael Kvium will get out, his gallery thinks the new market is the chinese market. Dinner tonight. Must rest and then shape up.

wednesday 2/27**7.00 PM**

Dinner with former Princess Alexander and her new husband Martin, the photographer, in the Mathisen Junior home. She's asking questions, he's saying nothing. She's very sexy, half chinese, half austrian. Lots of name dropping. Getting tired from all this, don't want to take part of it anymore, to be honest. Because nobody digs Bob Dylan, when I'm asking. But off cause: At the opening nights and parties, it's a killer when some celebrity gives you a hug in front of the crowd. As usually in these stiff circles, I'm drinking too much, pure nervousity, and ML pulls My sleeve at midnight.

thursday 2/28**4.15 AM**

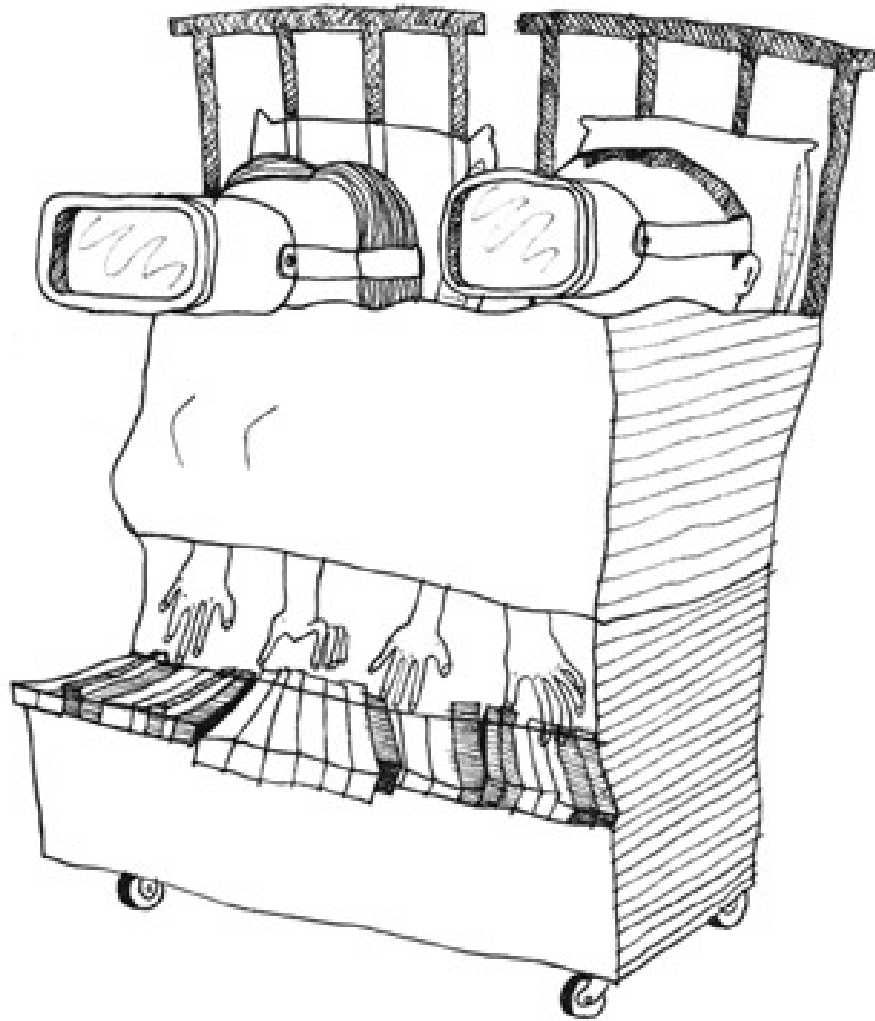
Terrible head ache, hang over, must have pills, must eat something with salt and sugar, white bread with cheese and tomato ketchup all over it. Feeling like shit inside and outside. My hair smells like an ashtray. Why is it only the middle class that can stop smoking, at least in this country? Fortunately I fall asleep when the pills starts to work.

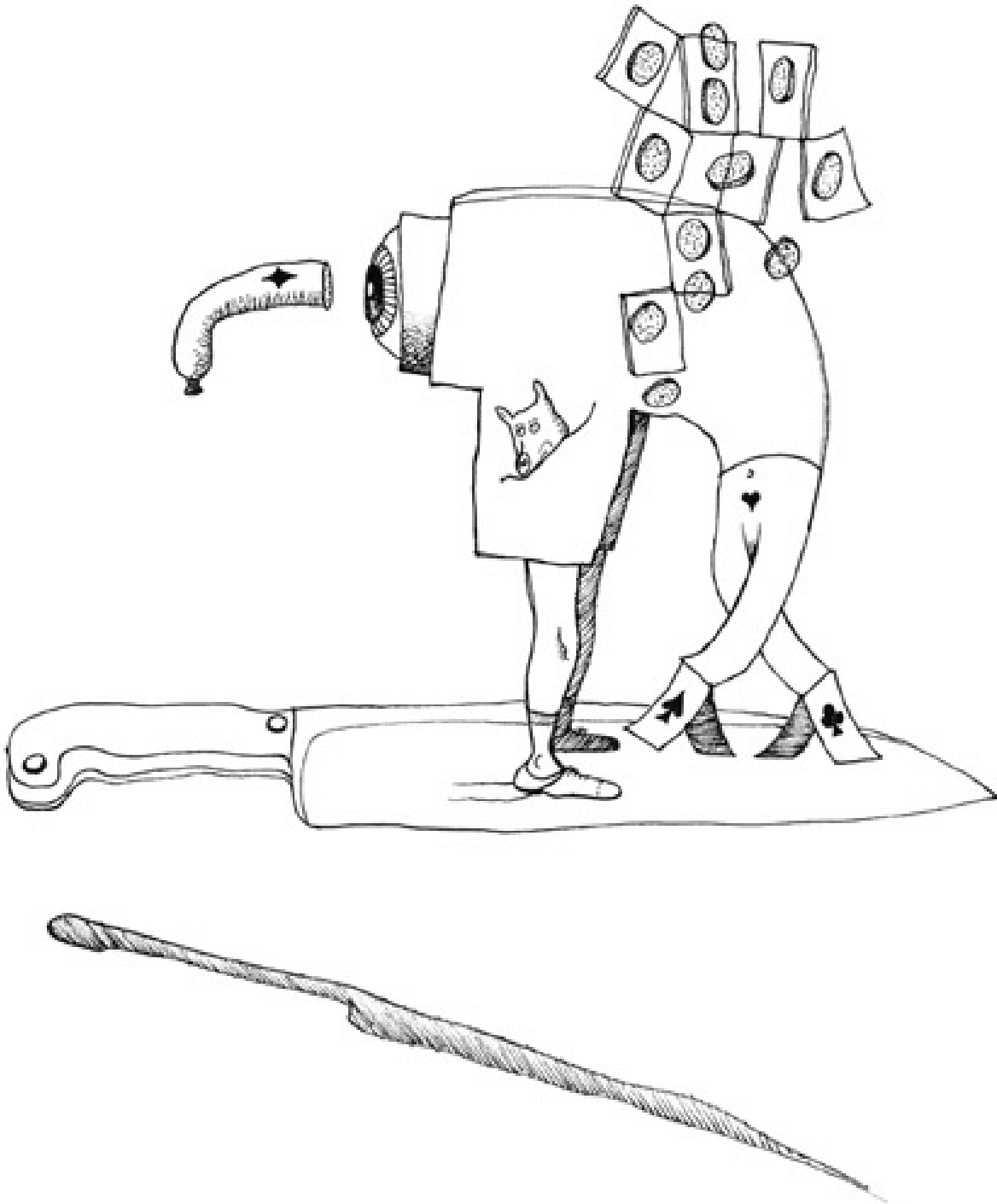
9.00 AM

At work again. Missing Rebekka. Calling her up. She's playing a hockey game. Melancholic. She's so big now. New paintings on the floor, a thick layer of lack coding the chinese ink, which I'm using for the first splashes. Now ready for oil. Love the atelier which is big and atmospheric. Hang over, but it's okay. Checked with ML, didn't insult anybody yesterday. A little bragg ass, though. Got to be a bragg ass sometimes. Somebody at the dinner party told Me that his free time occupation is to go visit some cherokees on the planes. He looked stoned. One time, having a show in London, I met the guy who found Titanic, I told him. The cherokee guy turned, and left for more red wine.

friday 2/29**5.00 PM**

Psoriasis terrible, back pains, skin peeling off. But I'm in way too good mode to take care. Spring time flowers breaking the surface in the garden, Kiki is boxing, Rebekka is here, downloading Bob Marley. Cozy day at work, just taking it easy, gardening the paintings, almost in super slow motion. And very few phone calls. Not so much OCD, the atelier is too big to control in details, so its less neurotic than being at home. In the afternoon: made interview with art historian Lennart Gottlieb, about the 80's art in DK, about fellow painter Erik A. Frandsen, which was rather funny, Gottlieb digging in old photo's from our youth, being "The Wild Painters" all dressed in black. No connection with the old group, anymore, to much envy and disagreements. Only one little hazzle: Good friend Claus, the cook, wanted me for a meeting in his restaurant, but I can't go there, he decorated his new kitchen with kilo's of thick led, and that's way over My OCD tolerance line. He obviously thinks that I'm a nut cake.





Lucio Pozzi: *The Competent Yawn*

There seems to be so much diversity around. Everybody does their thing so brilliantly. There is a niche for each of us. Occasionally a few of us get taken in a stream that's called a movement or a group and the attendant publicity might carve light around our art like an aura of celebrity. Sometimes this aura may last more than eighteen months if we cultivate the right friendships and affect the correct attitude of reluctant courtship towards a chosen audience target.

We are the professionals, the ones who know what they are doing and explain it clearly beforehand. Packaged well, our thoughts may be received with favor by investors. We must be very careful to consider every move, though, like a courtier at the court of Louis XIV. If impulse calls us beyond the hidden boundaries of the acceptable, many will tell us we ought to repress it. The boundaries include even an academy of transgression as canonized as other academies, say, of restraint or of excess or of one kind or other of normality. Transgression has its own rules and they cannot be transgressed. Its practitioners' heresy must contain the potential for becoming an institution or else it won't be offered the ritual of being burned at the stake, a good publicity to start a career: it will just simply be ignored.

Defamiliarization was exciting in 1917, but now we could write an instruction manual about how to operate it. So, I am one of those who feel cornered by the culture I live in. Not knowing where to turn, I find myself desperately seeking other ways. One could be longing for the margins of my galaxy. It's boundless (see Important Footnote below) out there, where there is permanent danger and passion can explode unhampered. Then, I could also instead stop caring about art, whatever that might be. I have chosen a third way: to avoid formulas and dive inexplicably into the languages of visibility with no exclusion of approach; to avoid packaging the viewers' gaze and to let them see what they want to see – I seek a 'creative misunderstanding' from the spectators. To seek a kind of open-ended ecology of thought. When I'll disappear, I wish only a million undefinable luminous dust specks should be left in my trail, not a defined ghost. Indeed, as I journey now in the artworld I see thousands of living ghosts bouncing gently from gallery wall to gallery wall, curtsying to one another in an endless minuet of urbane competitive skirmishes under the guise of tolerant emulation. Their only purpose is to achieve at least one moment of certified existence. Their eyes get older. No freshness remains. Is it worth it?

Yawning comes from feeling sleepy or getting bored or being hungry. A cruise on a millionaire's yacht could produce a strong yawn. The tension between its passengers and the terrifying dread of poverty outside could open your respiratory conduits and let them emanate the air bubble. Or else, we could feel sleepy and yawn after a loving encounter. Or we may feel the disenchanting hunger of the well fed in our dining room and yawn because of it – very different from the yawn of the bloated starving child.

The art yawn is gauged by that which precedes it and surrounds it. It comes from the current conditions within which art is practiced, conditions that under a veneer of apparent renewal are instead foreseen and unchangeable. Predictability is embedded in our soul. The manner of exchange in our art corridors is measured by expertise and competence, not by intuition or emotion. A young artist is not even admitted to the consideration of a person in power unless s/he can exhibit a diploma from an accepted school of art. S/he must also have a statement of purpose, short, to the point, sellable. If I, however, had to explain the purpose of my art I would feel that it is no longer worth making it.

Focusing is considered by many cognitive scientists to be an obstacle to creativity. It is good tactics only for competition because it forces the adversary to fight in a field of either/or choices defined by the aggressor. This is limiting indeed for exploration. Focus is considered to render dull and closed the person who engages in it. Focus can reduce our critical outlook by blinding us to alternatives. In art it's called consistency. In supermarkets it's called brand recognition. In many fields it's called specialization. With very few exceptions I call it a bore. Basically, it's the corruption of the once efficient practice of the division of labor.

Art has become a major industry and as such it is submitting to bureaucratic manners of exchange. Faithful groupies tread the canyons of art malls, discussing what they look at, often without seeing it. There is excitement about this postil or that. They feel the thrill of art that revives whatever had been sidelined and now looks new. Then there is food and sex and shopping around it. We are living a golden age of opportunity for our art to be seen and collected. But that comes at a price. The terms of discourse, the manner of presentation, the advertorial criticism that surrounds it are predictable and defeat the very reasons each of us started making art or looking at art in the first place.

Ours is the time of the Competent Yawn. Perfect arrangement of things, perfect presentation, perfect manufacture even of dirt. Before you enter a place of display you already know how by entering you have agreed to an unwritten contract of viewership that limits your gaze. A heavy inventory of connotations has corralled the making of the art as much as it is corraling your looking eye. While the people of the world outside butcher one another, we are safe enough to split hair about expensive details inside our shiny white coffins.

[Important Footnote: No event happens without a context, so, to say a mental art location is boundless is a paradox. The question is whether context is considered as a regulating bond by the artist or whether it is acknowledged as a starting point for unpredicted processes to follow.]

5 September 2007

Seth Price: *An Excerpt From - How to Disappear in America* - The Leopard Press

As if with a twist of the kaleidoscope all would become clear, splinters join, new scapes hove into view.

I'm like a person who makes things. You do it one after another, unending. It goes on for such a long time: *something new, and something else, and something something*. Here come a lot of different varieties of strategies and arrangements, all interesting, all interlocking, *mutatis mutandis*. Such a lot of things!

After a while, there arises a question similar to this one: might it be possible that a person of, say, forty has seen just about all that has been and will be? Well, catch yourself. That would be an argument against progress. Let's skip that argument. This is where we are! The bottom line is in fact use. You're a person who uses things. Use demonstrates an attitude, and attitude is all. Period. 'Nuff said.

At some point in the past, all production was for use, rather than for gain (unless use is a kind of gain). But even if we acknowledge that use was the foundation of Christian morality, justice and conventional social mores have since given rise to principles so general and agreeable as to be acceptable to everyone. In other words, whatever concepts you signal through your making of things, you end up sanctifying the current state of affairs. Anyone who gazes upon your products might well wonder: *"Must I consult some picture or trinket to learn that power corrupts, desires are commodified, control is paramount, subjectivity is administered?"*

Try to imagine so, for the sake of fiction. And ask yourself: for this sort of idea, would you discard all your friends, your family, your way of life? As in, put paid to some cumbersome item of crap. Some things that might have been dogging you lately. Nothing too heavy, at least not psychically. Your car, for instance. A good one to start on. Total destruction of automobiles can be accomplished easily enough, just by adding long-grain rice to the car's radiator fluid. If you've been a housewife for decades, you may not know that much about cars, so here's what you look for:

* Pop the hood of the car. There will be a lever somewhere above the feet of the driver's side of the car or, in older models, a lever is provided under the leading edge of the hood. Some hoods will stay open on their own whereas others have a rod mounted in the engine compartment that's used to hold the hood up. This lever may well be inscribed with words to the effect of: "Hood release."

* Remove the radiator filler cap if the engine is cold. (Opening the cap with the engine hot can get you badly burned. The fluid can start to boil once the pressure is relieved and spray all over you. The fluid will be quite painful resulting in first and second-degree burns. It's not likely to be disfiguring but if you accidentally burn yourself, you can very well go ahead with your plan to escape however your mind might be focused entirely upon the pain and not upon escape. With the engine cold you don't have to worry about getting burned.)

The cap can be found easily enough. Look for a cap with a small lever on it. Some radiator caps don't have levers, I'll add, but they'll be a standard size and shape. The cap will be mounted either in the center of the radiator or, usually, to the right. There will often be a notice on it saying something like "Pressure Test to 13-18 Pounds" -- at least in the United States they do. The cap is removed by lifting up the small lever on the top of the cap and turning counterclockwise. If there's no lever, press down and turn counterclockwise. It often only takes about a half turn before you can pull up the cap and remove it.

* Add as much long-grain rice as possible. The insides of the radiator will greatly affect the amount of rice you can add. If it looks like you must, pour in some rice and use your fingers to move the rice around inside the radiator. Then add more. Try to add as much rice as possible since what you're aiming for is a horribly clogged radiator and badly damaged engine. As you're adding rice, fluid will slop out. Don't worry about all that for now.

* Replace the cap. You'll have to lift the small lever on the cap (if there is one) then set the cap in place, turn clockwise until it stops turning, and then release the cap's lever, pushing it down if it doesn't automatically go down.
Close the hood.

* Depending upon the amount of rice you added and the fluid level of the radiator before you began, you may have a pool of radiator fluid on the ground which, since it's usually a bright green, can be seen. Someone could see that pool, pop the hood, notice spilled grains of rice, and know that they've been "processed." They're not likely to run the engine with rice in the radiator -- something you want them to do so that they'll destroy their engine by warping the head. So get a hose and wash the evidence away before any opposition can see it.

* Add dirt and sand to the engine's crankcase. Open the hood and find the cap which covers the oil filler tube and remove the cap. (The location of the oil cap is far too different on cars to describe where to locate it.) You may find a notice which indicates the oil filler cap. Such a notice might say something like "Use only SAE 30" or "Use only SAE 10-40." Add as much sand and gravel as possible. This will rest in the valve cover until the engine is started. As the engine is run, some parts of it will not get oil -- oil which is used for both lubrication as well as cooling. Worse still: ground-down particulates will work its way around the entire engine eventually ruining it until it just stops.

* The traditional way to destroy a car quickly has become somewhat difficult now that most cars have locking gas caps. Still, if you have access to the car's keys, get yourself a funnel and add a pound of sugar to the car's gas tank. The sugar will disperse in solution and caramelize in the guts of the engine when it's burned with the air/fuel mixture. That'll kill the car for sure and will do the job quickly. Note that adding too much sugar could simply clog the fuel outlet line which, while it damages the car and requires extensive repair to clear, won't kill the car out totally -- that's your objective, remember, since you're working to limit the resources of your opposition.

NOTE added July, 2005: Sugar in the gasoline tank does not work well and it's something of an urban legend. The suggestion is covered in a number of classic books such as Edward Abbey's "The Monkeywrench Gang" however actual experimentation proves that sugar added to a gas tank doesn't do enough damage.

It has been suggested that other substances added to a gas tank might cause serious damage, such as pancake syrup and other sweeteners however there is no good scientific data available anywhere that I'm aware of that provides any evidence that such substances work.

In the end, perhaps the best way to destroy a vehicle that might be used to come after you is to drape a blanket over the vehicle, dump a gallon of gasoline on it, and throw on a burning object from a relatively safe distance.

Alternatively experimentation with putting clothes soaked in gasoline in a pile under vehicles and then setting the clothes on fire has met with success in the United States so that's an option. There's that. It exists for you.

But take care: Gasoline don't burn; the fumes mixed with oxygen in the air is what burns. After gasoline soaked cloth is set in a location, fumes will build and if you strike a match anywhere within the volume of asperated fuel, it will go BANG! And you don't want to be inside that volume when it ignites. Also take care: Arson should be a last resort because it's considered to be a violent and dangerous crime. Ask yourself whether your life is in danger or whether your child's life is in danger and whether burning the vehicle is what's absolutely required to safeguard your life or the life of your children. If the answer is No, just don't do it.

* Then destroy all photographs you have access to. This includes family volumes of photographs that family members have. Your family members may or may not be supportive and hand over (to the opposition) all of their photographs of you depending upon your situation. Your family could be forced to support your opposition through threat of law or through physical violence. If you destroy all photographs of you, they can't be shown around gas stations and quick food stops.

If at all possible, your opposition should be reduced to passing out artist renditions of you. Even if you have police mug shots on file or have a drivers license photograph on file, it's still a good idea to limit the availability of photographs. Make the opposition use old photographs rather than up-to-date photographs if you can.

Another thing:

* If you are employed, make arrangements in advance. First off, stop looking at this stuff at work. Network administrators have on going logs for where their users visit when they are supposed to be working. Go to a public library, or if you have a laptop, do it from a wifi location. Don't do it at home, because it is information that can be used against you. Don't do it at work. Do it from a public place.

* Begin to express your dislike for your employment, and if possible, have the quiet conversation with your boss about being a part of the next layoff. It comes with a severance check. In some cases, you can prearrange to have your 401k liquidated, giving you additional funds. If you don't have a job to disappear from, there are fewer leads for your pursuers.

* Carry as little cash as possible, but find safe places to hide cash. Scatter it around so that in the even one cash cache cash is found, you have others.

* Change hair color and cut as soon as possible. If you are a man, grow or shave your mustache as soon as possible. Mustaches are readily spotted, but beards, not so much.

* If you are going to squat, get a Boy Scout Handbook. The information contained is invaluable, including simple first aid and how to get spotted when you need to be. Also how to build a shelter, and how to survive in the wilderness.

* If you are going to squat in the desert, the landscape is food and water. Learn what plants are edible. Realize that they will be a shock to your system and expect what is to be expected from a radical dietary shift.

* Properly skinning your poached meat will protect it from flies. Learn how to properly skin animals. Properly tanning the hide of your poach will give you clothing and additional shelter. Learn how. Properly "jerking" your poach will prevent it from spoiling giving you food sources for a long time.

* The US National Park Service has scores of backcountry hiking areas. Take your survival skills on a "test run". When you are ready to "drop off the grid", you will know what to expect.

* Drop your car off at a border crossing. Preferably on the other side of the border. The additional headache of working with international agencies causes your pursuers to waste additional time negotiating jurisdiction. And the Mexican side of the border is where you want your center of operations to be. Traipsing back across the border during normal "rush" is an easy way to blend.

Consider using cameras at transportation facilities to your advantage. Buy your \$500 beater and park it the day before. Drive your own car to the airport, bus station, trainstation, etc. Go into restroom and change your clothes, cutting and destroying as previously mentioned.

If you can't cut your hair, at least shave and acquire a new wig. You should have also destroyed your bag that you carried in. Go out the door and get into your beater car and drive away. Dump that car as quickly as possible and acquire a 3rd. Sell it to a car lot and it, in effect, disappears.

* Put paper napkins around any glass, can or bottle that you drink from. Open push doors with the back of your hand. Wipe the counter tops of restrooms with a clean paper towel before you walk out and toss the papertowel into another trash can. Get in these habits before you leave.

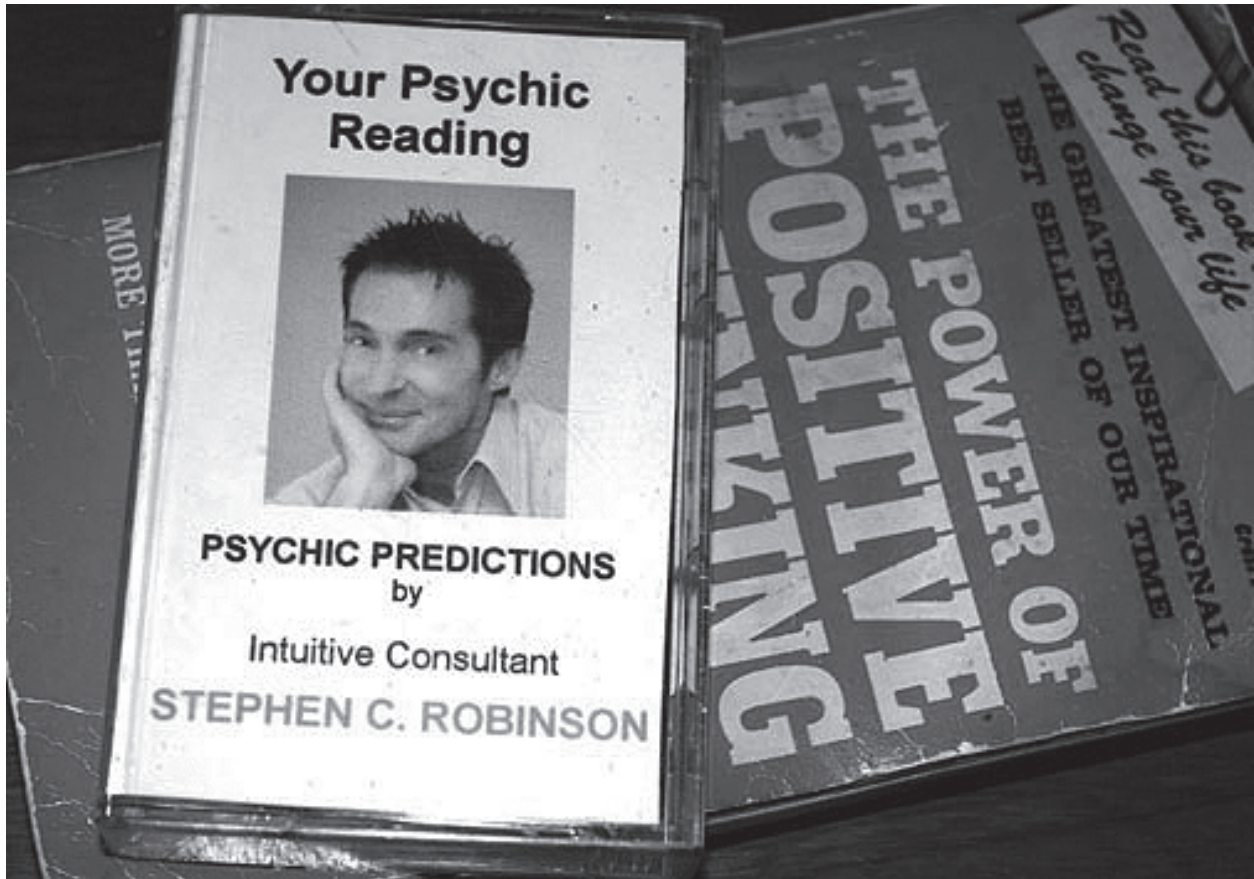
* Wear a hat... everywhere. Ha ha ha. Yes indeed. Hat's hide the face from cameras. Most cameras are higher than your head. Spend a lot of time looking at the counter. Or your shoes.

* Find nomadic jobs. They don't have insurance, but the people are communal and will help when they can. Renaissance faires, traveling Carnivals, Migrant farm workers are all nomadic.

Also look for natural disasters. There is a lot of work to be done, and there is also meals and shelter. I am not saying that you should defraud the government and take relief funds, but if you were a dishonest sort, you may be able to.

* Many small towns don't have daylabor programs, but if you are reasonably well groomed, you can get day labor by knocking on doors and asking the people of the house if they have some outside chores you can do in exchange for lunch. If they are friendly sorts, you may be able to work for them a couple of days, but don't press your luck. If there isn't, move on quickly.

* Like others said, shed the baggage. No one wants...



Ted Riederer: A Psychic Inquiry Into The Dimensions of the Sublime: Transcending Time Through A Turning of Energy And Unfolding Of The Unconscious.

"All right, so basically what I'm going to do now is hold your cell phone, and um, I'm going to close my eyes for a couple of minutes and sort of go into a little trance, and I'm gonna ask that you just sit back and relax and have an open mind, and um, I'll be with you in a couple of minutes..."

I leaned back on the comfortable leather couch, but I would not relax. I felt as if I were sitting in the waiting room of a dentist's office about to undergo a quadruple root canal/wisdom tooth extraction. My mind was as open as the aperture of a pin hole camera. What was he going to do with my cell phone, place a very, long distance phone call to the dead? That's not covered by my calling plan.

"...Let me just sort of tune in here. It'll look like I'm sitting here with my eyes closed, but I'm getting information that I'll come back and share with you, so bear with me for a few minutes."

What was I doing in the living-room of "Intuitive Consultant" and psychic medium Stephen C. Robinson? I don't believe in psychics, spirits, astrology, crystal balls, or prognosticating palms. I don't even believe in God, Christianity, The United States, any traditional ideology or dogma. Often, I don't even believe in myself, but I do believe in painting. I believe in painting.

"Oh I had this really strong vision...of um a group of spirit people working with you, and um I feel like they're with you, not like they walk around following you as invisible people..."

I came to Stephen C. Robinson's well-furnished Chelsea apartment to speak to the dead. I selected him from the myriad of internet psychics because of his photograph. Immaculately groomed with plucked eyebrows and spiked hair, he cupped his puckish face with the palm of his hand. He was the antithesis of the psychic stereotype, a Gypsy woman with a bandanna tied around her head gazing quizzically into a cloudy crystal ball. His photograph looked like a soap opera star's publicity photo. If he wasn't a good psychic maybe he could act like he was.

His web site proclaimed in large letters surrounded by stars and moons, "Your future can be seen today. Professional sessions for today's discriminating client. A Gifted Psychic Medium as seen on TV and Radio. In practice for over twenty-five years." There was a list of "actual" testimonials by past clients who claimed that Stephen C. Robinson had helped them find lost broaches, predicted impossible pregnancies, and even communicated with dead relatives. I wanted to communicate with dead artists.

His assistant assured me in my telephone screening that if I brought good energy, a personal item that had always been in my possession, photos and reproductions of the paintings of the dead artists I wished to contact, and a credit card, Stephen C. Robinson could channel the energies of the spirits with whom I wanted to connect.

I brought eleven four by five photographs of deceased artists and writers. Most of them were self portraits in oil paintings and etchings. They were spread like a winning poker hand on the glass table in front of me. Something about their size reminded me of vacation snapshots of family and friends. Caspar David Friedrich, Hermann Hesse, Max Klinger, Edouard Manet, Heinrich Von Kleist, Charles Baudelaire, Eugene Delacroix, Walt Whitman, Jean Singer Sargent, and William Wordsworth stared up at us impatiently.

Soft music was playing in harmonic pastels, as aromatic candles flickered in the room. Stephen C. Robinson wore a slimly tailored dark-blue pin-stripe fashionable suit with a dark dress shirt. After the recent occult photography show at the Met, I expected him to be wearing a cape, turban, or at least an eccentric mustache.

The setting was more like the scene of a soap opera seduction than a seance. Displaying a mastery of dog training and theatrics Stephen C. Robinson abruptly interrupted me, got up out of his seat, and dimmed the lights.

"Painting is an act of implicit faith, try to have faith in this," I thought to myself. As skeptical as I was, I vowed to participate in this encounter as sincerely as I could. In a sense, I communicate with the dead regularly. When a work of art affects me, I feel an intense dialogue with the artist. In his journal, Eugene Delacroix wrote, "Besides the pleasure of being praised, there is the thought of communicating with other souls capable of understanding one's own, and thus one's work becomes a meeting place for the souls of all men...Living in the minds of others is what is so intoxicating(Delacroix 42)."

When I am deeply engaged in a painting, I feel the artwork is consecrated. In the psychic vernacular, this may make a work of art a spiritual conduit capable of evading time, distance and death. Artists have always been described as alchemists and conjurers; is it possible they are spiritual mediums as well?

Stephen C. Robinson seemed to agree, "I feel like with some people and art that they may be mediums, and I don't mean the material that they use. I mean mediums as in people who communicate with the dead...It's said in emotion, and it's said in intuition. It's like it's something that goes around the intellect. It is something that bypasses the intellect...there's mediumship that's connected to art, intuition. I feel like since you were a little kid you were selected for this, you were chosen for this...And I'm really feeling that your purpose, as in why you're here on the planet, is to convey something that goes beyond everyday life, and transcends time. That's your issue...to transcend time."

I brought one more photo to that session, and Stephen C. Robinson was holding it as he spoke. It was a digital image of one of my own paintings, depicting American soldiers in Iraq sitting in a tan mud covered Humvee listening to a CD by the 80's punk band The Misfits. The painting is called "Static Age." There was no way he could have known or deduced this. Things were about to get interesting.

"I don't want to impose my beliefs on you, but I do very strongly feel that there are very strong past life connections to art with you as well. Uh, I don't feel like this is your first time around as an artist. Um, I feel like you've spent many lifetimes as an artist...I see something about um, like paintings that, and I don't know a lot about art, paintings like Monet and Impressionists."

I was an Impressionist? I came here to talk to Romantic artists. "Maybe I was Mary Cassat," the cynic in me quipped. Next, I supposed he was going to tell me I was also an artist during the Renaissance, or some other popular period that someone who had only a basic knowledge of art would know. Twenty minutes later he added, "...you had a past life, and it was short, and I feel like it was during what was called the Middle Ages, you know during that time...the art may have been religious in nature."

I was self-consciously aware that my opinion was swinging uncontrollably between the part of me that wanted believe in Stephen C. Robinson and another part of me that wanted to scream, "You're a fucking charlatan!" and storm out. He prophesied that art would become my career, my life, my identity, that my art would take me to another dimension, that I would "unfold my consciousness" through my art. I realized how vulnerable I was, because this is the future I wanted so desperately, but I never asked him to tell me my future.

I already know it as if I am my own fortune teller. I will always make art, and it will always be a struggle. Maybe this is the seduction of psychic advisors, and why the practice is supplanting psychiatry and social work. Instead of paying to tell someone what you secretly know and don't want to hear, you pay someone to tell you what you couldn't possibly predict but secretly want to believe.

"Enough of the future, what about the past?" I scolded myself, "Don't forget why you're here."

Stephen C. Robinson began to shuffle the photographs of the artists and writers methodically. I thought of card tricks, sleight of hand, and prestidigitation. Was he going through the motions or could he see, hear, or feel something I couldn't. I scolded myself for telling him which pictures were the most important to me. I didn't want to give him any extra help in duping me.

"Who is this man?" he asked, holding up the picture of an etching of Caspar David Friedrich. It was the self-portrait of a young man with billowing curly sideburns that grew all the way down the sides of his face.

"I sense a warm energy from this man being directed towards you, and it's coming through in the center of your back. Like something...pushing you forward to the canvas, and taking you to an altered state."

I smiled because of an incident I had experienced with Friedrich the week before. I had been working on a painting that depicted a group of boys beating up another boy in a wintry graveyard. In the background, a group of druids in monk's robes is running past a tall gothic tombstone to save the battered boy. I had just received Caspar David Friedrich and Romantic Painting by Charles Sala in the mail, and when I opened the book I was stunned. There was a picture of a painting by Ernst Ferdinand Oehme entitled "Procession in the Fog" in which a line of monks, in monk's robes with hoods drawn, marches past a gothic tombstone almost identical to the one in my painting. The similarities were uncanny. I don't think I have ever seen this painting before, and I don't think I would have ever seen it if it weren't for Caspar David Friedrich.

I handed Stephen C. Robinson the brochure from the 2004/2005 show "Comic Grotesque: Wit and Mockery in German Art, 1870-1940" at the Neue Gallery, in New York City. On the back of the pamphlet was a reproduction of a painting by Max Klinger from 1880 entitled "Der Pinkelnde Tod" or "Pissing Death." This was the only picture by another artist that I had on display in my painting studio. This artist was the one of the main reasons I sought a spiritual medium. I wanted to contact Max Klinger because I felt such a strong affinity with the painting, and I wanted to know why.

"Pissing Death" depicts a skeleton holding a scythe in one hand urinating into a lake or ocean. The figure is dwarfed by a vast Romantic landscape rendered loosely in washes and thick paint, a palette of yellow ochre, burnt umber and raw sienna. I always remark that even though this painting is one hundred and twenty-six years old, it could have been made yesterday. The subject matter possess the wry wit of contemporary culture balanced with something grander, something ineffable.

In anticipation of my appointment with Stephen C. Robinson I investigated the work of Max Klinger.

"Klinger was the modern artist par excellence. Modern not in the sense that is currently given to the word, but in the sense of a man of awareness who feels the heritage of centuries of art and thought, who sees clearly into the past, into the present and into himself(Klinger viii)." When I read this quote by Surrealist artist Giorgio De Chirico, I felt like Klinger embodied the type of artist that I wanted to become. My approach to painting, a type of figurative realism that reflects the seductive properties of oil paint, was referential to the long tradition of painting.

Painting for me has never been overshadowed by its' antiquity, or what Gerald Marzorati, in his biography of painter Leon Golub *A Painter of Darkness*, describes as the "elegiac". I believe painting remains a valid way to communicate contemporary ideas. The fact that I strongly identify with a painting over a century old seemed to reinforce this.

As I read more about Klinger and the early nineteenth-century German Romantic tradition that influenced him (Klinger xv), I realized that one of the things that drew me towards him and artists like Caspar David Friedrich, was the artist's sense of *Weltanschauung*, or comprehensive world view, as reflected in their work. *Weltanschauung* is an ethical vision of the world, a set of principles, a creed. Klinger presented the banality of modern life through an ontological, existential, and sociological perspective.

Regarding Klinger's conscience, J. Kirk T. Vanderhoe writes "...we might find here an archetypal ideological dilemma, between self-indulgent dreaming and the political responsibilities of critical analysis, set in a period of crisis in burgeoning capitalism (Klinger xvii)." As an artist, I strongly identify with this dilemma, and I feel that if one substituted "globalism" for "capitalism" it could describe an artist's challenge today in 2008.

There was an elusive spirit to this work that also fascinated me. I was having trouble defining this essence until I encountered a description of German Romantic writer Heinrich Von Kleist in Charles Sala's book, "His essays veered sharply away from objective reality to concentrate on the specifically human situation: deprived of paradise man lives in a circular dimension, ever in search of a new grace, which may be granted by the unconscious, a dream, or a new unfolding of the personality (Sala 76)."

In spite of Klinger's subject matter in "Pissing Death," the fantastical image of death as a living skeleton, the painting possessed grace. This was something I tried desperately to convey in my work. Stephen C. Robinson told me my consciousness was going to unfold throughout my life. Like Kleist's description of an unfolding, did this mean I will achieve a "new grace" in my work?

When Stephen C. Robinson examined Klinger's "Pissing Death" this is what he saw, "What I sense with this is just this feeling of compassion that I get with him, like my heart center is drawn into this, and um I'm feeling that...that level of energy is coming through to you. Not just from this, but from his spirit...that's going to be part of the sublime experience for you, compassion."

I had mentioned the sublime at the beginning of our session, as a characteristic that linked all the artists whose photos I had brought. The sublime was a crucial component of the Romantic's philosophy. I thought back to an old high school art history aphorism, "The Romantics valued the Sublime over the beautiful." I recently read Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Sublime and Beautiful* and was struck by the relation of terror to the sublime, but more specifically Burke's etymological investigations of word terror. Throughout history the word has been associated with astonishment, admiration, reverence, and amazement (Burke 102). These words are all qualities of Romantic painting that I revere, but with an artist like Friedrich this sentiment is mainly derived from the grandeur of nature. My work, and possibly the work of Max Klinger, derives the sublime from everyday life.

When Steven C. Robinson spoke of compassion, I made an instant connection. As opposed to nature, compassion relates to humanism, man's relation to man, society, the universe. I believe an existential investigation of the sublime is an essential contemporary function of art. I now believe this is an important exploration in my work, to illuminate the sublime through a compassionate depiction of the world as I experience it.

Stephen C. Robinson had made another psychic connection that he was unaware of. In researching Romanticism's lineage/legacy, I frequently came across references to Edouard Manet. In Beth Archer Brombert's, *Rebel In a Frock Coat*, she writes, "In Manet's artistic lexicon sincerity was a key word. The text for the catalog of his private exhibition in 1867, presumed to have been written by him, contains this key word: 'The artist does not say today, 'Come and see flawless work,' but 'Come and see sincere work.'"

Compassion and sincerity are important moral precepts in my world view, and I enjoyed thinking about these ideas in relation to art making. One can't be compassionate without sincerity. I thought of Manet when Stephen C. Robinson spoke of compassion. Bromberg continues, "The word sincere was not a neutral adjective at the time. As historian Philip Nord points out, 'It is easy to forget the extent to which notions of sincerity were freighted with radical connotations.' The word became a Republican shibboleth. 'To claim for Manet[and] for the new art the mantle of sincerity was to elevate it into a challenge not just to the academic bombast but to a prevailing climate of reaction.'"

I feel the word sincere is as radical an idea today as it was in the nineteenth-century. In rebellion against an inflated elitist art market that overvalues nihilistic artwork, to be a sincere artist one must disregard economics. To make art without any concern for money has again become a revolutionary idea. In conversations with fellow artists and friends one can't even mention words like compassion or sincere without fear of being judged as sentimental, cheesy, or new age. An urbane vernacular without words like sincere is an impotent language incapable of communicating substantive emotion. An oligarchy of indifference must be overthrown.

I began to realize as the psychic reading progressed that I was no longer concerned with the validity of Stephen C. Robinson's words. When I pressed him about Delacroix, he claimed to see the word "revolution." Anyone with the slightest art education who has seen Delacroix's painting "Liberty Leading the People" knows of the re-occurring theme of the French Revolution is his work. Anyone who is familiar with the Broadway musical *Les Miserables* might have even been able to fake it.

I didn't need a psychic. I was channeling Delacroix as I read his journals. I felt his presence as I painted that week, and he wasn't whispering the word "revolution" from the great beyond. He was telling me about color and line and women and the desperate urge to be a good person and a great painter. When I looked at his self-portrait from 1837, I could hear the dead speak, "You who are withdrawn from eternity for so short a time, think of how precious these moments are(Delacroix 33)."

When Stephen C. Robinson claimed he could "psychometrize" a painting and see the artist through the work. I nearly laughed out loud.

But Stephen C. Robinson was offering me something more substantive and material than the psychic or the supernatural. He gave me affirmation that I was a proper heir to the legacy of artists whose work and beliefs I found meaningful, "There are paintings that you're gonna paint that you have no knowledge of now, just amazing things you're gonna do. And I feel this troop of spirit people and their collective energy are gonna work with you with this. Especially that one man with his hand behind your back pushing you forward. You're really gonna feel that. It's gonna be an amazing feeling."

And he gave me a new provocative way of thinking and talking about my art, "There's a merging with the canvas spiritually, and it's like the creator and the object being created are merged into one, and that's the element of time being lost. It's like you've transcended that clock time...you've transcended time...that's one of the symptoms of an altered state of consciousness, you have an altered perception of time. You called it the sublime, that's it. It's when your consciousness merges with the canvas. It becomes you. It's like the spirit working with you, you, the canvas, are all one, and there's just this turning of energy."

I have begun to think about art beyond issues of aesthetics. Introducing sincere into my critical vocabulary, I feel it is an artist's duty to think about the creative process in terms of morality. I'm not suggesting that an artist makes moralistic artwork, but that an artist treats the process of making art with compassion, openness, honesty, sincerity, with qualities of grace. Grappling with these existential concerns, an artist will make works of art that truly resonate. In his Letters on Cezanne, Rainer Maria Rilke writes, "Today I went to see his pictures again; it's remarkable what a surrounding they create. Without looking at a particular one, standing in the middle between the two rooms, one feels their presence drawing together into a colossal reality. As if these colors could heal indecision once and for all. The good conscience of these, reds, these blues, their simple truthfulness, it educates you; and if you stand among them as ready as possible, you get the impression they are doing something for you(rilke 46)."

When one stands before a painting the artist has fully considered, when one stands before a painting where the artist was so engrossed in the process that he or she transcended time, when one stands before a painting and a sense of grace is felt, this is the sublime.

Stephen C. Robinson told me my fortune that day. He said I would live to be in my nineties, a great teacher, and artist. Even though I was aware that I was paying him to tell me these things, and even though I didn't really believe he could tell the future, I know that if I stay true to this artist's life, I will live in my work a lot longer than I ever thought possible.

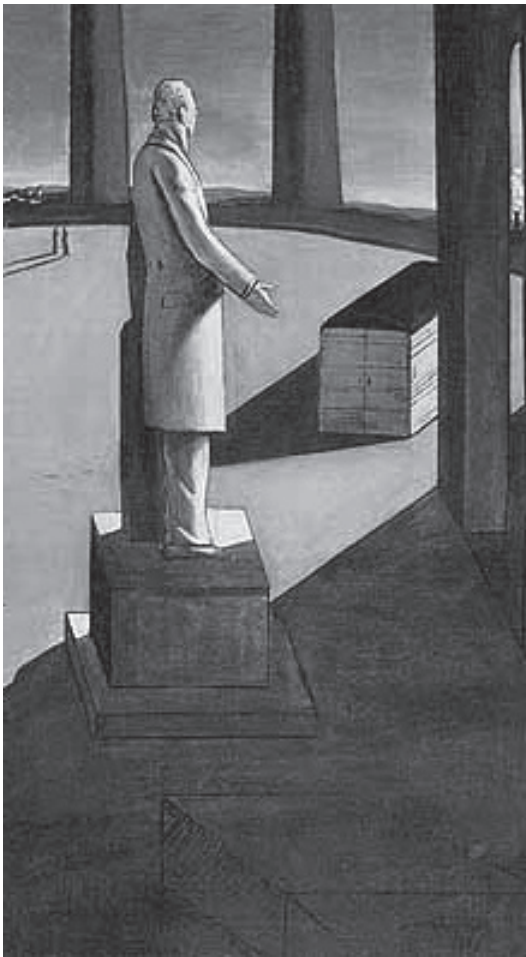
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Gary Stephan: *The Order of Pictures*

De Chirico reinvents the reasonable order of pictures, moving the supporting cast of picture devices to center stage, renorming the subject. The conditions of appearance now elevated to the role of content.

In any earlier picture, in the reasonable order of things, if a statue cast a shadow there would be no doubt that the statue was the subject and the shadow was the support, that set the object in space. What is new in deC is that something being covered or being seen, shadowed or lit, stacked or deployed are no longer just facts, the way things go: but the meaning itself.



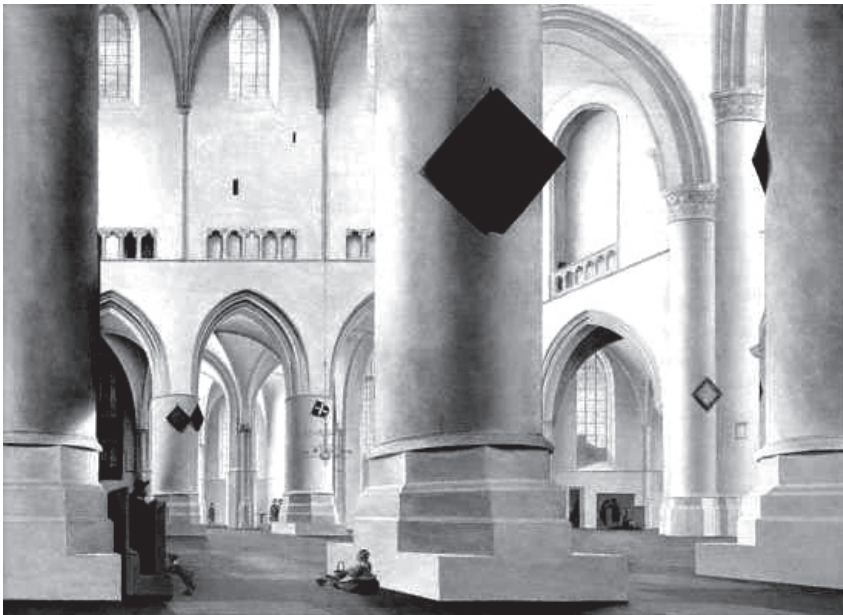
De Chirico, *The Enigma of the Day*, 1914, Detail

In De Chirico, the statue/shadow can be co-equal, each conferring meaning on the other, or the shadow may be all we see, implying the unseen object.



De Chirico, *The Seer*, 1915, Detail

In prior pictures, buildings are either subjects as in the works of Pieter Saenredam or useful places to set subjects.



Pieter Saenredam, *The Interior of the Grote Kerk at Haarlem*, 1636-7.

In deC's metaphysics the building and the figure conduct a symmetric exchange.



De Chirico, Thw Anxious Journey, 1913.

"The Enigma of the Oracle" is the first painting to posit a barrier to the nominal subject, in this case the white figure, as the real content. Many paintings have curtains; no prior painting foregrounds the curtain to the role of subject.



De Chirico, The Enigma of the Oracle, 1910, Detail

Things, as a matter of fact, are eclipsed by other things: walls, horses, curtains. But here for the first time the missing parts are shifted from being merely matters of fact, the way things are, to assume the charged role of the image's meaning.



René Magritte, *The Lovers*, 1928.



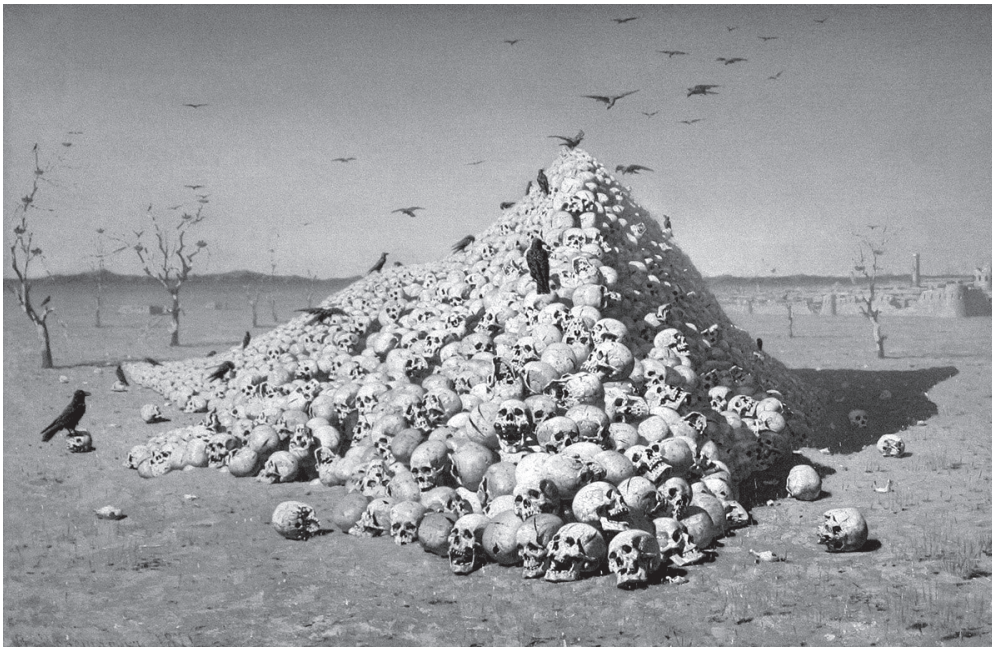
John Baldessari, *Blockage (Blue)*, 2005.

We are now so used to covering as subject, from Magritte to Baldessari, that we forget that this content was invented in 1910. This reconceiving of painting's subjects is perhaps most disturbing in the role that the pile comes to have in Guston after World War II.



Philip Guston, *The Testing Tree*, 1976

Premonitions of this power are evident in this Russian painting from 1871, "The Apotheosis of War." No people, no action, no dynamic composition, just the stack casting a shadow in the middle of the picture.



V.V. Vereshchagin , Apotheosis of War, 1871.

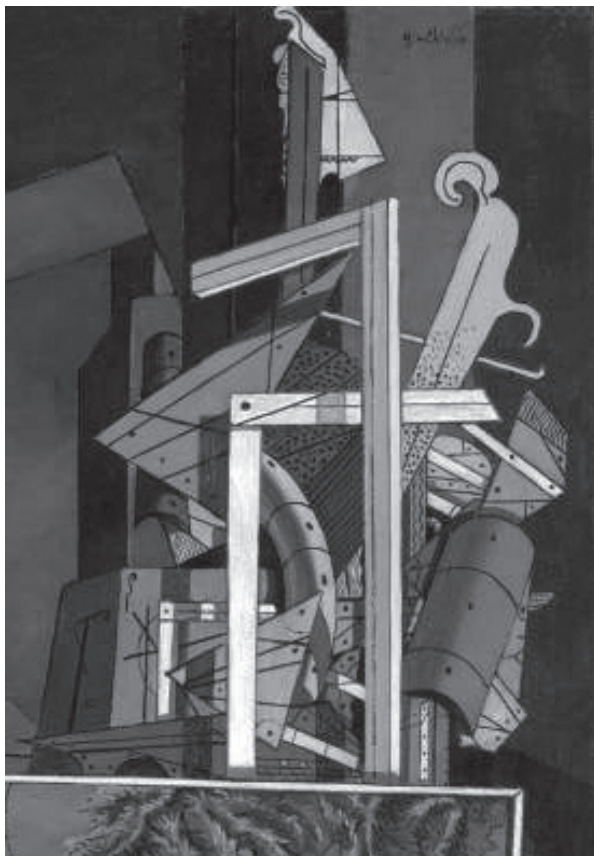
Then its unlikely companion Monet's Haystacks, which offers the banal effrontery of a subject with no edification, just useful formal existence.



Claude Monet, Grainstack, 1891.

But with deC's stacks we see the pile becoming an icon of modern life, from endless industrial dumps to mass graves.

And this icon was born in the early days of the 20th Century in the mind of Giorgio De Chirico.



De Chirico, Metaphysical Interior, 1916, Detail

A serendipitous find while searching Google Images: this Guston suggests I am on the right track.



Philip Guston

