

EVIDENCE

Dedicated to the memory of Joan Shipley

EVIDENCE OF EVIDENCE OF BRICKS

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Excerpt from 'stage exercises for smokers and non smokers' a script by Ohad Meromi, Limited Edition of 1, Repeatedly stolen and reprinted as needed for the exhibition Rehearsal Sculpture curated by Anne Barlow for Art In General, New York, 2010.

(TO BE READ BY MORE THAN ONE PERSON)

We are asking for a new place.

We, who are the first to admit that we are utterly unable
to even picture

such a place.

Still demand that it be established,

That it literally be built

Without delay.

FOREWARD

August 8, 2012
Dear People,

I offer you evidence of *Evidence of Bricks*, a document of documents that outlines the pre-revolution mumbblings of an exhibition, which took place in Portland, Oregon, in the fall of 2011. Evidence in this case comes in the form of interviews, essays, and photographs that document the state of the world as it was seen through the eyes (and work) of artists. A year ago, I had a feeling that we were on the brink of something. I watched the events of the Arab Spring from a safe distance. I culled images from the sacred space of the Internet to build my case. I looked to artists for answers to questions I could not possibly tackle alone. I sought an outlet for my anger about societal injustice. I held a brick in my hand waiting for a target. I hoped that we would soon all be swept up in a wave of a new revolution and, sure enough, we were.

It was less than eleven days into the exhibition that the people-powered movement called Occupy Wall Street erupted in Liberty Plaza, New York, and over the course of the next few months spread to over 1500 cities globally. At its start the movement was swift, leaderless, multi-faceted, incredibly organized, vibrant, collaborative, powerful, and all that anyone could talk about. Occupy rose up only to all but disappear from view, much like the exhibition *Evidence of Bricks*. Still, the sentiment and activity behind both linger on. The artists included in the exhibition continue to manipulate the current moment with their practice; the world continues to watch and wait for the occupiers and their comrades' next move.



Alexander Zemlianichenko/Associated Press. The Pussy Riot members Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, Maria Alekhina and Yekaterina Samutsevich sit in a glass cage on Wednesday in a courtroom in Moscow.

AUGUST 8, 2012

One year later, “the charisma of protest” (in the words of Pussy Riot, the currently imprisoned Russian band) is still alive and well. Pussy Riot’s performative protest in February of 2012 came in the form of a song (*Madonna, Drive Putin Away*), sung on the altar of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow. It resulted in their arrest and the charge of “hooliganism” for which they could serve up to seven years in jail. Earlier today, as band member Nadezhda Tolokonnikova looked out at the prosecution from inside the glass cage where she and her two band mates, Maria Alyokhina and Yekaterina Samutsevich, have spent a nine-day trial, she stated: “Even though we are behind bars, we are freer than those people. We can say what we want, while they can only say what political censorship allows.” It is in the performativity of protest in which real freedom exists, we embody an idea and display our commitment to it.

It is not clear whether or not *Evidence of Bricks* was a crystal ball or a mirror; either way, it allowed the artists, myself, and the audience to reflect on what matters most right now. Our participation in righting the wrongs of the world in whatever material or method we choose—print, protest, performance, sculpture, video, philanthropy, dance, song, lecture, food, friendship, collective activity, private meditation, and just plain showing up—is still crucial. The electric feelings of 2011 have faded a bit. Obama finally came out in support of gay marriage, the fires in London were extinguished, and elections across the world resulted in new leaders almost everywhere. Still, there are currents running underground and new problems undoubtedly arise as old ones fade.

It may not even matter how effective the movements or (exhibitions) of the past were, but only that they existed. Their triumphs and shortcomings are now the stuff of history. One revolution has the potential to inspire the next as one exhibition has the potential to inspire the next. Perhaps you think I am reaching too far in linking these things together and for purporting their generative qualities. I mean, how can an exhibition be as meaningful as an all-out assault on the US economic system? Or as brave as three twenty-something riot girls standing up to Putin? The simple answer is that it can’t. And yet, it is this curator’s hope that it and other efforts by artists and curators and writers and audiences can be a part of the collective organism that radicalizes culture.

FREE PUSSY RIOT,

*Kristan Kennedy, Visual Art Curator
Portland Institute for Contemporary Art*

EVIDENCE
OF
BRICKS
IS
EVIDENCE
OF
US.

Evidence of Bricks is about the building up, but mostly the tearing down, of institutions, societies, structures, and ideas. It is also about personal revolution. The kind that is more disruptive than a brick through a window.



Image 1.

In March of 2010, the FBI began investigations surrounding bricks thrown through windows of several supporters of Barack Obama's health care reform bill. One of the bricks, which landed in the county Democratic Campaign Party office in Rochester, New York, had a note tied to it that said "Extremism in Defense of Liberty Is no Vice". This sentiment, made famous by conservative Barry Goldwater in his 1964 speech at the Republican National Convention, was actually a paraphrased quote from the Roman Statesman Cicero. Friedrich Engels, the German Industrialist and co-author of The Communist Manifesto called Cicero, "the most contemptible scoundrel in history," for his lack of acknowledgment and support of class reform while upholding the democratic virtues of the Roman Empire. Goldwater was an anti-communist, who advocated for the reduction of social programs, which aided the poor. Often haunted by his quick wit, Goldwater once said, "There are words of mine floating around in the air that I would like to reach up and eat."

The brick starts as a lump of clay and winds up as a structural wonder, the basis for our architecture. It is at once sculpture, building block, and radical message delivery system, torn up from the foundations of the city and thrown in protest.

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Image 2.

“Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned.” —Gautama Buddha

The artists of *Evidence of Bricks* could start a revolution with a painting, or a digital text poem, or a block of clay, or an inflatable elephant. The materials of an artists’ revolution are their ideas. We must be brave and look directly at what they have made. After that, we must take to the streets and spread their message.



Image 3.

Muammar Muhammad al-Gaddafi’s current location is unknown. He faces prosecution by the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity. At the time of this printing Libyan Rebels were storming Tripoli.

KRISTAN KENNEDY

In this particular revolution, there is gray and there is color, there is action and inaction, there is illusion and disillusionment. In the gray of it, exists quiet, cerebral work such as Mona Vatamanu & Florin Tudor's silent film *Rite of Spring*, in which the tiny hands of Romanian children set fire to mounds of poplar fluff that litter the streets of Bucharest each year. This combustion is a poetic gesture in response to a natural phenomenon; it is both dangerous and immediate. The result is a cultural commentary on the leftovers of communist reign, and perhaps it is also an acknowledgement of the loss of innocence in the wake of political upheaval all over the world.



Image 4.

Eyes of a Child, Part II, To Our Children's Children's Children, *The Moody Blues, 1969: I'm gonna sit and watch the web, That you will build this day, Will it be a thread of love you weave / It's yours to show the way, Then everything will be, As you will see the light / In the eyes of a child, You must come out and see, That your world's spinning 'round, And through life you will be, A small part of hope, Of a love that exists.*

Grayness is also a feeling, a little like feeling blue, and a little like feeling dark. It is the sheen of a mirror. It is a non-color somewhere between the bright of white and pitch black. Gray Gray is the memory of T.V. snow as you click from one newscast to the next. It is July 1977 and you are six years old. New York is burning, there are blackouts, everyone is sitting on their porches keeping an eye out for the Son of Sam.

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Image 5.

"The riots caught British politicians by surprise. Many, including Prime Minister David Cameron, were on vacation abroad when they broke out. Cameron's office said he had no plans to return early..." (AP) Aug. 7, 2011

London is burning, the people of parliament are all on vacation, it is August 2011 and you are thirty-eight years old, the people of the city are smashing windows and taking what they want, saying what they want. From where I am standing, we are in the gray of it. We are here in the in-between space between amidst countries in radical transition. When will we send a tweet that topples our leader? What do we do with all this news of revolution? As culture seeps into our eyes mind as we watch from the sidelines here in America, will the acting out of others invade our bodies? When will we walk out of our houses and pick up a cobblestone? If we join in and become activists or artists how do we live capture the experience and reflect it back for others to see? Gray mirrors, gray movies, gray times. The gray writing is on the gray wall.



Image 6.

Television Lies! www.solidarnosc.org.pl

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It is now September. *September* is also the name of a daily newspaper produced by the artist team Anna Gray & Ryan Wilson Paulsen. It is a record of thought and inquiry around art and ideas, which will be edited by the artists and their comrades. These redactions, corrections, erasures, and cuts will illustrate how history-in-the-making on day is history-for-the-taking on another. In their ~~Fit~~ office, the artists sit at desks, they perch on a pedestal; in fact, their printer, their papers, and their tools are all on pedestals, working sculptures of the art world. Our stories are recorded in many ways, but no matter how much we try to avoid subjectivity, history is a thin suit of cloth that constantly comes apart at the seams. It is our job to mend it with our gut, the only space in our bodies worth trusting.



Image 7.

“The Book Bloc joins the student and public sector workers’ protest to affirm and defend what is under attack: our universities and public libraries, literacy, thought, culture, and jobs. In the past few weeks, our attempts to do so peacefully have been met by police with batons, riot shields, and horses. These are not isolated incidents of brutality but part of a system of institutional violence. By bringing books into the streets we are drawing attention to the violence at the heart of the neo-liberal. When the police kettle us, baton us, or charge us we will not only police violence against individuals but the state’s violence against free thought, expression, and education. Books are our tools—we teach with them, we learn with them, we play with them, we create with them, we make love with them, and, sometimes, we must fight with them.” —The Book Bloc

This summer in Eastern Oregon, dozens of kids communed with the artists of Whoop De Doo and planned for a project about the body as a site of investigation and change. Over the course of ten days, an army of people from Kansas City and Portland will build out their own space, using the leftovers from mass production: foam, cardboard, diaper fabric, plastic bits, and other detritus. This world within a world, will be the site for a television broadcast. Imagine *Pee-wee’s Playhouse* post-apocalypse. Or the Cockettes’ version of Slim Goodbody. My hope is that as children are climbing atop a tongue made from a waterbed, and the audience is being doused with

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slime from the inside of a giant cardboard nose, we will revel in the happy chaos of the society of bodies.



Image 8.

item # 61680, Clown Foam Brick

There is color in Halsey Rodman's time-based light and painting installation, *Towards the Possibility of Existing in Three Places at Once*, in which the artist makes three paintings side by side, each one loud with bold hues and produced gesture-by-gesture from memory, resulting in the creation of near-identicals with no original. Rodman's work speaks to the transformation of the self—here the body is aligned with gesture. There is evidence of the hand, of time passing, of choice, of the day leaving us as the light in the room changes from sun beams to incandescent glow. Though the artist has left the gallery space, we are in proximity to his body; there is still a record of his action through the changes he made to our perception. Color has a voice, as do we.

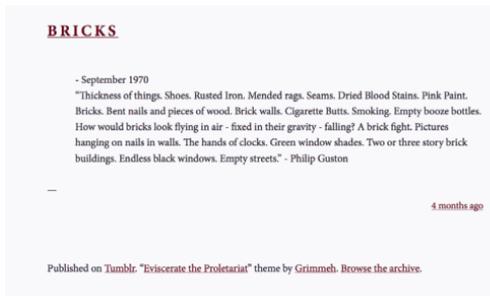


Image 9.

www.evidenceofbricks.tumblr.com

KRISTAN KENNEDY

There is action in Ohad Meromi's work *Rehearsal Sculpture, Act II: Consumption*, in which he turns an old classroom into a black box theater. Meromi takes cues from the idealistic nature of Kibbutz communities and the Russian avant-garde. He turns a series of sculptures, a pile of cigarettes, pine branches, and a loose script into a set with no prescribed outcomes, where audiences are invited to stage their own play for themselves. Meromi will also offer the space as a rehearsal studio for the choreographer Tahni Holt, who will create her own work in the space. This shared authorship with the audience and with other artists eradicates the notion of one sole creator and instead implicates a broader community in the "making" of art.



Image 10.

Houdini made famous the "Walking through a Brick Wall" trick after purchasing it from Sidney Josolyn, although there is some suspicion that it was stolen from P.T. Selbit. Apparently, Houdini's performance was so spectacularly confusing to the audience that they remained in complete silence, jaws agape long after the performance. Doug Henning brought it to Broadway in 1974 and David Copperfield upstaged them both when he walked right through the Great Wall of China.

Cristina Lucas recorded retired and fired jobbers from Liverpool tossing rocks through a factory window with all of their might. Her video *Touch and Go* slows down shards of glass in mid-air, and as they cascade to the floor we see the beauty and joy in the unionists' cathartic "TAKE THAT!" moment. A calliope pings out a carnival cover version of The Beatles' "Revolution," accentuating the violent choreography that ensues. Imagine dedicating your life to warehouse work—practically holding the walls up from the inside with your labor—only to see it evaporate. Poof! Staring at the place from outside, it must look like an empty cathedral, a

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Roman ruin, the site of something built on the backs of many, for many. Europleasure International, Ltd. is the name painted on highest point of the building and Lucas portrays this factory as being emblematic of all factories across the globe where pleasure is promised with product. As the center of manufacturing moves from “first” world to “third” world, we are left to imagine the same.



Image 11.

On February 14, 2011, citizens started demonstrating at the Wisconsin Capital building against a state bill that would prevent collective bargaining rights for most public sector workers. Despite an order from Governor Scott Walker to vacate the building, protesters remained peaceful; many of them camping inside. They did not leave for nearly two weeks.

Sometimes, bold actions can look like one thing and wind up as another. In Jesse Sugarmann’s monument to the corporate and “spiritual” leader of the Chrysler Corporation, Lido “Lee” Iacocca, he creates an illusion by inflating piles of air mattresses (soft bricks!) under three Chrysler minivans. As they rise, they look as if they will soar, but they tumble gracelessly onto the ground with a thud. His work is both epic sculpture and a marker of the fallacy of status symbols and industry. The air mattress motors scream and hiss under the weight of the machine age and then it stops and everything goes silent. The Plymouth Voyagers point up towards the heavens. Sugarmann recently attended a lecture in which the speaker linked our desire to explore outer space to our pursuit of the unknown, or god, and Sugarmann sees another link to our habit of piling our families into the car for the great American road trip. I cannot separate the image of the Voyagers from that of the Space Shuttle of the same era, which held so much promise only to explode in the sky.

KRISTAN KENNEDY



Image 12.

“We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them, this morning, as they prepared for their journey and waved goodbye and ‘slipped the surly bonds of Earth’ to ‘touch the face of God.’”- Ronald Reagan, State of the Union Address, January 28, 1986

Claire Fontaine is a song. “Chante rossignol, chante toi qui as le Coeur gai , Tas le Coeur a rire, Moi je l’ai a pleurer.” She is also a “readymade” collective artist, whose America is set to be burned by the hand of this curator. Their piece, *USA (Burnt/Unburnt)*, is a tedious but meditative installation made up of thousands of green-tipped matches placed one at a time into tiny holes in the wall by the artists’ assistants. It will not burn, however, because our city, county, and state rules prevent it from happening. This art has been rendered too dangerous; it will have to be complete in its’ incompleteness. When fire is absent, but only the potential remains, isn’t this a greater risk? At least one knows what do with a fire like this. You let it burn out and leave its’ mark. However, not only will the map not burn, it cannot burn, as each match is soaked in fire retardant. The map is as Claire Fontaine expected—a monument to the impotence of our society, the frustration of the artist, and the idea that cannot be made real. And so now here we have disillusionment.

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Image 13.

October 19, 2010, Tijuana, Mexico. Around 105 tons of marijuana - which would have been sold for around 4.2 billion pesos (\$337 million dollars) in roughly 210 million packages - were seized in Mexico's drug-plagued north on Monday. Eleven people were arrested during the operation and two were wounded - one drug trafficker and one security official - after a shootout in the Otaysection of Tijuana, Baja California. The packages were marked with various insignia, including Homer Simpson faces.

When I started the conversation with YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES about participating in the show, they asked me to tell them more about my curatorial objectives. That is when it got personal. A year ago around this time, my brother and I were talking on the phone. He had just been called a faggot by a group of teenage girls as he walked through the center of Manhattan. Now these girls should have known better; my brother is a tall, strong man from Brooklyn, and our ancestors are from the Highlands of Scotland. What I am saying is that a good fight is stored in his bones. He is also smarter than most, and wit can be a weapon, too. Shouting ensued and he went at them with everything he had. I can picture his face blood red the heat creeping up his shoulders and neck to his cheeks. A deliveryman rushed to the girls side, wanting to protect them, but who would protect my brother? When he later told me about the incident, he remarked that, "brick sales are about to go up." These words floated there between us for a few moments, before he said something about how people were going to start throwing bricks and everything snapped into focus. My brother was calling for a revolution. YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES, did not make a piece about my brother, but rather made a piece about how we relate to the struggles of others, where we place the blame, and how we re-claim who we are. Artists, faggots, etcetera and so forth. They challenge us to re-consider the phrase, "I feel your pain."

KRISTAN KENNEDY

The mythologizing function of the brick wall in this drawing will be discussed shortly. (The wall was “invented” by Warhol for the specific purpose of misrepresenting the circumstances of the car crash.) But let us note first, with regard to mourning, that the brick wall becomes an expression of unfulfilled gay male desire and a symbol of a certain bleakness, perhaps even a fatalist sensibility, within white gay male culture. In *James Dean* Warhol tells us that the most famous sad young man of the fifties had died by crashing his car into a brick wall, leaving all the other sad young men grieving over his loss. Functioning as a key conduit of gay mourning and as a symbol of gay martyrdom, the brick wall in *James Dean* still conveyed gay specificity mostly in negative terms; but since martyrdom is predominantly associated with the triumph of spirituality and the transcendence of bodily pain (*James Dean* clearly emphasizes the psychic appeal of the star over his physical aspects), the drawing proffers and preps these negative signifiers for instant conversion into building blocks of gay identity. *James Dean* may then be considered an important early testimony to the postwar gay male subject’s ability and will to mourn and a testimony, too, to this subject’s desire for a certain degree of public visibility and for identity. The impression that *James Dean*’s pictorial elements are arrayed fairly loosely somewhat belies the drawing’s rhetorical power to coerce a gay reading. For it seems that such a reading is more or less compelled to respond to the drawing’s

Image 14.

Andy Warhol’s Blow Job, Roy Grundhall, Temple University Press, 2003

In honor of the artists, and of Oscar Wilde’s fabled delirious fits of genius, Patrick J. Rock has fabricated a forty-foot inflatable elephant bouncy castle. Three people at a time may crawl through the pachyderm’s pink asshole and jump around inside the beast. We can still see them through the animal’s crystalline eyes, two windows into the soul of the object. Those on the inside are hallucination, they are causing the shakes. We on the outside are the witnesses— will we be inspired to join them or be content as voyeurs to the action? Wilde himself once said that, “all art is quite useless.” In uselessness there is freedom, in freedom there is expression, in expression there is art



Image 15.

Edwin Markham was born in Oregon City, Oregon, in 1852. He is best known for blending art and social commentary in his poems. His poem Lincoln, the Great Commoner was turned into a song by the composer Charles Edward Ives in 1921. At the top of the composition Ives wrote the following epitaph: “The storm and stress of life! / The cures

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of war and strife!/ The harsh vindictiveness of men!/ The cuts of sword and pen!/ What needed to be borne- he bore! / What needed to be fought- he fought! / But in his soul, he stood them up as - naught!"

Occupation/Preoccupation, stages sing-ins where musicians reinterpret songs from the sovereign countries in which the U.S. maintains more 700 of our nation's military bases. The army of artists who collect, cover, and perform the songs talk about occupying the song, translating and reflecting its meaning as a way to understand the places where we reside without true acknowledgment or a sense of responsibility for our actions. For this public presentation of the project, a single room will become a site for this activity. Sometimes it will be filled with song, at other times it will only contain the promise of song. Either way, investigating culture through music and, in this case, the music of specific geographies, allows for an understanding that is moving, visceral, and emotional. All of that is necessary to take on the cause of peace and changemaking.



Image 16.

We want a wild and ephemeral music. We propose a fundamental regeneration: concert strikes, sound gatherings with collective investigation. Abolish copyrights: sound structures belong to everyone. —Excerpt, Mai 68 Graffiti

For her project, Kate Gilmore cast five women to hurl over 4,000 pounds of clay at the gallery walls. But first it was fashioned into one perfect cube: three feet on all sides, it sat on a pedestal, and that pedestal sat on a plinth. It was asking for it. The women were to tear this cube apart. Its destruction was their job. Over the course of fifty-six minutes they clawed at the sides, pushed their elbows into the wet clay, and pulled off chunks of it until there was nothing left. When the women in Gilmore's *Sudden as a Mas-*

KRISTAN KENNEDY

sacre asked her what emotion they should have during the performance, she replied: “anger.” When I asked Gilmore where this anger came from she said, “living,” but also continued on to say, “I get it all out in the work.” I, too, was angry when I started putting together this show, now I am not. I got it all out in the work.



Image 17.

To Suffragettes. A word of advice. In destruction, as in other things, stick to what you understand. We make you a present of our votes. Only leave works of art alone. You might some day destroy a good picture by accident. Then! Maise soyez bonne filles! Nous vous aimons! We admire your energy. You and artists are the only things (you don't mind being called things?) left in England with a little life in them. If you destroy a great work of art you are destroying a greater soul than if you annihilated a whole district of London. Leave art alone, brave comrades! —Wyndham Lewis, BLAST, 1914i

Ezra Pound once said, “The image is more than an idea. It is a vortex or cluster of fused ideas and is endowed with energy.” In 1914, his friend Wyndham Lewis made a magazine (Books and Magazines, Bricks of Paper!) called *BLAST*, a “violent pink” manifesto in the name of a new movement: Vorticism. I needed a poet to call the image a brick, and so I asked Barry Sanders to do just that. And he wrote, (see page 25) “We are not mean: We mean. Duck. Brick by fucking brick, we make meaning. Duck. As bricoleurs of meaning, we simply make our marks and we mean.” Now I am here to start a new movement, called Brickism. Dig it?

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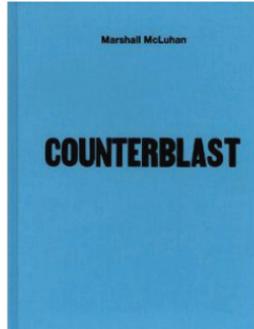


Image 18.

*Blast those art galleries and museums, which imprison and classify the human spirit—
Malcom McLuhan, COUNTERBLAST, 1954*

Egypt happened. Wojnarovich happened. Japan happened. Nicki Minaj happened. The Tea Party happened. Marina Abramovic at the MOMA happened, The BP oil spill happened. Ai Wei Wei happened. Wisconsin happened. London is happening right now. Each happening ushered in change, some radical and some unfathomable. Some effects are still not known. This series of artist statements exists to question, and to invent new possibilities. *Evidence of Bricks* hopes to make us less angry and more inclined to make something, or to make something happen. Whichever comes first.

August 24, 2011

*Kristan Kennedy, Visual Art Curator
Portland Institute for Contemporary Art*

BARRY SANDERS

JUST ANOTHER FLIC IN THE WALL



THE ASSEMBLY—How silly to think otherwise: Of course, it all begins with what's beneath our feet. It all begins with clay and mud. God breathes hot breath into a lump of clay, into Adam, and, voila, we've got non-stop animation—left/right, left/right: Everything comes awake and everything begins to move. And then someone yells fire, and suddenly everyone's talking ceramics. "They say one to another: 'Come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly.' And they had brick for stone, and slime they had for mortar. And they say: 'Come, let us build us a city, and a tower, and its top in heaven, and let us make us a name; lest we be scattered upon the face of the whole earth.'" Don't take my word. That's Genesis. That's the beginning, and in the beginning what people did they did pretty damned simply—they dug up the earth and they roasted it. They baked the earth like something they knew well, like bread. They baked the earth into a million loaves of bread.

$3^{5/8} \times 2^{1/4} \times 8$ inches—that's all they were talking about, tiny rectangles of earth, the size of a standard brick. Not much, but with enough of them piled wide and high the people could make themselves a city—make themselves one of the most beautiful cities in the whole civilized world. They could make Paris.

JUST ANOTHER FLIC IN THE WALL

THE DIS-ASSEMBLY — It is May 1968, and thousands upon thousands of students empty the halls and the classrooms and the libraries of the Sorbonne—we declare school over!—to gather together on the Boul Mich—the Boulevard St. Michel!—the main drag for Guy Debord and his spectacular pals in the spectacular heart of Paris, on whose cobblestone streets Guy and his guys wander and walk and argue, just searching for situations—for just the right situation. And, what do you know, here it is: on this sixth day of May they walk right out of theory and smack into a revolution. My God, students are picking up pieces of the street—the cobblestones, the bricks laid down so long ago—the very places where the homeless and the poor have laid down to sleep, the very bricks on which the clochard have pissed away their grim nights. University students are dismantling the City of Light— $3^{5/8} \times 2^{1/4} \times 8$ inches at a time—and demanding to breathe on their own. They want their breath back. They want it back right now. University students are digging up history—very ancient history—and throwing it right into the faces of the police, the Paris Flic. Brick by brick, they are dismantling and deconstructing the city streets of Paris, France, Fifth Arrondissement. Keep moving: You cannot hit a moving target. Someone should yell it out loud this very moment to those very students. Listen: this is important. This message they will hear all the way to Revolution Square in Tunisia. They will hear it in Syria and in Lebanon and in Yemen and they will hear it in Egypt and Palestine, and if you yell loud enough it may make its way across the great ocean to Detroit and LA. They all need to hear it. If they do not hear the word, they will at least hear its echo. Revolt! Tell the students; tell the workers. Here we have politics in a brand new key, body politics—the body politic that springs from the fleshy flesh of the human body. This is not a street movement; this is not *infra dig* but subterranean. I meet you deep beneath the roots, down at the root of the grass root, at the down where we can no longer go any farther down: sub-radicals all. Are we not all radicals? Are we not all rooted? Do we not all grow—I mean, really flourish—beneath the scene, subterranean and so underground? I mean out of sight. I mean, Outta sight! And maybe even out of mind. Outta mind! Way outta mind! “Il est interdit d’interdire”! TO FORBID IS FORBIDDEN! Write that on a brick, my friend, and hurl it as high in the air as you can and do not watch it come down. This is the covenant of the arc.

It is May 1968, and the students from the University of Paris at Nanterre have assembled in great numbers on their own streets to confront the flic. And they will not move. They are the new bricks in the streets of ancient Nanterre, the sacred shrine of the Hauts-de-Seine. Try as you

BARRY SANDERS

may, push as you might, these students will not budge an inch. The brick is precisely measured, perfectly shaped, fired, and weighed—a loaf of bread—baked rectangular and solid, not like one of those petit rockets, the baguette de fusé that cracks in half with the twist of a wrist. The brick is uniform and because it is so uniform it means that it knows the state of the state much better than you; and now the students are hurling uniformity—these hairy ruffians in their black clothes mourning the death of meaning—hurling uniformity back into the faces of the uniform row of uniforms. “*Sous les pavés, la plage!*” BENEATH THE COBBLE-STONES, THE BEACH! Write that, too, on a brick, my friend, and hurl it as far as you can and do not watch where it lands. This is the shortest distance between two lines.

DETOURNEMENT — The Bureau of Public Secrets Recommends Rene Vienet’s “Can Dialectics Break Bricks?”: “Imagine a Kung Fu flick in which the martial artists spout Situationist aphorisms about conquering alienation while decadent bureaucrats ply the ironies of a stalled revolution. This is what you will encounter in Rene Vienet’s outrageous refashioning of a Chinese fisticuff film. An influential Situationist, Vienet stripped the soundtrack from a run-of-the-mill Hong Kong export and lathered on his own devastating dialogue. . . . A brilliant, acerbic and riotous critique of the failure of socialism in which the martial artists counter ideological blows with theoretical thrusts from Debord, Reich and others... Vienet’s target is also the mechanism of cinema and how it serves ideology.”

LIMB OF LAW AND ARM OF ORDER — Take to the streets! No, take the streets! Of course, we will take the streets apart and hurl them back in your face. We paid for these fucking streets. Don’t you get it? And that’s all we have left. We are prying up our investment from the very streets where we walk and where we drive and where we kiss in the late evenings after our Absinthe and Pernod and we are hurling the street brick by brick back at you. Do you not yet get it? What is wrong with you? These are our bricks and we are hurling them—air mail, express mail, two-day mail, e-mail, par avion, overnight, snail and special delivery mail—back at you. Duck. We are not mean: We mean. Duck. Brick by fucking brick, we make meaning. Duck. As bricoleurs of meaning, we simply make our marks and we mean.

Pick up a brick you crazy cat and hurl it as hard as you can. America has exported baseball and a strong right arm is a damned great thing to have. Some American scout on holiday will notice the grace of your right arm and he will try to sign you for the Philadelphia Whats or the Chicago

JUST ANOTHER FLIC IN THE WALL

Thats or the Detroit Ifs, and he holds out millions of the brightest green dollars in his fist; but you will say no, I am turning down the green to play here for the Red Squad, for the Paris Left Overs. Sartre threw the first brick on opening night. Camus is our batting coach. Marcuse taught me to slide. Now excuse me, I have radical change to make. And you take a piece out of the sidewalk and you hurl it, well . . . you hurl it somewhere . . . right near the first base line will do just fine. Just make sure at some point in your career you throw somebody out at home.

Pick up a brick Krazy Kat and hurl it as hard as you can. Hurl your most perfect Herriman brickbat back at Mister Ignatz Mouse, right at the head of that smart-assed mus musculus. But Krazy is what we need, more crazy, for he (she) can do nothing but see those belts out of the blue from the mitt of that midget, Ignatz, as acts of pure, unadulterated love. And they are, in a very certain way, always exquisite acts of Krazy Kat love delivered at maximum speed as a way of saying—as a mouse or a mole or a mill-worker—hey, you on other side, standing so rigidly there, pay some attention here! Pay it right here! I am starving: manger des briques, the French say when they run out of food and run out of Euros.

All right, Krazy yells out—goofing with the fuzz, the way he so much likes to do—: Let ‘em eat bricks, ya says? Ya says, I do not care about yur pertikalar brand a kat fevah? Ya says, I do not see ya standing over dere? Well, den, here—here, just for yous Mistah Flat Foot—a very speshal morsul, ...

...a loaf a da finest I sends ya—a clay tile. Take a bite, Mistah Offissa Bull Pupp. How duz dat taste? See how youse guys feel now. Ya like bein’ bricked, Mistah Kop? $3\frac{5}{8} \times 2\frac{1}{4} \times 8$ inches. Dats all I got. And so I sends me little loaf a luv!

JESSE SUGARMANN



JESSE SUGARMANN, *LIDO, CHEE PRIDE IS BACK*, PERFORMANCE VIEW. PHOTO: TONY BOX

JESSE SUGARMANN

LIDO (THE PRIDE IS BACK)

Jesse Sugarmann's automotive performances are elegant pile-ups. His vehicular actions engage the car accident as an inadvertent monument, a spectacle of trauma and a point of social exchange. Lido was Sugarmann's accident/monument in salutation of Lido "Lee" Iacocca, the now-retired sales (and sometimes spiritual) leader of the Chrysler Corporation. Positioning three Chrysler minivans atop 42 inflatable airbeds, Sugarmann created a slow motion car wreck that soared clumsily through the air, the vehicles softly piling upon themselves with a cozy violence. Over two days Sugarmann held four public performances in the Washington High School

parking lot for crowds of awestruck onlookers. Each performance was filmed and quickly edited into a single channel video and sound piece, which remained on view for the length of the exhibition.

Kristan Kennedy: Lido (the pride is back) could be seen as a temporary monument to Lido "Lee" Iacocca, the former guru/sales leader of the Chrysler Corporation. What is it about his iconic persona or his company that links him to the work?

Jesse Sugarmann: The 2009 bailout of the American auto industry naturally brought Iacocca back to mind. Lee Iacocca invented the automotive bailout with the 1979 bailout of Chrysler, and then here we are, re-bailing out Chrysler 30 years later. But the atmosphere of this bailout is so different, so much less shared, less populist and optimistic. I've been having this struggle with my patriotism for the last couple of years. I'm patriotic, you know. I love the US. And it's been a really difficult time to be patriotic. Patriotism has begun to feel like an extreme right-wing sentiment, a sort of code

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for all of these awful things, all these intolerances. And when I trace back what patriotism used to be, or is supposed to be, I think of Lee Iacocca and the run he had at Chrysler after the '79 bailout. Iacocca rallied behind confidence in the American worker in a manner that was so much less exploitative and condescending than it would seem now. Iacocca, as a CEO, served as a patriotic figure for his workers, a truly believable and identifiable figure, and that just seems so odd now, so socially impossible. Lido (the pride is back) is part of my hunt for this lost patriotism. But it's also an acknowledgement of patriotism's failure, of its collapse and loss.

KK: Your piece exists as a performative sculpture and as a video. One thing that I noticed is that when viewing the performance there was intense focus and silence from the audience. As the minivans rose up on the precarious air mattresses, people crowded around to witness a hopeful crash or other disaster. Their anticipation added a tension to the work; their stillness made every slow movement of the sculpture that much more defined. In the classroom where the video documentation of the performance is displayed, the aggressive noise of the air blowers takes over and it reads less like documentation of a performance and more like a conversation between the landscape and the hard metal/soft pile-up of the cars. What is the relationship between the two interdependent works?

JS: As a maker, I prefer to work with video. I enjoy the degree of control video offers me, the privacy of the process, the ability to edit out failures. And it's my home base, the medium I have traditionally worked in. The performances are new to me, pulling me into more uncomfortable territory, but I think they're necessary to the work, so I've been obliging them. I'm interested in the way that car accidents function as instant monu-

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ments to traumatic events. I think that we look at car accidents when we pass them on the high-way with a lot of the same emotion and energy that we bring to a monument. With Lido, I'm using a car accident as a monument to Iacocca and, really, as a monument to patriotism. When you go to see a monument, the shared experience is a large part of the meaning of the piece. Monuments are collective experiences; they are about shared memory, shared loss. And for Lido to be interpreted in that way it needs to be seen live. The video documents of my projects tend to soften the monumental experience; they become about process and destruction, more experimental than solemn, more constructed than real. This difference is interesting to me; I still like the videos a lot. But they do not capture the tangible energy shift when a large group of people suddenly and simultaneously find a heft of meaning in something as absurd as minivans on a pile of Aerobeds. And that's a loss.

KK: What is it about the minivan that intrigues you? What do they represent? What about the sculpture's formal qualities? The three vans are lifted up in a pyramid formation, they are all meticulously painted the same color, they are all the same make and model...

JS: Building a monument out of vans, I needed for the three vans to form a single object, a single system. The vans had to be able to assemble the visual strength of a monument but at the same time engage, as vehicles, in this impossible pile-up. I painted them alike so they would better function as material, like bricks (ahem) forming a single solid. Used cars take on so much identity as they age, and I wanted to wipe that individual history out. I've been interested in minivans for a while now. I'm attracted to them as designed objects. The design curve of the minivan was so bizarre, how they started off looking like toppled refrigerators and them

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quickly turned into spacecraft. By the late 80s/early 90s they were all designed to look like spaceships. And they were even named that way: the Voyager, the Aerostar, the Astro, the Trans Sport. A few years ago I went to see the sculptor Diana Al-Hadid speak, and she talked about early cathedrals functioning as man's first spaceships. These ornate, intricate buildings were designed for taking man to search for God, a process later taken over by the space program. What got me was the back half of this thought, the part that wasn't even a question for Al-Hadid: that the whole of space travel, spaceships, and the space race, was about being the first man to find God. And I thought immediately of these 80s minivans, designed after spacecraft, as these crappy little vessels designed for the American family to go out on the '5' and search for God. And I kind of fell in love with the idea, and have been obsessed with these minivans since.

KK: There was quite a bit of personal risk involved in the staging of Lido, you and were as much a part of the sculpture as any other material. Other than the obvious need for you to set up the performance and make sure all of its various parts and plugs are working, is it important for you to be in proximity to the work, to be in danger?

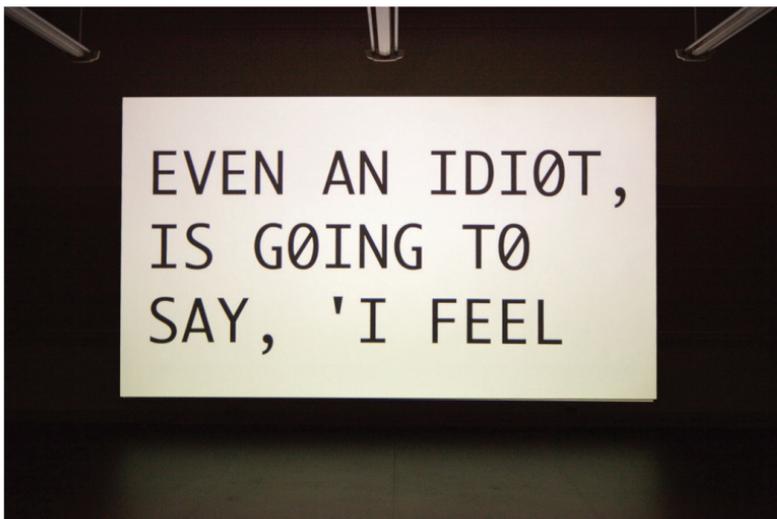
JS: No, not at all. I'm actually sort of embarrassed of the danger, really. I'm not daring. And if one of these cars falls on me, my last thought is going to be, you know, this is so embarrassing. I'll imagine my mother rolling her eyes. The processes this work requires are inherently dangerous, so I can't, in good faith, ask anyone else to do it for me. But when you see me out there, I'm trying to be as invisible as possible.

KK: Do you think that making art is an inherently political act?

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JS: For myself and my work, the answer is yes. I feel that any creative object or experience that offers multiple points of engagement inherently offers political interpretation. So if one's art-making is based upon a conceptual footing, there is inherently going to be room for political interpretation there. I think that the political can exist on a personal scale, that political content doesn't need to project upon others or be universally applicable. And I can never really commit to definitive statements like, "art making is inherently political." I was house-sitting this fall and the homeowners had a watercolor of a piece of asparagus hanging in the kitchen with the word "asparagus" written on it. I'm pretty sure that was apolitical.

Sugarmann is an interdisciplinary artist with footings in video, animation, sculpture, and fibers. A 2012 Creative Capital grantee in Film/Video, his subsequent project We Build Excitement will debut in Detroit, Michigan, in early 2014. Sugarmann's work is shown both nationally and internationally, at venues such as the Getty Institute, Los Angeles; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City; the Banff Center, Alberta; and Filmbase, Dublin. Sugarmann currently lives in Bakersfield, California, where he is the Professor of New Genres at Cal State Bakersfield. He is a co-founder of Ditch Projects in Springfield, Oregon, and is represented by Fourteen30 Contemporary in Portland, Oregon.



YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES, WARNING FOR LAUGHS—NO REDEEMING SOCIAL VALUE, INSTALLATION VIEW, PHOTO: DAN KVIITKA.

WARNING: FOR LAUGHS—
NO REDEEMING SOCIAL VALUE

Warning: this is just for laughs. There's no redeeming social value. We'd apologize, but that's sort of our goal every time we do what we do—you know, create an empty vessel you can fill with your own nonsense. Go ahead, knock yourself out. Is that a joke? Uh, no, not that I'm aware of. So you're saying we offer nothing. Well, yeah, at least we try. But that's why the average Joe hates our stuff. Because it's bullshit—he says. Uh, I've got news for you. The average Joe could give a damn about what we do. As long as we stay out of his way. Oh, right, I forgot. O.K., but scratch the laughs. Laughing is meaningful. You can laugh so hard it'll kill you—and death has to be dealt with. O.K., so drop the jokes. But if you do, remember, it'll get pretty boring. Nah, boredom can kill you, too. You're making this tough as hell. Man, it ain't easy being an artist. Is that another joke? - YHCHI

Kristan Kennedy: Your work “speaks.” Who is the voice,

YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES

or perhaps are there many? In this particular piece, it seems to switch back and forth, much like the conversations we have been having over email.

YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES: We've never given much thought to who is speaking in our work. It's not us, of course, and it's not the same person every time. And it's certainly not some omniscient narrator. Artists make mistakes, and artists who write are, well, bad writers. We can only hope that through it all the speaker comes off as a pretty cool guy or gal. In WARNING: FOR LAUGHS, NO SOCIALLY REDEEMING VALUE, the speaker seems to be a friend you trust who introduces one of the "smart guys," a group of high-profile shakers and movers who push and pull us through life. The smart guy in question then takes over for the rest of the piece.

KK: Which leads me to another question, when you read do you hear music? Why do you score your work? Are these tones and melodies perhaps yet another voice?

YHCHI: As for the music, it's fun to add an emotional layer to a text that otherwise would probably not be as compelling.

KK: Many people talk about how making art is an inherently political act, that it is brave and that it can change things. Do you believe this to be so? Do you think your own work has this potential both in aim and result?

YHCHI: No, we don't think art can change things. That said, we have a lot of respect for artists who risk their well being for their art. And we have a lot of respect for good political art. But we're not fond of art that tries to influence our politics. Although, as you say, all art ex-

presses some political content. As for our own art, we have no idea what its politics are, and we hope it expresses anything the viewer wants it to express.

KK: Why black and white?

YHCHI: We made a decision one day to not venture into graphics, to simplify, to do things the easy way, to avoid complicating things with pretty colors (although, if you look hard, we do use a color here and there on our Web site). Thus, the Monaco font, usually black on white.

WARNING: FOR LAUGHS—NO REDEEMING SOCIAL VALUE, was commissioned by the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, and set in Monaco, for Evidence of Bricks, 2011.

YOUNG-HAE CHANG HEAVY INDUSTRIES is yhchang.com. It is also Young-hae Chang and Marc Voge. They have made work in 17 languages and presented much of it in major art institutions, including Tate London; the Centre Pompidou, Paris; and the New Museum, New York.

HALSEY RODMAN

HALSEY RODMAN, WANDBEER, CINDER, CHANGING CONDITIONS, PHOTO: DAN KVITKA.



TOWARDS THE POSSIBILITY OF EXISTING IN THREE PLACES AT ONCE

Halsey Rodman's installation was comprised of a group of three interrelated sculptures broadly concerned with gesture, sequence, time, movement, and phenomenological experience. All three addressed themselves to the mobile body of the beholder, suggesting a consensual, productive encounter between audience and object. Rodman spent a week on-site prior to the exhibition, placing the room in direct relationship to the changing natural light as the sun progressed past the old classroom windows. In the evening the installation was lit solely by three lamps made from hand painted cast parts and paper shades made by the artist.

Kristan Kennedy: Our first conversation happened over the phone: it was a studio visit in voice only. I remember

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us talking about the sound of color, and I feel like I can "see" that in your work—how loud or how quiet a sculpture/painting is from its movement between hot, saturated brights and dull neutrals and subtle shades of white. You have such a specific color palette—the painterly quality of your work makes it seem unfettered, but now after knowing the work and you a bit more, I realize how considered everything is. What are your thoughts about this sort of synaesthetic relationship to color? Where do choice and chance come into play in your practice?

Halsey Rodman: The sound of color... this reminds me of the degree to which these two registers of sensory experience resist linguistic description. Sound and color refer to the present moment, the moment at hand, with an urgency that is different from the memory trace of, say, an image or representation. Sound and color must happen in the present, in your body, your eye, your ear—it's not that they don't leave an impression, but rather that they are both deeply inflected by the moment of their reception, and to such a degree that recollection fails tremendously. Color and sound both speak to a moment of brute sensory perception—something that is probably inaccessible to us in a direct way—to the moment before sound and light are organized into and attached to "things."

I have always been attracted to extreme color experiences, both of intensity and contrast, though this interest began impulsively, through a kind of desire for the specific experiences offered by color, for experiences marked by this provisional thrill (i.e. what happens when you are in front of "the thing" and can't happen anywhere else). I have come to think about the experience of color, and "chords" of color as both a spatial and temporal marker, a shared point of reference for behold-

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er and author. There is a mysterious cloud that emanates from colors in combination, a floating diffuse authorial cloud, something that emerges from the reflected light, somewhere between when the color was applied and the present moment. The experience of color mediates between history and the present moment. And this immediate experience, which is accessible, superficial, provisional to current conditions, is present in a way that may, in the best of circumstances, forcefully defer power relations and hierarchies of knowledge.

KK: I am curious about your “construct” paintings, and the notion of a time-based painting. How did the pieces come to be? What was the process, formal and informal, as you were trying to reconstruct your gesture and in the end make three similar, but distinct paintings?

HR: My intention with The Construct was to make a profoundly unstable object, to render this quasi-architectural sculptural object—very predictable in its formal construction, and quite fixed in space, unchanging, frozen—to take this object and, in covering it with a recording of its own making crystallized as micro-layers of paint on its various surfaces, render it unstable, stuttering, vaporous, mutable. But to say it is just the object is perhaps to limit the field—of equal importance is to render the author (as perceived by the beholder in relation to the object) as equally unresolved, as in a similar state of dis-assembly. The paintings were made in such a way that not one of them is the original. They were built gesture by gesture, by repeating each gesture/color combination three times, once in each painting. But rather than returning to the same painting, I would always begin a new gesture/color combination on the painting I had last painted. The cumulative outcome of this method is that the three paintings are woven together of equal parts first, second, and third generation

HALSEY RODMAN

marks and therefore there is no original among the three, but rather a series of near-identical copies all referring to the same sequence (or choreography) of gesture/color events.

The effect of this arrangement of near-identical (but very specifically not identical) paintings is that the three versions, taken as a whole, constitute an oscillating, shifting, unresolved field; since there is no original instance, and no single originating moment to refer back to, all three present an equally viable "present." As one must move around the assembly to take in all sides, the shimmering action within this field is directly tied to the movement of the beholder.

KK: What about the relationship of the body to the sculptures? All of the yellow triangles were placed in the corners of the room as stand-ins for a table, chair, shelf—were these present for the "audience" or are they evidence of you/the artist/ghost/maker in the installation?

HR: The yellow triangles were meant to address the body of their beholder—this shouldn't, though, preclude thinking of them as describing some other ghost body that placed them there. (This actually seems important: that their beholder perceives an intentionality in their placement, a proxy [the ghost author?] that allows one, as the beholder, to ascribe meaning to them.) But if the other sculptures in the room propose minimal formal difference as a primary experience (the tripled paintings of various kinds, the dots on the lamps, the light in the room as it changes throughout the day, for example), these triangles make a slightly different proposition about the experience of difference. The three triangles are formally identical, but the way they address the body changes each one dramatically: low, the triangle becomes a bench; at waist height, a desk; and above the

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head, a shelf. Though the object hasn't changed at all, its placement in relation to both the architecture of the room and a theoretical body changes it completely.

KK: When you were here you spent many hours just sitting in the space, watching the way the light hit the room at different times of day. This in turn helped inform the placement of the lamp sculptures and the other objects in the room. Can you talk about the influence of the natural light on this particular installation and how it changed the work, and perhaps the viewers perception of it?

HR: One of the most frustrating things about sculpture can be its implicit resistance to temporality. It seems so fixed, so inert, just dumb weight and matter, so different from us, our fleeting impressions, and the glittering cloud of emotional mental life. But of course this is also what is great about sculpture: its fixity in space moves the agency of change to its beholder. In the most basic sense, rather than changing in time like almost everything else, it changes when you walk around it—it continuously produces the new, the unexpected, pulling it out with every step from the invisible into the visible. Recently, I've been trying to find ways to mediate between these different temporal registers: the process of making something, the moment of encountering it (especially from a mobile perspective), the world as it changes around the thing.

So knowing that the room where the work would be installed had gigantic schoolroom windows along an entire wall suggested a good moment to make a sculpture that very specifically addressed these multiple temporalities. *Wanderer (Under Changing Conditions)*, in addition to being a lop-sided, tripled arrangement of near-identical elements, contains three lamps with

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fluorescent light bulbs. One of the most important aspects of this piece was to turn off all the other lights in the room (we even went so far as to put a box around the light switch so it couldn't be turned on!) so that the three lamps would be the only source of artificial light. The lamps are a constant, maintained by continuity of the electrical grid, in relation to the light coming through the windows as it shifts throughout the day and diminishes with the coming of evening. But in practice, though the lamps never change in intensity, their appearance appears to shift dramatically as the conditions around them change: because our eyes dilate in relation to the whole scene before us, when the light coming into the room becomes dim, the lamps appear to grow brighter. In effect, the electric lamps become a clock that inversely describes the degree to which surrounding conditions are in flux.

KK: Do you think making art is inherently "political?" So you think art can change things, be radical or revolutionary?

HR: Yes! Though I want to begin by acknowledging the potential of art objects to engender moments of radical inter-subjectivity; the term that keeps insistently surfacing is "minimal difference." Though not exclusively, this could refer to temporality, to the formal differences that separate instances of the near-identical, and/or to the formal variation brought forth with every step as one moves around an object considered in-the-round. An awareness of minimal difference, and setting up the conditions that allow for the minutia of a given condition to become part of one's experience—even in formal terms. All of these point the way to a fraying of edges between object (a received object) and event, and towards a lowering of the sensory threshold, in a very direct sense, to dislodge objects from the appearance of stabil-

ity. This dislodging, which is a kind of de-naturalization, allows the object to become historical and fragmentary, rather than arriving seamlessly whole. The object considered as such becomes something closer to an event, arriving not as an assumption but as a thing with a past and a future. So, rather than embodying transhistorical concepts (beyond our understanding and influence), objects can be understood as the embodiment of a series of conditions and forces that can be affected.

Rodman is a visual artist who lives and works in New York. His work has a structural/performative bent and often integrates gestural painting, diagrammatic drawing, and intense color, and he has often collaborated with others to realize "event-based group figurative sculptures." Rodman received his BA in sculpture from The College of Creative Studies at UCSB and his MFA from Columbia University and has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally at venues including Guild & Greyshkul (New York), The Institute of Contemporary Art at Maine College of Art, and, in collaboration with the SFBC, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE). Recent shows include a solo presentation at Arte Portugal 10 (Lisbon), and group exhibitions at Laurel Gitlen (New York) and Sue Scott Gallery (New York).

OHAD MEROMI



OHAD MEROMI, REHEARSAL SCULPTURE, INSTALLATION VIEW.
PHOTO: DAN KVIITKA.

REHEARSAL SCULPTURE, ACT II: CONSUMPTION

Ohad Meromi constructed an evolving sculptural space, transplanting his studio practice to a high school classroom. Within this environment, visitors were invited to form their own troupe to interpret and perform scenes from his Stage Exercises for Smokers and Non-Smokers. Inspired by the pragmatic idealism of the Kibbutz and Russian avant-garde theatre, Meromi created an architecture for action, rather than a set for a staged play. Meromi invited Portland-based choreographer Tahni Holt to use the exhibition space as her studio for the length of the exhibition. Holt held private rehearsals and workshops, recording her activity on the chalkboards and black floors of the room. Visitors to the installation made use of the Rehearsal Sculpture for impromptu dance parties, lectures, cigarette smoking, drawing, re-arranging an reflection. At the close of the exhibition Meromi returned to work with Holt and the public on a improvisational action which was recorded on video as

OHAD MEROMI

part of a cumulative project by the artist to document his projects in action.

Kristan Kennedy: What is group sculpture? Do you think that collectively we can build something worthwhile?

Ohad Meromi: If there's one thing I'm sure about, it's that collectively we are able to build something worthwhile, and this is probably the motivation of coming up with a term like group sculpture, which is more a proposal than a description. It is a "what might it be" or "where might this take us" kind of title, which is a general mode of operation for me. There is potential between "group" and "sculpture," these two not quite compatible things.

Then I'm adding this other term, rehearsal sculpture, which is coming from a similar place, but it helps clarify that I am interested in the work environment rather than the finished thing. "Rehearsal sculpture" can be a place to try out and speculate what a "group sculpture" might be.

KK: In the past you have worked within various architectures to create dystopian sites. What do you think the frame of the old high school will do or not do for Rehearsal Sculpture?

OM: In my earlier work, the school was one of the heterotopian spaces I'd addressed (among others, such as a clinic, a border crossing facility, a mobile home, etc...). I'm very interested in the relationship of what I do to learning and education, though I am not an educator.

More generally, transforming the white box is a fundamental gesture of my installation toolbox. I'm trying to

OHAD MEROMI

make the space hover between architectural functions by addressing the wall structure and circulation; introducing other types of spaces in an attempt to open it up to some other speculative use.

Some images you sent me of the space I'll be working in had the rooms unaltered, and some showed how it looked a year later when it was built out with clean white walls. My first thought was that I would have had very little to do if it had stayed as a large classroom. But since the room has been made into an approximation of a white box, I am, in a way, taking it back to its original purpose. It's a back and forth motion, like reconstructing a classical ruin, but getting it wrong. All of those layers are there. It's as if we worked on a room in a school to accommodate some extracurricular activities, which in a way, could not be better for Rehearsal Sculpture.

KK: What is it about a "stage" that has become interesting to you as a site for your work?

OM: The following is a statement I've used to introduce a piece a couple of years ago:

"A stage for me is any space that is in the moment of transformation from concrete space to fictional. This moment implies a transition from a passive to an active social mode, a moment of potent reflexivity, when the subject shifts his relationship with the matrix that regulates him and achieves a temporary utopian agency over it."

KK: In a way you are directing a scene when you are not present in the room. Where is the personal agency in the work?

OM: My output is not the performance, it is the param-

OHAD MEROMI

eters: the site, the set, what they enable.

KK: For this exhibition, you are collaborating with the choreographer Tahni Holt, who will be using the room as a site for her own work, a private practice that will become an invitation to the public someday close to the end of the show. Tell me about your impetus for inviting other artists to make work within your own.

OM: I am interested in questions like “What designates a stage?” and “What is enabled by such a designation?” Even in previous projects, the installation, as such, is an invitation for the viewer to move, and the work is never complete until the viewer performs it. I am interested in the performative as a mode, rather than in one particular performance or another. Being a sculptor, I know how to deal with spaces. But what to do with time? If put on the spot, I would not quite know what to do with it.

So it is even better if I allow someone else to use that space. In modern theatrical tradition the set and decor are the least interesting aspects of the stage, but I am very involved in the role they play in making this site what it is, in setting the parameters for the action, and in how they influence the dynamics of it.

KK: When you return in October, we will film a series of rehearsals or actions in the space. What is this footage for? To expand on this, how do you understand what happens in the piece if you are not there?

OM: I have been using the guise of making a film to generate all sorts of group dynamics and collective work environments. There is footage, and it might become a piece too, but first it is documentation which helps me understand what is going on and what has happened in the space. There are a lot of narrative threads about

OHAD MEROMI

workers and actors and smokers and Native Americans, which do not make one thing. As for the idea that I am not there, visual art works like this anyway: you make something, leave it in a room, then other people come and do something with it, and you have no clue.

KK: What about the cigarettes? A pack is sort of an iconic object already. The stack of them could build something. I don't smoke, so I probably would build a sculpture out of them. What is their significance to you?

OM: So, as I said, I was setting up stages but not knowing what to do on them and smoking presented itself as the perfect non-action. It's like the reflex of lighting a cigarette when a camera is directed at you (i.e. you are on a stage). It deals with time by breaking it down; it is a pause, it is self destructive, it is cool, it is perfect. This became my default stage action. But there is still always the question of what could be a productive action in its place. I thought my stage without audience could be split between smokers and actors.

Thinking of group activities and New Age tropes, and workshops and all the rest of it, I thought the premise of a workshop for quitting smoking is a funny premise for my lofty ideas about stages and their transformative powers.

Then there is the Native American emblem. I was smoking American Spirit cigarettes, and the packs were there, and had been accumulating in the studio, and this icon just made it right into the work. It felt appropriately wrong to have a primitive figure inhabit a neo-modernist stage.

KK: Do you think that making art is or can be revolutionary?

OM: Sigh. Probably not, though I'd like to say that I do. I guess I think of art within the politics of making a language, of changing it, expanding it. As such, it has effects on our horizons of possibility, since we are bound by language. It is an important role, and it is for sure political. "Revolutionary" sounds fast and strong and determined. I am distrustful of fast and strong and determined art. Maybe "transformative" is a better word?

Born in Israel, Meromi currently lives and works in New York City, where he is represented by Harris Lieberman Gallery. Meromi graduated from Bezalel Academy in 1992 and went on to receive his MFA from Columbia University School of the Arts in 2003. He has exhibited at venues including The Israel Museum, Tel Aviv; Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Israel; the 2nd Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art; the Lyon Biennial, France; Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin; Magasin 3, Stockholm; De Appel Museum, Amsterdam; Sculpture Center, New York; PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New York; and Art in General, New York. He has received numerous scholarships and awards, including a Percent for Art commission (2009), the Foundation for Contemporary Arts (2008) Grants to Artists Award, the Fund for Video and experimental film (2004), I.C. Excellence Foundation (2003), and the Nathan Gottesdiener Foundation Israeli ArtPrize (1998).

MONA VATAMANU & FLORIN TUDOR

RITE OF SPRING

The simple and poetic gesture of Romanian children burning mounds of white poplar fluff implies a promise—the promise of renewal. Occasionally, the mesmerizing play of the children leads the fire to consume a tree and then firefighters rush to extinguish it, leaving the burned trunk as a black drawing on the sky. The sparks and small fires in the film suggest the catalyst of change to existing orders. They recall the fires in the French banlieues in recent years, the perpetually deported and repatriated Roma people throughout Europe, or this year's uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East—all of which point to the hope of a more equal world.

Mona Vatamanu (Romania) and Florin Tudor (Switzerland) live in Bucharest, Romania, where they have been working together since 2000. Their practice spans film, photography, painting, performance, and installation, and reflects the social upheavals of post-communist Eastern Europe. The duo has had solo exhibitions throughout Europe and North America, and has been featured in the 2008 Berlin Biennial and in the Romanian Pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale in 2007. Vatamanu and Tudor have had residencies at Basis Voor Actuele Kunst in Utrecht, AIR Vienna, and Project Room at Ludwig Museum in Budapest, among others. They received first prize in the 2006 Fair:Play Video Festival in Berlin. Vatamanu and Tudor are represented by Lombard Fried Projects, New York.

MONA VATAMANU & FLORIN TUDOR



MONA VATAMANU & FLORIN TUDOR, SITE OF SPHINX, INSTALLATION VIEW AND FILM STILL. PHOTOS: DAN KVIITKA.

THE BURNT ANTONYM

At one level of understanding, Mona Vatamanu and Florin Tudor's film *The Rite of Spring* intrigues by the unclear chronology it sets into motion. That the artists recorded the footage of children playing with fire and its antonym—poplar fluff—in Bucharest, in one of the quasi-suburbs built into the city centre in the decade before 1989, this much is certain. But as to when they did so, I would like to propose that the action recorded on camera takes place on a Saturday morning.

This speculative trigger would create and undo an operational connection between the simple action of play, the presupposed removal of pedagogic authority from the scene (or the enactment of a perverse pedagogy, of a school of destruction), the odd voluptuousness of performance (recalling the inescapable urge to peel scar tissue from a fresh wound and expose the 'beyond' of the wound's nakedness), the past whose conclusion the performance could be said to embody (or disembody), the absence of dénouement (or its repetition in a work built as a tight sequence of climactic moments), and the implicit sense of progression, of advancement on a conflicted timeline.

It's Saturday morning, then, when Bucharest awakens from a week-long stupor. Friday night—the anteriority that the film indicates and that it is projected against, like a screen—is when the financial elite of post-communist Romania bifurcates, while not renouncing its political and economic self-identity. A single entity, to have emerged from the dark, twisted entrails of the 1989 revolution, fragments into two functional wholes, fulfilling complementary roles in the same political scenario. One of these exhausts its consumption capabilities, in feverish celebration of sudden prosperity, in the trance of its capacity for excess. The other whole executes the plan whose completion is celebrated in Bucharest's expensive bars. Taking advantage of the decreased vigilance, or programmed lack of vigilance, of whatever law enforcement agency could thwart that plan, Friday night is the time of unauthorized demolitions of houses, old or newer, that are in the way of real estate development projects and the creation of new places for consumption.

THE BURNT ANTONYM

The film allegorizes a permanent process of expropriation and repossession, which perversely completes an agenda of urban mutation and disfigurement set before '89: no manifesto is drafted on a Friday night in Bucharest, sleeplessness is not the result of pursuing an idea to its ultimate, liberating consequence, but of the avoidance of daylight. Perhaps a wider scenario of urban mismanagement and ideological brutality mirrors in the children's play, as they pursue a self-hypnotized sensuousness, a disappearing object of desire or a kind of possession which can never own its object other than as wreckage. *Rite of Spring* asks how economically and politically distinct groups see each other across historical fault-lines, how selves are configured as the negotiation of a constitutive marginality: by being pushed away, threatened with evacuation, or, conversely, as relentless claims to that which cannot be possessed.

What is set on fire, then, is not poplar fluff, but its possible equivalent in a social construction or 'system.' Poplar fluff is diaphanous, it materializes an ontological state of barely holding together; it is absolute porosity, lacking the precise geometry of the dandelion or the icicle. It accompanies the lower strata of architecture: it hugs street or pavement, embraces it with myriad impotent tentacles, it would like to adhere to it as its permanent signifier but exists as ruptured dependency. It accumulates at interstices and blocks holes, its formlessness occupies and emulates whichever angle it encounters in an aimless pursuit of biological mission. It is an anti-substance that mediates between things that are not in need of mediation, that papers over their slight disjunction. It shelters that which is not sheltered, and from this ambivalent position it signals its impending disintegration.

I see, or rather sense, poplar fluff as an allegorical stand-in, as a representation of another substance to insulate and connect, intercede and reduce rigidity or friction, to barely hold together the mismatching fragments that constitute our present. When fire and poplar fluff consume each other without residue, when they go out in flames, this figures other disconnections and fissures, the absence of a cushioning layer between blocks or segments in an ampler emotional and political economy. Should they indeed reproduce something, maybe fluff and thin air stand for gaps and shocks, for the shrunken polyurethane foam that insulated antagonisms— or so we thought—that separated and allowed for the coexistence of that which it separated. Where and how do shockwaves propagate, which harder surfaces and volumes can they now traverse or unsettle? What revolution is ignited here, and is this revolution waged from the above or the below of the political spectrum?

MONA VATAMANU & FLORIN TUDOR

Fire is not the antonym of architecture. Mona Vatamanu and Florin Tudor's recent projects have engaged the ambivalent nature of residue, as both falling out of use and advertising the immense vitality of the processes and factors that generated them, as 'essential particles' left behind by the self-consolidating consumption of political or financial power, finally as non-residues that resist a post-industrial aesthetics of the ruin. Dust and rust work like measurement units for the acceleration of a system in one ideological direction or another, they materialize its efficacy under the guise of decay. The title of the artists' current exhibition delays hope, pushes or hauls it into the future—it finds its glimmer, and that which is bound to happen, beyond the revolutions of the poor and the revolt of the rich. The show looks at that which is set on fire but not consumed by the flames, across a map of stifled conflicts, explosive ramifications and multiplying shockwaves, of identical reflexes feeding each other and registering at different levels of what they destabilize. It searches for symmetry in a superstructure of distances, half-voices and larger echoes, of points of incandescence, smoke clouds and signals of unrest, of butterflies and storms.

Mihnea Mircan, 2011

Text by Mihnea Mircan written for the exhibition There will be Hope, D+T Project, Brussels, 2011.

CHRISTINA LUCAS

TOUCH AND GO

In this video, Christina Lucas stages artful vandalism and cathartic protest. A group of Liverpool unionists and their families alter the façade of the now-defunct but forever iconic/ironic “Europleasure International, Ltd.” building. Today, many buildings like this one stand empty in post-industrial cities as obsolete monuments to a past economic era—memento mori of the recent history of the metropolis. Incorporating irony and humor into her work, Cristina Lucas focuses on the irrationality of human actions and ethics within contemporary aesthetics. She was born in Jaén, Spain, and earned her BFA from Complutense University, Madrid, followed by an MFA from the University of California, Irvine. Lucas has recently participated in Dominó Canibal II Bienale PAC Murcia and the Liverpool Biennial. Her work has also been seen in solo exhibitions such as Centro de Arte 2 de Mayo, Móstoles an Carrillo Gil, Mexico DF; Stedelijk Museum Schiedam, The Netherlands; and Galería Juana de Aizpuru, Madrid; as well as in group exhibitions at NMAC Foundation, Cádiz; Aldrich Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; 28 Bienal de Sao Paulo; and X Istanbul Bienale. Lucas lives and works in Spain, where she is represented by Juana de Aizpuru Gallery, Madrid.

Touch and Go was made possible by the Liverpool Biennial and supported by the Arts Council England, England Northwest, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, SEACEX, and Gobierno de España.

CHRISTINA LUCAS



CHRISTINA LUCAS, EUROPLEASURE INTERNATIONAL LTD. TOUGH AND OO, INSTALLATION VIEWS, PHOTOS: DAN KVTIKA.

KATE GILMORE



KATE GILMORE, SUDDEN AS MASSACRE. INSTALLATION VIEW.
PHOTO: DAN KVITKA

SUDDEN AS A MASSACRE

Kate Gilmore devises strenuous, physical propositions without clear, purposeful outcomes, asserting a dogged persistence, dark humor, and a stark sense of risk. For *Evidence of Bricks*, Gilmore created a site-specific installation, video, and performance in which a quintet of women dressed in flowered pastel frocks climbed onto a massive yellow plinth and tore apart a cube made from 4,000 pounds of wet clay. The performance was seen by a small audience, comprised of the artist, the curator, preparators, and a camera operator. They watched in silence as the women battled the clay. As the block disappeared, the space retained the evidence of action. Clods of clay hung from the walls and littered the floor; drying and crumbling over the course of the exhibition, leaving stains and dust in its wake. This vivid performance recording ran on a constant loop across from the rubble of the performance. When gallery visitors turned to look at one, their back was to the other.

KATE GILMORE

Kristan Kennedy: Clay, paint, dresses, shoes, mega-bytes, drywall, women. Can you talk about your material choices? Some of it seems like the stuff of art and some of it the stuff of life; some of it plain practical, some of it primordial. When you are conceiving a piece, does it start with an image of a lump of clay? Is it sculptural, or conceptual?

Kate Gilmore: For me, the materials, the methods, and the actions are all on the same level. I see the sculpture as a character, the women (or myself when I am performing in videos) as material, and the actions that occur as signs of individuality. That said, I am not sure of what comes first. Like most sculptors, I fall in love with a material and then figure out its personality and try to use it in as many ways as possible. Through the process of figuring out materials, I start thinking of what can happen with that material. Then the performance or action is figured out and then an idea of what the sculpture might be.

KK: Let's talk about the cube. It was once there and now it is not. What did its destruction represent to you? What did the form represent?

KG: The cube is an object that most people can understand. For art people, it represents art historical moments, architectural structures, the gallery/museum... It also can be a symbol for things that are completely defined, rigid, and inflexible. Through the transformation of this form, the women are taking apart an object that has possibly rejected them in some way, be it historically or metaphorically; they are making it their own.

KK: What about the women? In the past, all of your performances featured only you as the maker and the worker and the performer. What is it like to watch other

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moving bodies do the work of your mind/body?

KG: I love it! It is great to be an observer. After doing several of these performances now, I realized that I never was able to see my work in action. Of course, I would see it after and edit it on video, but there is something exhilarating about watching a performance unfold from start to finish. This has been a big learning process for me and it has created a new excitement for me in my work.

Gilmore's exhibitions include the 2010 Whitney Biennial; the Brooklyn Museum; The Kitchen; Indianapolis Museum of Art; Bryant Park (Public Art Fund); Locust Projects; White Columns; Contemporary Art Center, Cincinnati; Artpace; The J. Paul Getty Museum; The Rose Art Museum; Istanbul Museum of Art; Haifa Museum of Art; and PS1/MoMA Contemporary Art Center (Greater New York 2005). Gilmore has been the recipient of several international awards and honors, such as the Rome Prize from the American Academy in Rome, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Award for Artistic Excellence, the Franklin Furnace Fund for Performance, Louis Comfort Tiffany Biennial Award, The LMCC Workspace Residency, New York Foundation for The Arts Fellowship, and The Marie Walsh Sharpe Space Residency. Her work is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Brooklyn Museum; Whitney Museum of American Art; Museum of Fine Art, Boston; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Indianapolis Museum of Art; and Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.



OSCAR'S DELIRIUM TREMENS

Oscar Wilde, the irrepressibly witty writer and dandy, possessed equal appetites for decadence and beauty—virtues that have come to define the artist and the art world at large. All the ecstasy, absurdity, and ensuing nausea in the life of a modern artist is present in Oscar's Delirium Tremens: a forced-air-inflated, viewer-interactive jumbotron. Although built at the monumental scale usually reserved for historical statues and public art, the hot pink, elephant-shaped structure lies toppled, flaccid, and prostrate the morning after. One entered Oscar through the sculpture's posterior orifice and crawled inside his soft belly; from here one could see the outside through the elephant's clear plastic window eyes. Three persons were allowed in at a time creating a *ménage à trois* of jumping bodies. The piece disrupted visitor's balance, implicating them in the woozy sense that the world continues spinning out of control, even after one stepped off the ride.

PATRICK J. ROCK

PATRICK J. ROCK, OSCARS DELIRIUM TREMENS, INSTALLATION VIEW.
PHOTO: ANDREW BILLING.



Kristan Kennedy: Can you tell me why you started working with inflatables?

Patrick J. Rock: Somewhere in my academic career... can you really call paying to go to art school or, in my case, not paying the government back for loaning me the money to go to an art school I really couldn't afford, an academic career? Anyway... Some teacher with a mustache with whom I later became friends tried to pound this theory of social sculpture into my head. This is when they still dropped words like 'post-modernism' and 'multiculturalism' around in every syllabus, critique, and visiting lecture now long forgotten. This in a room composed of roughly 75% spoiled rich and damaged white kids and an international contingency representing the other 24% (and an attractive one at that), all of whom rolled their eyes at the thought of any of the aforementioned. That and I was interested in taking the piss out of the idea or the Apollonian value of the monumental in art. Do we really need a piece of art to stick

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around that long? I mean unless it is Duchamp's Fountain we certainly don't. I am also fascinated by the thought that you can inflate and deflate the monumental, unrolling, and then re-rolling it up back up over and over, sticking it in a storage unit or your friend's garage, where they rest their sad canoe on it. Plus, I had a credit card during that small window of time between an academic career and the real world. It is a time and place where we give artists credit cards to spend on such things as ideas.

KK: I still remember your giant hot dog sculpture Simulacra/Hermaphrodite and how it disabled people's normally prissy interaction with objects. With Oscar a similar destabilization occurs—one is knocked off balance in the mind and body. How does it relate to the deeper concepts of the piece?

PR: I firmly believe as an unknown you have five minutes to convince someone, anyone really, to come around to your side of the fence regarding the function and relevance of contemporary art. One can achieve that through seducing, tricking, manipulating, or flattering one's audience. Typically I can't do any of that at all. But I do froth at the idea of compelling anyone into eagerly entering Oscar through any exterior lingam or yoni opening or any orifice of questionable gender binary and, upon entering the interior, being forced physically and psychologically into a destabilized state, affected by the light, color, sound, physical bounce, and general uncanny experience of the interior environment of the inflatable viewer-interactive jump room. Only then am I able to know that the viewer can't help but crack a smile, perhaps in the self-realization that they have 'been there' before. Or perhaps reacting to the fact that they have been duped and they the viewer, now activator-cum-subject matter of this beast, suspend disbelief

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for a moment, and releases. Pondering what method they will employ to exit Oscar's pink anus gracefully and without losing their pants, shirt, keys, cell phone, eyeglasses, lipstick, or that small change in their pocket. It is my hope that Oscar's Delirium Tremens and Simulacra/Herpamphrodite both share that quality. Wait... Did I just say that my deeper concept was to make people happy?

KK: Why is Oscar an elephant, and furthermore why is he toppled over, legs in the air? What does this work have to do with vulnerability? What does it have to do with the sculpture's namesake?

PR: Oscar's Delirium Tremens, a pink elephant, a larger-than-life prostrated pink elephant. My understanding is that the pink elephant is the universal signifier on any continent that has a native population of elephants, a zoo, or has sat through Disney's Dumbo while blubbering at the maternal/paternal quandary and societal construct as it unfolded before them (which I did and still do to this day), for a state of 'delirium tremens,' which is defined by any shape or form of intoxication followed by strong hallucinations brought upon by overindulgence in too much of anything good. Personally, that is a pretty accurate description of the relationship with the creative process and the life of an artist that I possess, which by its very nature of processes leaves one vulnerable to the world around them, should they wish to share it. And by sharing, I mean the work. Oscar is also a nod to the writer Oscar Wilde. I cannot help but be compelled to get behind any aesthete that overindulges and works oneself to death. Especially a prolific foppish jailbird who was rumored to beat the shit out of a group of uncouth thugs loosely acquainted to him, who dared questioned his sexuality, and his exquisite style of dress and flair on a balmy evening on High Street in Oxford.

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“And now, I am dying beyond my means,” said Oscar Wilde (sipping champagne upon his death bed). I would hope he would be flattered by Oscar’s prostrated bow in his direction.

KK: When I climbed into Oscar I was overtaken by the sculpture’s internal beauty; it feels like a church in there. Were you surprised by how serene it felt in comparison to the surreal/comical nature of the exterior?

PR: The womb, from what I can recall. Waking up in a green tent with the sunrise. The self-preserving act of putting one’s head under the covers feels serene compared to the surreal and comical nature of the exterior world. For me, it was the eyes of Oscar and the experience of observing that initial crew of PICA staff and volunteers jumping up and down inside of Oscar’s head as I stood outside that unsettled my resolve, as they gazed back out at me through Oscar’s over-sized, transparent, dilated eyes. Truthfully, the act of being inside of Oscar’s Delirium Tremens or Simulacra/Hermaphrodite makes me nervous. I have never really felt serene inside or outside any of my work and try not to dwell too long there. The PICA crew told me about catching people in the act of same sex coitus inside of Oscar after closing time at TBA. That is the highest form of flattery and the best I could ever hope for really.

KK: During the course of the installation, Oscar started loosing air. While we kept him inflated, no “jumpers” used him. Even though this was distressing to both you and me, in the end I think the work was what one might call a “success.” Obvious gripes aside about the failure of the fabricators, what are your thoughts about where you started and where you ended up with the project?

PR: I believe that an artist has to accept full responsibil-

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ity for their work, be it a success or a failure. In this case I base self-assessment upon the intended and expected interactive experience of the audience of a festival atmosphere. I won't pull punches. I can't lay it off on the fabricators completely (although they got a rather curt Christmas card from me). I got soft at some point and made a series of decisions based upon what I could financially afford rather than what the work truly needed to be a complete success (see the above aforementioned answers), and acted outside of my own personal paradigm of an integrity to materials when it comes to my work. As in: "this is that," and "this must now be that, regardless of what needs to be done to achieve that." I don't want to be the artist who posts, "Look but don't touch!" on their work, or who thinks the things I conceive too precious, or who steals candy from a child. But there were some seriously bummed-out children looking wide eyed at Oscar. I had to hear a lot of parents tell their children that they couldn't jump in him and that stung, that and the fact that I was walking around with two broken ribs. My hat goes off to PICA and their volunteers for being supportive of Oscar and myself, while making the best of a less-than-ideal situation. I got to watch a lot of the behind-the-scenes, how-the-magic-happens, production values of the TBA Festival, and that was actually valuable and enjoyable, even while I scrambled to bail out a sagging pink elephant. That mental image is rather hilarious in hindsight. Oscar has been repaired and has a pretty nasty scar. Which I suppose is appropriately metaphorical for a lot of what happens with my work. I intended to do this, but I got that, and this is much stronger and painfully funnier than that first idea ever was. I will show Oscar again soon to fulfill my contractual obligations to the Regional Arts and Culture Council for the project grant I received. They have also been very understanding through all of this. Then I will crate him and think on it for a while.

Patrick Rock is a conceptual artist who has shown internationally, most recently with the collective AMERICAN MEAT LLC., and with the post-punk trio PISS in the Sequences Live Art Festival in Reykjavik. He is the director of ROCKSBOXCONTEMPORARYFINEART, a short-term artist residency and exhibition space in Portland, as well as the director of the Portland State University Art Department galleries, where he also teaches as an adjunct instructor of its Art Department.

This project was developed with the support of an Individual Project Grant from the Regional Arts & Culture Council.

WHOO DEE DOO

It takes guts. It is a curators job to say yes to artists, even when their hopeful projects intent is to get messy and transgressive. In the summer of 2011, Whoop De Doo landed in Portland with an undulating cast of characters including founding artists Jamie Warren and Matt Roche. Over the course of several months, the artists worked with Caldera (a year-round art mentoring organization that services youth in Portland and Central Oregon) and hundreds of collaborators to develop a project that transformed an empty library in the abandoned high school we inhabited for the exhibition into a living, breathing, oozing, immersive installation and variety show about the human body. Blood, guts, and bile, Butoh dancers, bell choirs, cardboard organs, belly button caves, multimedia brain trusts, and a virtual carnival of curiosities set the stage for an all-out frenzy of audience/artist interaction. Their live performances destabilized kids and adults alike and caused a mini-revolution of ecstatic bodies that were at once thrilled and challenged. Yes!

Whoop Dee Doo is a non-profit community project led by artists living and working in Kansas City, Missouri. The group has created commissioned projects for organizations including the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts (Omaha, Nebraska), Deitch Projects (New York), the Smart Museum (Chicago), The Kemper Museum for Contemporary Arts (Kansas City), Loyal Gallery (Sweden), and others.

Sponsored by The Boeing Company. Supported in part by Caldera and Robin Magowan. Special thanks to Northwest Paper Box, Pacific Seafood, GOODWRAPPERS, The Rebuilding Center, David Premysler, Denton Plastics, Inc..

WHOOOP DEE DOO



PHOTOS: CHASE ALLWOOD & PATRICK LEONARD

OCCUPATION/PREOCCUPATION



BRIAN MUMFORD PERFORMING AT OCCUPATION/PREOCCUPATION, SONGS
IN WARTIME. PHOTO: ALLISON CEKALA.

SONGS IN WARTIME

The United States has over 700 military bases on foreign soil in sovereign countries where we have no declaration of war. Occupation/Preoccupation united musicians, researchers, and music lovers to gather covers by American musicians of songs that originate from each of these places. By creating a new rendition of songs from occupied regions, these musicians enacted a second (symbolic) occupation and encouraged reflection on the implications of our nation's exceptionally expansive reach and presence. Throughout the world, music serves as a mobilizing force, from the musicians of Bolivian President Evo Morales' grassroots campaign to actions by CRASS and other punks. In contrast to the frequent co-optation of music as entertainment or commodity, this project focused on music's power to transform awareness and create change. In addition to live concerts, Occupation/Preoccupation held workshops, lectures, film screenings, and performances in their

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installation space in an effort to gather the community in song, conversation, and peaceful action.

Kristan Kennedy: How did this project begin?

Brian Mumford: This project began slowly in a flurry of good and bad ideas about making the energy, social excitement, and spiritual potency of art/music/culture/subculture interact in different ways with structures of power, or with an awareness of the effects of our particular way of life (including the foreign policy our taxes support) on people in other places in the world. Some ideas were directed by the desire to change things and [the desire] to inspire the will to change things in others. Most of them, though, were pretty focused on the current and recent US wars and military interventions, which I think can, almost without exception, be viewed as disastrous emergencies. The project came out of the repeated amazement and horror experienced during periods of revelation about the things we're unwittingly involved in as citizens of the United States and the shocking ease with which we can ignore this until something like a retaliation occurs. It came out of the unavoidable sensation that there is a tradition of actual resistance, actual rebellion (as opposed to mere participation in commerce or product-novelty) contained and encoded in the history of the oppositional stance of subculture, that goes beyond mere reactionary irony or cynical declarations of the uselessness of it all. It extends to radical irony and optimistic declarations of the uselessness of the portion of possibilities being enacted.

I think art and subculture believe that a better, less boring, less perversely unequal, less opportunistically violent world is possible. Art and music bring people together. Infect art and music with an awareness of the world as we make it, and hopefully with an awareness

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that the world as we make it is no foregone conclusion. For the moment, this particular project proceeds with a complex decision to try gentleness, inclusion, and welcoming instead of hostility. Which isn't to say that I don't think Americans also deserve to be bashed over the head with the fucked-up-ness they're doing. That's just not what we're doing with this rendition of this project. I think proceeding out of guilty obligation is seeking unreal absolution and imaginary personal purity. That doesn't mean I disregard the reality of guilty obligation, just that I think proceeding that way produces boring turned-off shit which does the opposite of drawing people together to learn to make things happen.

Dana Dart-Mclean: This project grew out of conversations with musicians and artists, with friends and family, with people whose views align with ours, as well as with those who disagree. I'm angry and dismayed by our country's engagement in these official wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, plus so many more incursions into countries where we have no declaration of war. All that time, money, energy, resources, all those lives spent! All to reap death and destruction in two of the poorer and more devastated countries on earth: Iraq and Afghanistan. It's wrong and must stop now. Like so many who live here in the USA, I am upset by the direction of the country. We need a new WPA, not another drone. We need health care for all, not more secret prisons and massive bases on foreign soil. The possibility for exploring these ideas and discovering protests, actions, that feel relevant and allow us to engage as individuals together, these are hopeful possibilities. This country is animated by a dream and charter of democracy that fires revolution around the world still. We are the lucky inheritors of this dream and structure. We have the freedom to engage and struggle. This project is the flawed expression of that freedom and also a consideration

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of the reality of our global military empire. Musicians covering songs take the project in many directions, far beyond what we ever projected. Artists and activists are involved.

Molly Pringle: Since we all began meeting together we pretty instantly got hooked on the phrase “fumbling towards action.” It’s very important for me to understand the project as a group effort, all of us coming to awareness from where we are. We work very hard at creating a kind of spacious environment for developing opinions and ideas. And for learning! Facing the kinds of issues the project addresses can be overwhelming, but you can figure out a lot by talking about it with good friends and making art that still feels natural even though the content is challenging.

Josh Berger: In October of 2006 I saw an article in The New York Times covering a Johns Hopkins study about the civilian death toll after our invasion of Iraq. The number in the headline was 600,000, which is a pretty staggering thing to see. It can be really easy to turn the page, not knowing any of those people half the world away. For some reason I couldn’t turn the page. My project Collateral Damage which is housed inside the Occupation/Preoccupation classroom, is an attempt to quantify this number.

KK: What was the first song you remember hearing that made you feel nationalistic, politically motivated, empathetic towards someone else, someplace else?

BM: “We’ve got new thoughts and new ideas, it’s all so groovy. It’s just a shame that we’ve all seen the same old movie.” —The Saints, “A Private Affair”

Liam Drain: I wish the first song that made me feel

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politically motivated was that Byrds song “I Come and Stand at Every Door,” but sadly, it was probably something by U2.

JB: I borrowed a neighbor’s copy of the Woodstock album when I was in 5th grade. I played it endlessly on my tiny green turntable. All of it made me feel politically motivated. There was one song that gave me hope and made me feel truly nationalistic: Jimi Hendrix’s rendition of the “Star Spangled Banner.”

KK: In your classroom here within the exhibition, there will be a range of activities, performances, workshops, happenings—a coming together of information and experience. What do you think the intersection is between art and politics?

BM: I think the intersection is almost so unavoidable that it doesn’t exist. Art, music, and all aesthetics are inherently a form of political discussion. Abstract expressions of value or critiques/rejections of systems of valuation. The dream that any art neither addresses nor is addressed by its political context is a weird construct. What we’re doing in the Oc/Proc classroom has elements of this abstract kind of dialog, but also a big part of what we’re trying to do is make some space for non-abstract engagement for artists (ourselves included). There is so much energy in the arts in Portland, and we want to make our radical aesthetics engage more directly with radical direct action. Unless you’re willing to become a voice (i.e. advertising) for the biggest assholes in the world (i.e. multinational corporations), it’s becoming harder and harder for artists to make a living. So let’s learn to change the world as it is. Radical campaign finance reform, revoking of corporate personhood, reduction in militarism and military spending, no more propping up dictators and prosecuting whistleblowers.

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DM: Politics can take the face of wrangling candidates and seemingly arcane bureaucratic process. The majority of the people in the country want universal health care and war's end, bringing the troops home. Or do we even know what the majority wants? That's politics. And who you love, also how you may love them. Politics is the structure that reflects our vision of a just society. And look at the society we have. Art is the shape of our discussion and it is a necessary luxury. It's all very grand, but mundane like a can of sardines. Lets eat! Lets talk! We can turn it all around. Will you turn it? Will we revolve?

LD: I think about politics all the time and so even when I'm not making something that could be easily identified as political to some else, to me it almost always is in some way. Especially if you understand politics as a process of negotiating relations of power between people and/or groups of people (and maybe also animals). So with that definition, anything new in the world can alter those relations or at least elucidate something about them.

I've noticed a lot of artists have a point of view that is almost stridently apolitical, i.e., they more or less refuse to acknowledge that their work has a possible political valence. Or they claim to not be interested in politics. What they may not realize is that even if they're not interested in politics, politics is very, very interested in them.

MP: Making art that has such an overt political charge is really dangerous for me. Sometimes it can be embarrassing if I don't know the very most current events or historical references. But it doesn't matter. If you have that deep, true feeling that something is wrong and some action has to be taken, that's all you need. There's something vital about understanding and respecting

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that basic feeling as a kind of politics on which to take action through art. You can do it! Trust your feelings and actions!

KK: What about the visual cues in the room—the map, Josh’s project Collateral Damage and the “X” drawings, the trompe l’oeil of rugs painted on the floor, the banners—what do they represent?

JB: With Collateral Damage, I commemorate the lives of civilians killed in the war in Iraq. Each civilian life lost is represented with an “X.” The images included here, at the beginning of the exhibit, show the first forty-six pages of the ongoing series. Of a total of 655,000 civilians killed as estimated by a Johns Hopkins study reported in the New York Times, the pages here tally 318,069. I estimate it will take about ninety pages to reach this total number. Each piece is set in an unfinished pine frame. This work is also performed in public as an intervention, in an attempt to draw attention to the daily catastrophe and to encourage dialogue. An intervention consists of me simply sitting at a table marking pages with X’s. A copy of the New York Times article is on hand. I will be doing this periodically during the course of the TBA exhibit.

DM: The banners derive from an archive of World War I suffragette war resisters’ banners. I love the suffragettes. They met in small groups and formed coalitions with other groups. They were radical in their belief in equality. We enjoy their legacy today. They marched and argued. They gave up and persevered. They saw a needed change and they stood for it.

The painted rugs are based on Pakistani, Afghan, Austrian, and Iranian rugs. The US has a military presence in all these places. Security is often upheld as the moti-

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vation for military incursion. What security is ever possible in a world of increasingly stratified access to clean drinking water and nourishing food? To me, rugs show a security of the home, the hearth, a little comfort and utility. What is your security?

The map shows the land of the globe. Borders between nations have been erased. New borders could be drawn around riparian areas. We could have pledged allegiance to a stream.

BM: The rugs are loose “covers” of rug patterns from regions which are under US military occupation. The banners are “covers” of banners used in the British women’s suffrage movement which was also deeply involved in opposition to WWI. The component fabrics we used to make those banners are textiles from Ghana, Ecuador, and India; all areas with U.S. military bases and/or histories of intervention. Heather Mackenzie selected these textiles while studying and working in these areas.

KK: What do you think we need to know about what is going on in the world right now? Or in other words, “What the world needs now is...?”

JB: We need constructive dialogue and collaboration.

It is very easy to become distracted by the volume and rapidity of the information we receive daily. We are beyond what I would call the ‘access phase’ of the information age; we are now in the ‘filtration phase.’ The downside of filtration is that tailored information streams encourage partisanship. We need to be in constructive dialogue beyond our social circles in order to solve the global problems we face today.

DM: I think we need to know that this is it, but still

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dream. We are going on in the world simultaneously with the rest. The language of the market tends towards uniform dreams, but we each have our own at night. Its easier to find out about astonishing cruelty and injustice than suffragettes. I want to know both extremes because I think the puzzle of how to live justly enriches and clarifies—it is worth the hassle. Also, once you start to know more, it's impossible to dream the same way; dreams change. One becomes implicated in other people's stories. Then the decision becomes about defining one's role, one's level of involvement. From there to nuances, shades of participation, from bystander, to witness, to actor. To me it's all poetry, some of it very harsh, much of it bad, but you decide for yourself.

LD: One thing is, it would be better if we could be more idealistic and less pragmatic. For example, you've noticed the way people on the right and (especially) the left dismiss revolutionary activities in Egypt and Libya as setting the stage for even worse dictators (because those people don't want democracy) and the riots in London and Vancouver as a dumb climax of consumerism gone mad? Not that I'm an advocate of violence, but the message we're relentlessly confronted with is one of radical politics as naive and childish, and real change is impossible. All we can do is recycle, go to yoga, buy shoes from TOMS (blackmail), and wait for some TED talk to finally iron all of the little wrinkles out of capitalism. Or wait for the Singularity. But if revolutions never change things for the better, what's with all that tea at the bottom of the Boston Harbor? I don't think we have to accept any form of oppression as an inevitable consequence of sharing a world with others.

BM: Concretely:

1. The wars, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq, are

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- total emergencies and need to be stopped immediately.
2. The campaigns of drone strikes are almost certainly going to be proven to be illegal under international law and are responsible for many hundreds of innocent civilian deaths.
 3. The Obama administration has drastically increased the number of drone strikes in Afghanistan as well as in Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen.
 4. The Obama administration is in direct violation of the Geneva conventions because of its refusal to investigate and prosecute the torture regime that preceded it. Let's think about these things when we find ourselves persuaded to vote for him by the scariness of people on the right.

Portland specific:

5. WTF is up w/our local FBI neighbors preventing that Somali-American kid from getting work in Alaska and then paying his rent and expenses while they involved him in a choose-your-own-adventure terror plot they were authoring? Good neighbors?

Less concretely: I think one thing we definitely need is an understanding of our current military interventions, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also in Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and potentially (controversially?) Libya, as emergency situations, which need to be immediately opposed and stopped. What America needs right now, faster than anything, is to stop killing and torturing people in Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Pakistan, Somalia. To stop propping up warlords in these places, and to banish the profit-hungry, blood-thirsty private sector from the sphere of military activity.

A vision of love, a post-capitalist imagination of desires, class consciousness, expropriation, intellectual diversity, exploration of possibilities, breaking down of assump-

tions, wikileaks, cyber attacks on abusive corporate and state institutions (the most amazing version of nonviolent fetish-property damage yet!). Kids feeling out their extremely real alienation in smart ways, which lead them not to cynical collaboration with the assholes, but to radical, hilarious, profound, militant, total resistance.

Occupation/Preoccupation is a collaborative project concerned with (particularly U.S. American) nationalist war and occupation. This iteration of the project was undertaken by an expanding group of contributors including Brian Mumford, Dana Dart-McLean, Morgan Ritter, David Weinberg, Tom Greenwood, Josh Berger, Molly Pringle, Liam Drain, Caley Feeney, Allison Rael, Heather Mackenzie, and John Niekrasz. Additional contributors to their program of events included Anne Marie Oliver, Vanessa Renwick, Becky Luening, Dao Strom, S. Brian Wilson, Veteran's History Project, Paul Cienfuegos, Mary Rose, Vanessa Kauffman, Posie Currin, Warren Lee, Debra McLean, Chris Fontaine, VaciVaci, Ghost To Falco, Dragging an Ox through Water, Lydia Brawner, Radiodiffusion Internasionaal, Vietnam Friendship Village, Alejandro Herrera, Avalon Kalin, Danny Sasaki, The Bubs, Mary Sutton, and Emily Katz.

CLAIRE FONTAINE

CLAIRE FONTAINE, U.S.A. (BURNT/UNBURNT), PHOTO: DAN KVITKA.



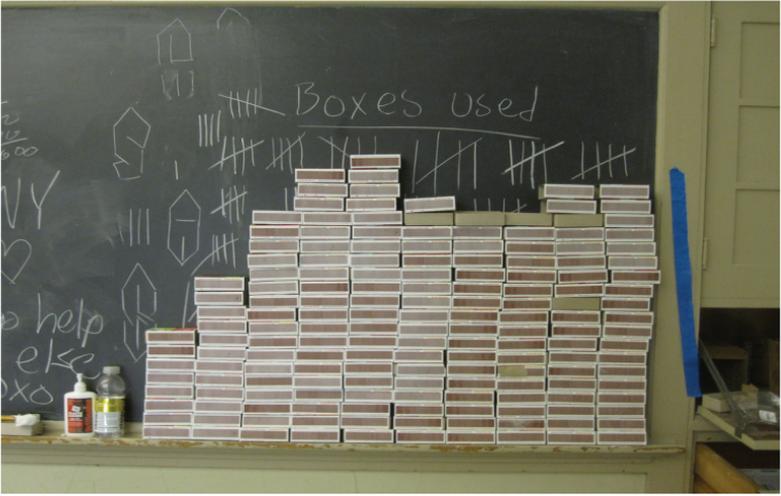
U.S.A. (BURNT/UNBURNT)

Claire Fontaine is a Paris-based collective artist, founded in 2004. After lifting her name from a popular brand of school notebooks, Claire Fontaine declared herself a “readymade artist” and began to elaborate a version of neo-conceptual art that often looks like other people’s work. Her practice can be described as an ongoing interrogation of the political impotence and the crisis of singularity that seem to define contemporary art today. But if the artist herself is the subjective equivalent of a urinal or a Brillo box—as displaced, deprived of its use value, and exchangeable as the products she makes—there is always the possibility of what she calls the “human strike.”

For this exhibition, Claire Fontaine and her assistants painstakingly placed close to 100,000 matches one-by-one into a simple white wall constructed in a former high school classroom which had been converted into a gallery for the purpose of the exhibition. The constella-

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PHOTO: KRISTAN KENNEDY



tion of green tips forms a silhouette of the United States, taking the place of a standard geography map. Claire Fontaine had requested the piece to be burnt by the curator of the exhibition and, after much deliberation, the highest authorities at PICA and the Portland Public School Board (who at the time still held ownership of the site) granted the permission to burn the work. Although all of the bureaucratic forms, safety precautions, and city fees were in order, PICA was prohibited from burning the piece by the Fire Marshal of the local fire department. The matches were then doused with fire retardant and monitored by guards through the run of the exhibition. In the end, the sculpture's impotence said more about the failure of freedom than the proposed arson.

Sokhun Keo: I feel there is a lot of tension in the process of creating this piece and predictably even more tension when the work is complete, but left unburnt. Do you feel a sense of relief after the piece has been burnt? What are your feelings towards the piece before and after the burning?

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Claire Fontaine: The piece is more alive and it has more potential when it is unburnt, because it is both: an actual danger in the space and a temptation for the viewer. It is something in an unstable state that can change at any moment. Once it's burnt it's very pictorial; it is somehow finished and it transforms the whole exhibition space into a support for the traces of its combustion, that are both a sculpture and a painting. The burning is very dramatic, but the aftermath has a feeling of being consumed and rather tragic.

SK: Do you have any feelings of guilt from this piece?

CF: We have no feelings of guilt: the workers that help create it, by putting the elements together, are cooperating with us. On the contrary, we feel a lot of solidarity and closeness towards the workers that construct the piece.

Alex Dolan: What role does (or perhaps can) art play in politics?

CF: Art and politics are connected, but not in a predictable and direct way. There is a beautiful text by Gilles Deleuze on the act of creation: it's the transcription of a conference he gave in the Fémis, a school for filmmakers. He says something really precise on this: there is a proximity, a relation between the act of creation and the act of resistance, but not every act of creation is an act of resistance and not every act of resistance is an act of creation. The space that interests us is the grey zone between resisting and creating.

Chloe Dietz: It is very interesting that your first U.S.A. (burnt/unburnt) is taking place in a decommissioned high school. I think of the discipline it takes to create the piece, the relationship between geography and

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schooling, and questions of safety in highly controlled environments like the school. How does U.S.A. (burnt/unburnt) relate to these things? What does this piece say about education in the United States? Does the Human Strike begin with education?

CF: Human Strike begins as a process of refusal, by un-learning things, so in a way it is the opposite of an academic transmission. We are very interested in PICA's site and very happy with the potentiality that U.S.A. (burnt/unburnt) develops there. The abstraction of the map and the affective experience of the territory meet in this work in a sort of immolation, their form is there, but only to be destroyed or to subsist in a precarious condition that could be changed at any moment. Besides the issues of safety that the Festival challenges by taking place in an abandoned school, there is the excitement of making a fire indoors and coexisting with a controlled danger, like one could live with a wild animal. It's definitely great that this can happen in a former school.

Zoe Clark: Is it possible to live on a prayer, to start a fire without a spark, to party everyday?

CF: Maybe it's possible to party every day, we don't know for how long though. The rest is impossible, for sure.

Claire Fontaine lives and works in Paris, France. Recent shows include El Museo Tamayo Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico D.F.; Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami; Air de Paris, Paris; Regina Gallery, London and Moscow; MUSAC Contemporary Art Museu, Castilla y León, Spain; Center for Art, Design, and Visual Culture, Baltimore; Bunker Stuzki Contemporary Art Museum, Krakow; Mastermind, Casablanca; and Künstlerhaus Wien, Vienna. Claire Fontaine is represented by Reena Spaulings Fine Art and Metro Pictures, New York; T293, Napoli and Rome; Galerie Neu, Berlin; and Galerie Chantal Crousel/Air de Paris, Paris. She is now preparing a catalogue with Buchhandlung Walther König.

ANNA GRAY & RYAN WILSON PAULSEN

ANNA GRAY & RYAN WILSON PAULSEN, DON'T WORRY, WE'LL FIX IT.
INSTALLATION VIEW. PHOTO: ALLISON CEKALA.



Anna Gray & Ryan Wilson Paulsen indirectly examine the ways in which the institution of History is continuously built up and broken down through a variety of divergent archival and historiographic methods. The Fix It office produced the publication September, a daily art broadside specially made for Evidence of Bricks, and served as an active space where the artists worked onsite to correct, revise, and compile errata from previous editions of the paper amidst a new body of their related object-work. September's daily editions included commissioned and borrowed texts from Mack McFarland, Julie Ault, Matthew Stadler, Garrick Imatani, Graham Bell, Lisa Radon, Jan Verwoert, Sam Korman, Krystal South, Ariana Jacob, Carl Diehl.

Kristan Kennedy: Why create a publication called September? What was it about the legacy of October that triggered the homage or reference?

Anna Gray & Ryan Wilson Paulsen: October seems

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like it sets the industry standard for theoretical art journalism. With its highly specific, peer-reviewed content, its institutional affiliation, and austere, sober aesthetic, it occupies the top triangle of the art theory/criticism food pyramid, if you will. It was this status of authority that we wanted to invoke and reconfigure with the making and editing of September, adopting an authoritative face but then animating it with the voices of less internationally renowned and less institutionally sanctioned writers and thinkers, who are doing perhaps similarly rigorous, but often more varied, experimental, and colorful work.

We like October, but we rarely read it. Maybe if it was more like September we would.

KK: What is the role of the “laborers” in your project, why does the daily newspaper need a room or office to operate from? What trace evidence will they leave behind?

G & P: The office workers lay bare an intensive physical process of revision. Hopefully, their presence will invoke questions. History is always being revised, but the evidence of that process disappears when we read an art history book, PDF, or watch a special on television. It is collapsed. Our instinct with this project was to create a visitable office, a place where the process of rewriting would be made visible. The traces of the editing process will be apparent on the surfaces of the papers themselves, as the revised versions re-circulate, and on the surfaces of the office itself.

In a lot of ways the office is a joke. Physically editing a daily newspaper is ridiculous.

KK: Are the objects and printed ephemera on the

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pedestals sculpture? Are the humans on the plinths sculpture?

G & P: Yes, we are thinking about everything in the office as representational art.

KK: How did you select the writers for “September”?

G & P: There were a lot of reasons we chose the writings and writers that we did. We struggled with the selection, but in the end felt like we were representing a range of writers and topics, with an emphasis on local writers who are, in our opinion, underrepresented when it comes to publication.

KK: What is the “news” they are reporting on?

G & P: We use the term newspaper because it is common, normalized; as sort of wishful thinking for a world where theoretical discussion is as common as comparing notes on neighborhood crime. But, September is a hybrid form. We are performing an arts journal more than we are publishing a daily tabloid. We aren’t printing pertinent daily news or reporting on current issues or events necessarily. We are thinking about the form of the periodical as a kind of first draft of history and, through the various revisions we make, we are demonstrating a number of different editorial methods, exposing what kinds of losses and illuminations such editorial interventions possibly manifest over time.

KK: What makes history?

G & P: Are you asking about the apparatuses that structure History? Or are you wondering what makes something come to be regarded with enough esteem to be immortalized? We don’t know the answer, but we know

that the old sieve analogy isn't it.

KK: Can you erase history?

G & P: Stalin certainly tried. And the US government erases a lot of stuff all the time. We don't remember what, though. It seems like what would be required for complete erasure would not only be the destruction of physical evidence, but also a kind of complete cultural amnesia.

Revision is ultimately political—a negotiation between inclusion and exclusion, appearance and disappearance. A lot (nearly everything) depends on who has control of the Pink Pearl [eraser] and the pen.

Gray and Paulsen are artists who live and work collaboratively. Their idea-based practice fuses history, fiction, autobiography, and artistic commentary into a wide variety of material works. Their work has been shown and published internationally. They live and work in Portland, where they are represented by PDX Contemporary Art.

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From start to finish the following humans have been by my side holding up the (brick) walls of this exhibition. To those named and unnamed. I thank you. – KK

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Kent Richardson / Principal Preparator, Exhibition Design
Nick Raffle / Preparator
Erin Long / Assistant Preparator
Clay Connerly / Assistant Preparator
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Evan La Londe / Intern
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