

FORMS OF
REENACTMENT IN
CONTEMPORARY ART

x.EQE5x



## Life, Once More Forms of Reenactment in Contemporary Art

Edited by Sven Lütticken

K

Ž,

x Scenario Data #39 &x Eran Schaerf 9

An Arena in Which to Reenact Sven Lütticken 17

> ★Art Must Hang Andrea Fraser 61

> > nen

Works in the Exhibition

x Scenario Data #39 &x Eran Schaerf 73

Seeing the Elephant ? Robert Longo 83

Lecture on Lecture with Actress Hilton/Bed Piece Barbara Visser 89

> & Past Imperfect Bik Van der Pol 101

% 'Tis Pity She's a Fluxus Whore ₹ Catherine Sullivan 103

Original from I UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

AHL L

# The Milgram Re-enactment & Rod Dickinson

★ Art Must Hang 
 ★ Andrea Fraser

117

Spielberg's List Omer Fast 125

Re: Painting Blue Poles Res Mike Bidlo
135

nes

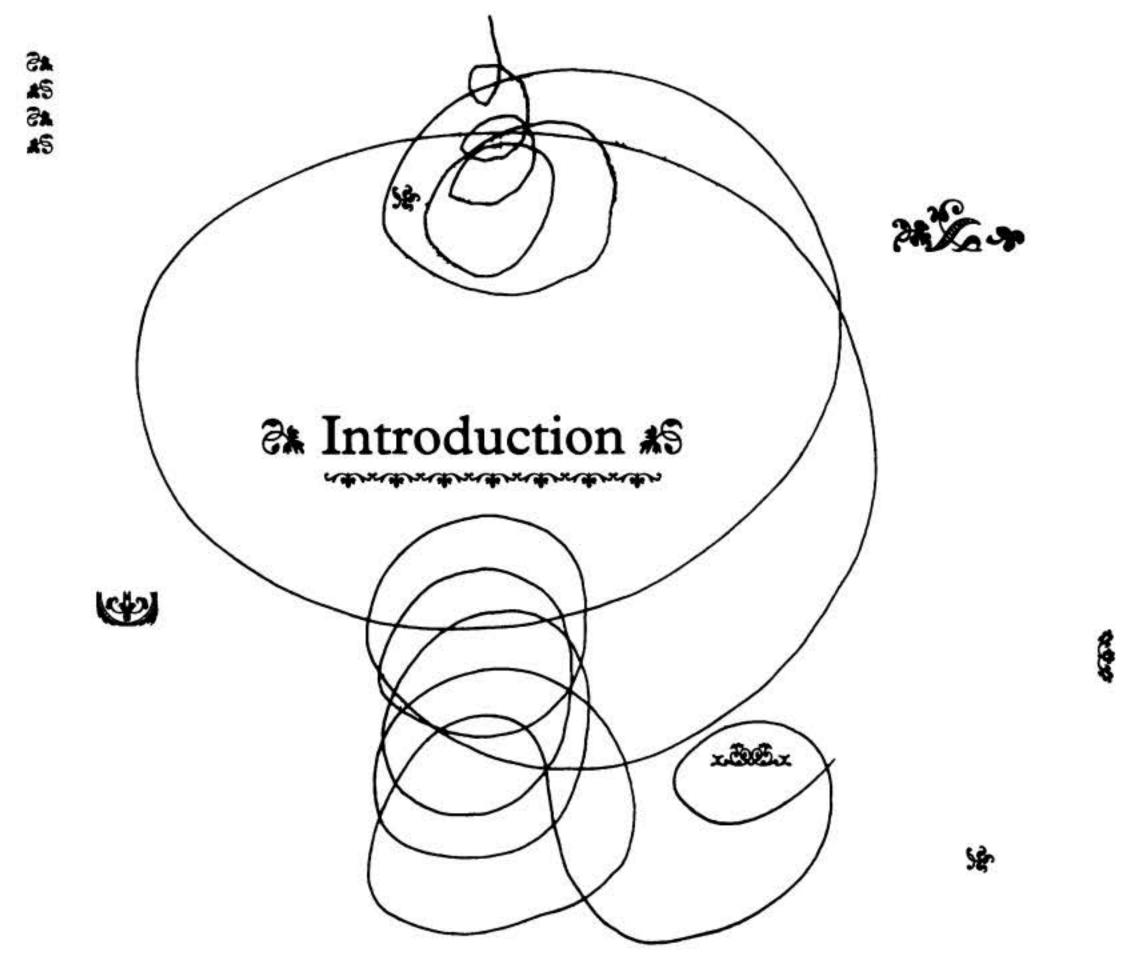
Lecture on Lecture with Actress
Barbara Visser
139

Hinckley and Ronald Reagan: Reenactment and the Ethics of the Real Peggy Phelan 147

Past Imperfect, no. 1 Bik Van der Pol

"Einmal ist keinmal"
Observations on Reenactment
Jennifer Allen
177

Colophon 215 Digitized by Google OO AN ARCHIVE OF REPRESENTED REENACTMENTS, FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES, SELECTED AND STRUCTURED ACCORDING TO SOMETIMES OPAQUE CRITERIA.



As performance art is becoming a historical phenomenon, artists have increasingly taken to reenacting their own and other artists' performances. Apart from individual reenactments, the last few years have also seen larger projects that involved the staging of new versions of classics of performance art, such as A Little Bit of History Repeated at Kunst-Werke in Berlin (2001), the two-part A Short History of Performance at the Whitechapel Art Gallery (2002/2003), and the performance event Re-enact organized by Casco and Mediamatic in Amsterdam (December 2004).

Reenactments are to a greater or lesser extent representations of the "original" performances, but many artistic re-enactments try to transcend slavish reproduction and create a difference. Like other performances, reenactments generate representations in the form of photos and videos. Is it the fate of the reenactment to become an image? And are such representations just part of a spectacle that breeds passivity, or can they in some sense be performative, active?

When Walter Benjamin described the Arcades Project as an "experiment in the technique of awakening," he was not so much grandly claiming to be awake and enlightened among deluded dreamers, as to be part of a "dreaming collective from Digitized by COOQIC"

JNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

 STAR WARS MOVIE POSTER PARODY BY MAD MAGAZINE, NOVEMBER 2002.



that is slowly awakening from its mythical slumber by using the powers of the dream itself to a transformative – rather than conservative – effect. Benjamin was well aware that he was part of the process, not intervening in it from the outside.

Similarly, when performative art attempts to fight repetition with repetition, to break open and recharge the past by duplicating and interrogating our event culture, it is none-theless part of this very culture. Historical war reenactments and living history museums and events are the dominant forms of reenactment today, and for artists they have become problematical models to be questioned and manipulated in order to make a difference in this increasingly dismal culture.

The exhibition Life, Once More combines documented reenactments of artistic performances with artistic reflection on historical reenactments outside the sphere of art. This publication accompanies the exhibition Life, Once More, but hopefully it will not be seen as just an appendage. Containing essays by critics and theorists, as well as scripts and other writings by artists, the book also aims to incorporate text-visual montages that go beyond mere illustration.

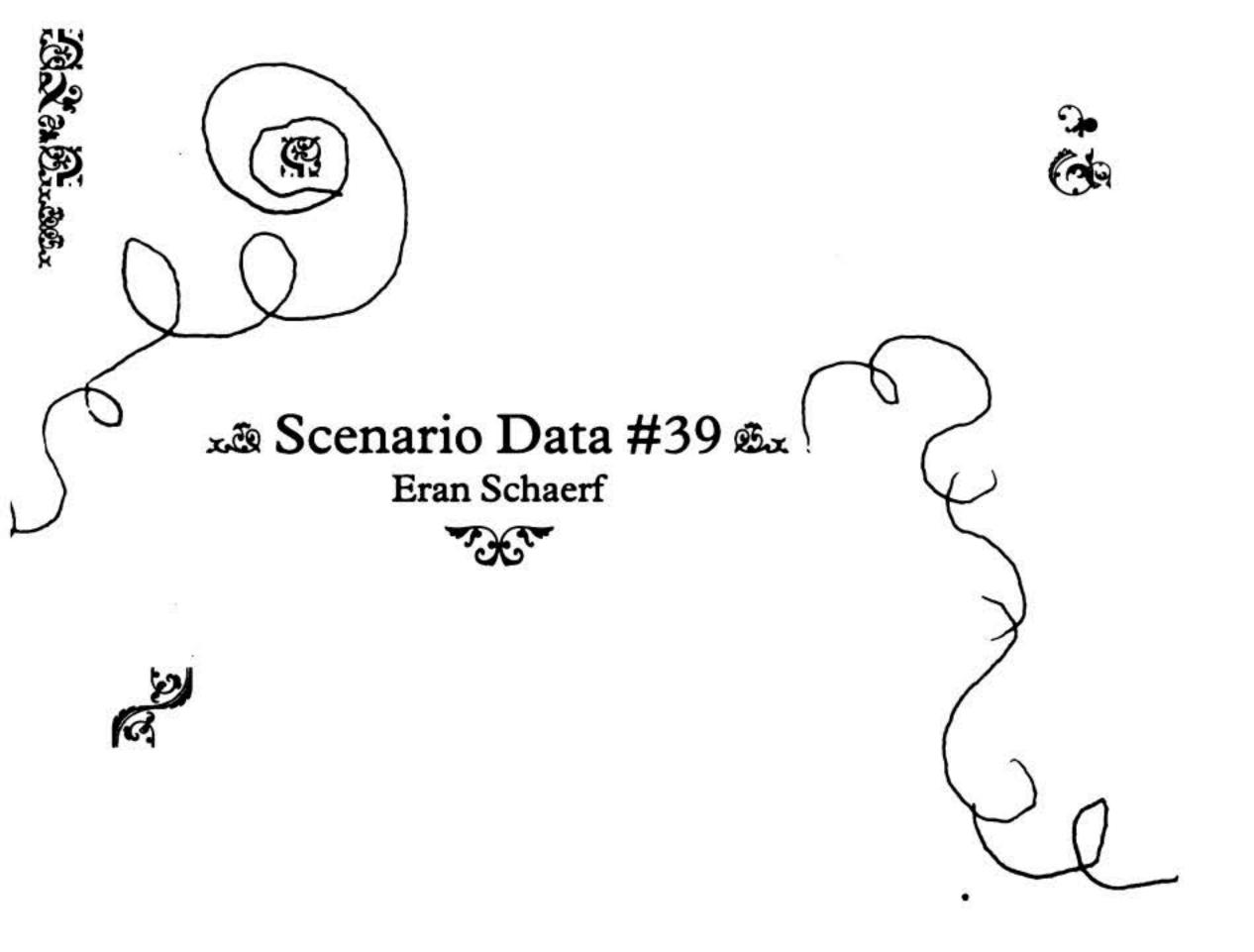
The title Life, Once More, is inspired by that of a work by Bik Van der Pol, Life, once more, continues to be free and easy, which is a variation on a collage by Guy Debord, Life continues to be free and easy (1959), whose title is based on a "detourned" sentence it contains. While both the exhibition and the publication appear against the grim background of imperial, neoconservative and fundamentalist reenactments, the title thus emphasizes the potential of (alternative) reenactments to let life (re)appear in the course of a productive repetition.

It has been a great joy to do this project at Witte de With, an institution whose existence is crucial to maintaining a critical curatorial practice and discourse in the Dutch art world. Witte de With is one of those rare institutions that – to paraphrase Mr. John Lydon – work for real, instead of going for cheap appeal. By an odd coincidence, it also seems to employ only genuinely nice people.



02 CALL OF DUTY, WORLD WAR II-THEMED VIDEOGAME, 2003.





According to a report from the news agency MGM, the Kubrick Company's futurologist "lost in space" was last seen in an eighteenth century French salon. Period rooms are now being sought world-wide.

The American space agency Odyssey suspects the Kubrick Company's lost futurologist may be in an eighteenth century French salon. The agency has requested the support of the Israeli secret service. Meanwhile, the French Baron Edmond de Rothschild declared his intention to donate an eighteenth century French salon to the Israeli Museum of Period Rooms to ensure that in the event of the lost futurologist's return, it will be in Israel.

A spokesperson for the Rothschild family announced in Paris that the Baron's installation of a French salon in the Israeli Museum of Period Rooms was not meant to be an exact reconstruction, but rather a stage set in which someone would have felt comfortable two hundred years ago. The spokesperson did not exclude the possibility of staging the lost researcher's return for the media.

The internationally connected Napoleonic Society decided in a special session to transfer its annual meeting from

2.E.9

Waterloo to Jerusalem. "For us hobby historians and wargamers, the inauguration of a French salon in the Holy Land presents a unique opportunity to restage a Napoleonic campaign in the Near East." The annual meetings of the Napoleonic Society are renowned for their detailed recreations of Napoleonic battles.

A group of women with Palestinian accents were temporarily refused admission to the inaugural ceremony of the French salon in the Israeli Museum of Period Rooms. The group's claim that they had been invited for a forum discussion of Jean Genet's The Blond from Beirut with members of the Napoleonic Society after the ceremony did not convince the museum staff. Only on showing their hairy arms did the group of "women" stand revealed as members of Samson, the well known special army unit that executes all its operations in disguise.

Staff representatives of the Israeli Museum of Period Rooms and PR representatives of the Ministry of Defense today met in the special army units props depot. According to a joint press release, their aim was to discuss the most recent codes of disguise employed by troops operating as civilians. The meeting was held in response to an incident involving museum staff members who, assuming the covert group to be a bunch of transvestites, hindered the mission.

In the course of the clash between the Israeli soldiers disguised as Palestinian women and the European wargamers disguised as Napoleonic Guards, an armchair and a mantelpiece decorated with sphinxes were destroyed in the French salon of the Israeli Museum of Period Rooms. According to archive photographs, the armchair was from the Gobelin workshop.

The trial of an Israeli soldier from the special unit Samson has opened in the Hague. Disguised as a Palestinian woman, he was involved in a clash with war-gamers of the Napoleonic Society on the evening of the inauguration of the French salon in the Israeli Museum of Period Rooms. A psychiatrist questioned in the witness box by the defense declared that the accused had acted blindly because of the loss of identity incurred through his disguise. A security

- 10

guard accompanying a school class on a visit to the museum is reported to have been wounded in the course of the clash.

The accused Israeli soldier said today in court in the Hague that he acted in the museum while possessed by an image. The defense introduced in evidence a photograph taken by the accused while disguised as a female Palestinian press photographer during an earlier mission in Gaza City. The photograph depicts Palestinian activists in outfits of the Israeli security service reenacting an interrogation scene in front of the public. The accused said he had never seen Israeli interrogators through Palestinian eyes before, and referred to the shooting as an intimate viewfinder experience which he has been longing to re-experience ever since. When the security guard in the museum appeared in his viewfinder in a similar outfit, he was overwhelmed by a longing for that intimate experience. Consequently, when shooting, it slipped his mind that his camera was equipped with a stupefying flash for the museum mission. Struck by the light ray, the security guard accompanying the visiting school children was wounded.

In the Hague, the court next asked whether the accused Israeli soldier could identify any details of the outfits worn by the Israelis played by Palestinians that were decisive for his experience. The accused pointed out to the court that the interrogators in the photograph wear sunglasses. "They don't wear them because the reenactment takes place outdoors," he said, "but because sunglasses protect you from eye-contact. Among Palestinians they count as the characteristic sign whereby one can recognize Israeli interrogators."

Several newspapers are inquiring whether the responsibility for a person's act can be shared with the image that possessed him and on which he acted. *The Land* is publishing a caricature of an Israeli security services interrogator, wearing sunglasses and bending down under his blurb: "The High Court ties the hands of the secret service. It forces us to bow for hours. It is as if it blindfolds us! It is like ear-splitting music."



The German daily Allgemeine today reprinted a photograph that was the turning point in the trial of the Israeli special unit member in the Hague. Accused of wounding a security guard who accompanied a class of school children during their museum visit, the soldier drew the court's attention to a photograph of a Palestinian demonstration of Israeli interrogation techniques. Under the headline "The Law of Potential Authorship" the newspaper called for shifting the trial's focus from the accused as the author of the photograph to the possible authors of the events reenacted.

Speculations about the interrogator in sunglasses keep appearing in the press. In the mass circulation paper Evening Prayer, the interrogator is caricatured holding a radio receiver in front of a man whose head is covered with a sack and whose hands are tied behind his back. The radio is playing "Evening is approaching between the pine trees." Former Chief Officer of the security services defends the use of props that change the perception of the ambience during interrogations. "Sunglasses, blindfolds and darkly atmospheric soundtracks do not aim at preventing eye-contact between interrogators and interrogated," he said. "They enable additional time-slots to enter the real interrogation time. After all," he said, "the point is not to find out what the interrogated person did in the past, but to make him speak of what he will possibly do in the future as though he had done it already." Meanwhile, some global manufacturers of designer eye-wear announced their intention to reduce exports to the Middle East.

"Caricatures and drawings in general cannot be granted the same evidential status as photographs," a spokesman of International Image Watch said today. "At the same time, a drawing is evidence of the scene that it represents as having taken place – be it only in the imagination of the caricaturist." To the question, whether the caricaturist who depicts scenes from his imagination can be legally taken to be the author of these scenes the spokesman replied: "Each and every one of us is at least a co-author of what he imagines. The legal status of photographic documentation of performances following scripts of political events is certainly obscure." He dismissed the army spokesman's reproach that the images are ordered by and produced for the press.

The Israeli government appointed a commission of experts to work out a legal framework for the use of interrogation techniques that do not leave signs on the detainee's body. The thrust of the commission's work concerns techniques for displacing detainees in time, to be applied in the interrogation of suspects classified as time-bombs. "I respect the High Court's order to abandon such techniques," said the Prime Minister. "However," he added, "we do not live in the Netherlands."

In a radio broadcast, a press officer of the defense ministry referred today to Palestinian and Israeli productions of images reenacting Israeli interrogation techniques. He defended the use of techniques to dislocate suspects in time in order to elicit statements about future events. "The use of atmospheric soundtracks merely intensifies our everyday experience of music in elevators. The origins of Muzak are military; it has been widely accepted in the civilian sphere and here it goes back to its roots. If it wasn't soft, the High Court would not legalize it," the officer said.

Several actors were today summoned as expert witnesses in the trial against the Israeli soldier from the special unit Samson, who had been disguised as a Palestinian woman. One of them proposed that the army should be instructed to give acting training to the Samsons. This was thought necessary in order to avoid the actor's identification with his role. "The current training focuses on staying in character," said a former Hollywood-trained Israeli motion-picture industry makeup artist, a part-time officer in the unit, "getting out of character is mainly discussed as a danger to your co-players, not to yourself."

Two days before the re-opening of the trial of the Israeli Samson soldier in the Hague, critics question the relevance of the testimony of an actor during the last hearing. "The accused was not only in character during the shooting," they say, "but on the contrary, he internalized the operational logic of the character to such an extent that he could see through the character's eyes. It must have been foreseeable that this logic would take hold of him as soon as a person wearing sunglasses indoors appeared in his viewfinder."



A petition presented to the court in the Hague addressed the potential of images to seize hold of the consciousness of their users or consumers. The public prosecutor replied that even if images were capable of such efficacy, the jurisdiction concerns the acts of persons. Since the images in question depict possible events, we are dealing here with potential authorship for which no legal definition is at hand. The petition was introduced in the course of the trial of a member of the Israeli unit Samson, who redirected public attention to the status of images depicting the staging of possible events.

A spokesperson for the state press archive declared today that the photographs of Israeli soldiers disguised as Palestinian women do not show members of the army, but people who volunteered for the shot. The use of the photograph in the media is legally linked to the proviso "There is no link between picture and caption."

In his opening speech of the Third Space Conference in Cairo, the President of the American space agency Odyssey considered the role of the lost futurologist as being of inestimable value for the future of mankind. The agency would therefore wait before proceeding to replace him. He also warned of the consequences the replacement of the destroyed armchair in the Israeli Museum for Period Rooms could have for the futurologist's chances of re-appearing in a French salon.

The Rothschild family, who donated the French salon to the Israeli Museum for Period Rooms, communicated to the press through its spokesperson that the destroyed items were replaceable. The Baron's donation did not intend an exact reconstruction of an eighteenth century French salon, but merely a stage set in which a lost person of our time could return. Immediately after the communication, House of Givenchy announced its intention to donate an armchair resembling the one destroyed to the museum. Givenchy is currently shooting its new publicity campaign in an eighteenth century French salon.

The exhibition Concerning the Plurality of Time opened to public in the Israeli Museum of Period Rooms last weekend.

Digitized by Google

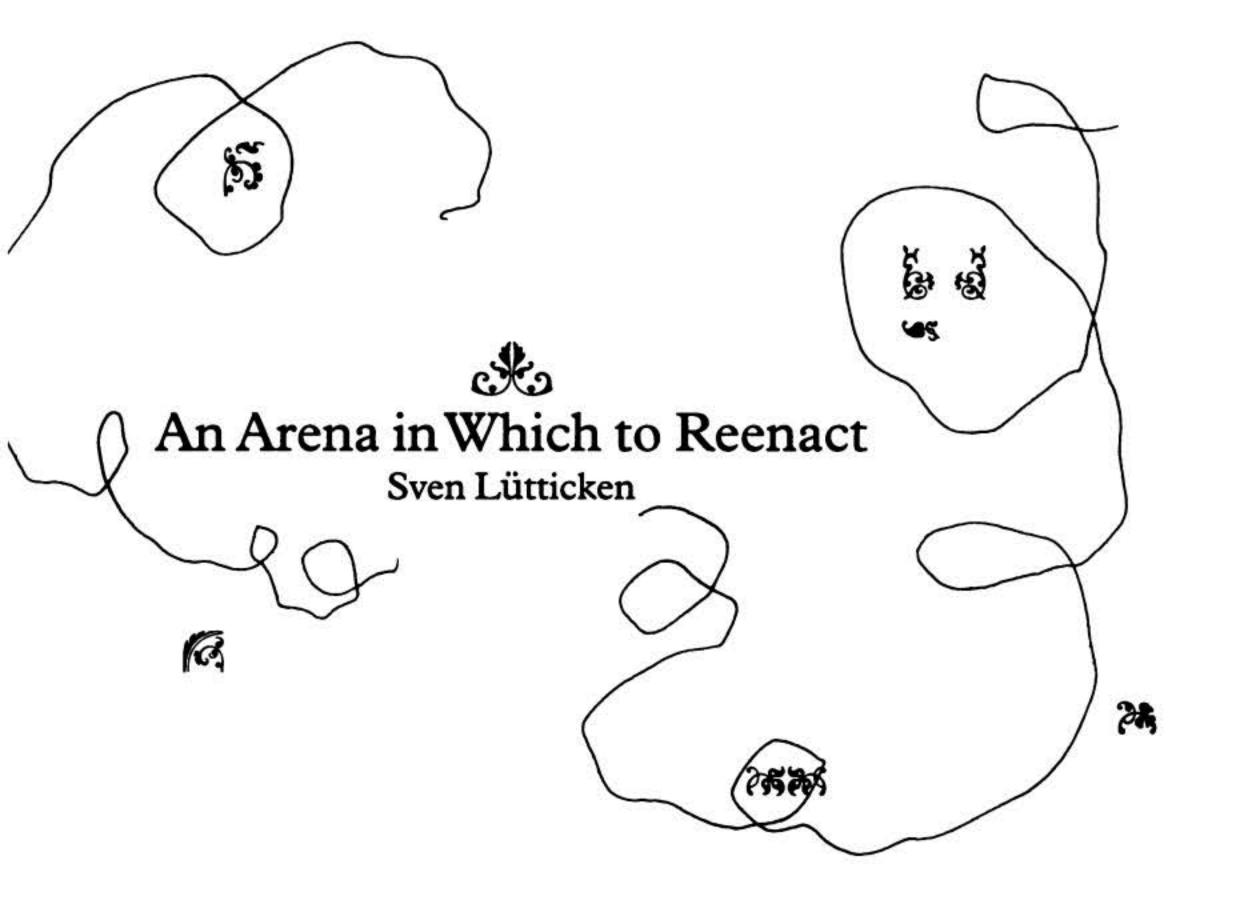
The exhibition includes more than two hundred armchairs and stools that were offered to the museum after an armchair in the museum's French Salon was destroyed. Among other exhibits on display are an anonymously stolen stool from the security services headquarters as well as designs for armchairs to be produced. Baron Rothschild's declaration that the destroyed armchair is replaceable triggered a deluge of donations. The museum's readiness to consider an armchair from any period as replacement for the missing piece drew criticism from the Academy of History.

In the first session of the Third Space Conference, the majority of member states voted for the renaming of their magazine. From 2001 on, White Box – for Neutral Cultural History will be replaced by Blue Key – for Scenic Politics. The conference spokesperson dismissed as unfounded any connections made between this decision and the staging of the return of the futurologist lost in space.

Die Welt dedicates its Science and Research page to the image of a camp fire surrounded by armchairs belonging indirectly to the Louis Quinze period. While one of the armchairs feeds the fire, on the remaining chairs one can sit around and enjoy it. "The futurologist lost in space" the caption claims, "is suspected to be in an eighteenth century French salon. There is no link between picture and caption."

09 AN AMERICAN REGNACTMENT OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, 1994. FROM: JENNY THOMPSON, WAR GAMES, WASHINGTON, 2009





"History has emerged as a drama seen from within by a spectator who, willy nilly, is also an actor and in some indefinable sense an author." Harold Rosenberg, 1970<sup>1</sup>

In the 1960s, Guy Debord and the Situationist International conceived of spectacle as a theater performed by commodity-images, consumed passively by people who lead impoverished lives. What was not sufficiently emphasized in this analysis was the spectacular imperative for people to present themselves, to perform themselves as commodities. In the post-Fordist economy, as service jobs became more important, it became imperative to present oneself not so much as an interchangeable supplier of labor-power – which is the commodity most people sell – but to perform oneself as a unique commodity-person. In a spectacular culture, everybody is a performer forever re-presenting him/herself in an attractive way. Of course, as Erving Goffman pointed out in his 1959 study on the "presentation" or the "performance" of self in everyday life, every society has a theatrical element, with people presenting themselves in ways that seem favorable and suited to themselves - a presentation that is also a representation of who they want to be or must be in a certain situation, for an audience whose members engage in the

same practice.2 Yet Goffman's book is specific to its time,

1 Harold Rosenberg, "Foreword: After Ten Years," in *The Tradition of the New* (London: Paladin, 1970; first edition 1959), p. 21.

2 Erving Goffman,
The Presentation of Self in
Everyday Life (New York:
Doubleday, 1959).
Although Goffman uses the
term "presentation of self,"
he also uses the term
"misrepresentation" (p. 58),
thus indicating that the
presentation of self as "some
kind of image" (p. 252)
is an act of representation.

2517

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

OY JEREMY DELLER, THE BATTLE OF ORGREAVE, 2001. COMMISSIONED



05 ROY VILLEVOYE, OVER THE TOP, 2003.



the late fifties, when corporate culture was already becoming more concerned with the performativity of employees; the book itself stimulated this development, being in this sense performative rather than merely descriptive. The performative aspect inherent to any social situation became exacerbated as certainties eroded; slightly later, the emphasis of the counterculture and the protest movements of the 1960s on free creativity was also absorbed by capitalism as it came to stress employees as creative, reliable people who are constantly improving themselves.<sup>3</sup>

By now, reality TV shows and an immense reservoir of banal quasi-celebrities have fulfilled Warhol's famous prophecy about the fifteen minutes of fame. Media images, however – including those of artists, whose performance of their identity is now often more important than the works they produce – are in a sense only the superstructure of a society of neoliberal performative subjects. As actors in a spectacle we have to appear as authentic beings with unique feelings and acts, but celebrity shows and real life soaps demonstrate only too clearly the unoriginal, repetitive nature of performance: the actors – we, potentially everyone – are assemblages, montages of repetitions. But while it is one thing to state that all subjects are created by something that precedes them - by language, by interpellation through speech – it is another to note that citation has to operate within narrow limits, without much variation. Basically, all acts have to be repetitions of the ultimate act: to play oneself in order to be visible and hence to have a certain exchange value in relation to other self-performers -whether the audience is a television audience or one of potential employers to be networked with. But if in the neoliberal theater everybody constantly reenacts himself and indirectly everyone else as well, reenactment becomes a crucial performative strategy – one that is explored in different ways by artists and other performers. If one is always reenacting roles partially scripted by others, one might just as well use reenactment against itself by recreating historical events. But can such a re-enactment succeed in breaking through the eternal return of the same, rather than ensuring its continuation? Historical reenactment may only be an escapist diversion from daily life, but perhaps it is also an anachronistic challenge to the present. Either option could itself be seen as a reenactment of older forms of reenactment.

3 See Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello, Le Nouvel Esprit du capitalisme (Paris: Gallimard, 2000). On the artists (especially female artists) in performative capitalism, see for instance Isabelle Graw, Die bessere Hälfte: Künstlerinnen des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts (Cologne: DuMont, 2003).

4 On interpellation and citation, see Judith Butler, Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative (New York/London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 43-52.

#### OS WILLIAM DUNNIWAY, WET-PLATE PHOTOGRAPH OF A CIVIL WAR



#### From Painting to Performance

In a society in which performance becomes the commodity par excellence, the act of painting can take on an autonomous function, reducing the finished painting to the status of a by-product. As Harold Rosenberg famously put it, "At a certain moment the canvas began to appear to one American painter after another as an arena in which to act rather than as a space in which to reproduce, redesign, analyze or "express" an object, actual or imagined. What was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event."5 Rosenberg's "The American Action Painters" is a peculiar text. It's not quite clear whom Rosenberg is talking about; he does not mention any names. Most people associated action painting with Jackson Pollock, but Rosenberg at the time was a champion of De Kooning. It was his rival Clement Greenberg who celebrated Pollock, but he praised him as a serious modernist painter who worked through certain formal problems left unresolved by cubism - not as an "action painter." Greenberg was appalled by Rosenberg's dadaist-surrealist-cum-existentialist rhetoric, which tended to dismiss the formal and colorist qualities so dear to Greenberg, "An action is not a matter of taste. You don't let taste decide the firing of a pistol or the building of a maze."6

Mary McCarthy responded to Rosenberg with the remark that "[you] cannot hang an event on the wall, only a picture." This was precisely what attracted younger artists like Allan Kaprow to Rosenberg's art-as-act or art-as-event theory. Events, happenings and performances seemed beyond commodification; being ephemeral, they could not be sold as precious artifacts. For artists like Kaprow, phrases from Rosenberg's article - even if not explicitly aimed at Pollock – blended with Hans Namuth's photographs and his film (1950) of Pollock painting his pictures to create an image of the prototypical action painter. The "acts" seen in these images seemed at least as vital and intriguing as Pollock's paintings, and yet they are only accessible as images. During the making of Namuth's film, Pollock began to feel that he was a phony who "acted" for the camera acting in the sense of play-acting. Numerous publications and Ed Harris's film Pollock emphasize that it was because of this experience that Pollock began drinking again. It has UNIVERSITY OF N

5 Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters" (1952), in Tradition of the New, p. 36.

6 Rosenberg, "Action Painters," p. 47. Greenberg (belatedly) attacked Rosenberg's essay in "How Art Writing Earns Its Bad Name" (1962), in The Collected Essays and Criticism, Volume 4: Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957-1969 (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 135-144.

7 Quoted in Harold Rosenberg, "Preface" (1960), in Tradition of the New, p. 9.

8 Allan Kaprow, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock" (1958), in Kaprow, Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life, ed. Jeff Kelley (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 1-9.

07 OMER FAST, GODVILLE, 2005. PRODUCTION STILLS.



been suggested that Rosenberg may have been deliberately ambiguous in his use of the verb "to act," perhaps using method acting as a model for an act that is a form of play yet emotionally real, but Pollock seems to have made a fatally rigorous distinction between authentic non-theatrical acts and "phony" play-acting (or film-acting).

Later happenings and events too were thoroughly caught up in the spectacular economy; starting out as rather obscure avant-garde events, they were soon absorbed by spectacle, which itself became a parade of happenings. The commodification of performative works in the 1960s and even more so the 1970s manifested itself in such phenomena as the sale of limited edition photographs and videos, of objects and entire "sets." And if the object played an important and marketable part in many performances, objectbased art also became performative - Greenberg's follower Michael Fried denounced minimalism for its "theatricality," since minimal objects shared the same "literal" space as the viewer(s).10 The literalist, everyday "presence" that Fried decried in minimal art has been championed by defenders of performance art as its prime quality and raison d'être. In the face of media representations that reduce us to passivity, performance art presents us with live presence that eludes the grasp of permanent representation. This aspect has often given rise to claims for the progressive or critical qualities of performance art, in spite of the fact that performance in a wide sense is thoroughly integrated in media spectacle. Peggy Phelan insists that "Performance's only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the representations of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. To the degree that performance attempts to enter the economy of reproduction it betrays and lessens the promise of its own ontology."11 Performance art, then, would seem to be an attempt to use performance against the aims of a dominant performative culture, which is only too eager to "lessen the promise of performance's ontology."

The expression "representations of representations" implies that a performance may create a strong sense of presence, but that it nonetheless takes place in a context that differentiates it from "normal life" and makes sure it is seen as a representation. Yet the thing that has distinguished performance art since the late 1950s, as Erika Fischer-

9 Graham Birtwistle, "Actie, oordeel en authenticiteit: Hoofdstukken uit de geschiedenis van het schildergebaar,"

Jong Holland 19, no. 3 (2003): 22-29. For a detailed analysis of Namuth's Pollock photographs and film, see Pepe Karmel, "Pollock at Work: The films and Photographs of Hans Namuth," in exhib. cat. Jackson Pollock (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1998), pp. 87-137.

10 Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" (1967), in Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 148–172.

11 Peggy Phelan, Unmarked. The Politics of Performance (London/New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 146. Lichte has noted, is that this representational context is often challenged: if Marina Abramović maims herself in the context of a performance, the actions are nonetheless shockingly real, even if we realize that "it is art." This also has consequences for the audience's behavior. The audience may intervene in order to help, as when spectators try to protect Abramović, or in order to disrupt things, as in the case of the famous Fluxus evening in Aachen (1964), when members of the audience felt provoked and fought with Joseph Beuys, resulting in the well-known photograph of a bleeding Beuys holding a crucifix. Undoubtedly this is "something other" than the real, ephemeral, unique event, but is Phelan right in drawing such a strict boundary around "pure" performance? With the perverse essentialism of Roland Barthes's claim - in The Third Meaning - that cinema's essence resides in film stills, one could also claim that the essence of a performance or event lies in the reproductions that give it an afterlife – photos, films and videos, descriptions. 13 Is it not here that ephemeral art becomes truly alive, in its afterlife, giving rise to ever new interpretations - and fantasies? It is here that the reenactment of "classic" performances becomes important.

On the one hand, such reenactments seem to be based on precisely the assumption that only a reenactment can give a real impression of such an ephemeral work, contrary to the misleading representations of photography and video, which tend to integrate performance art in the dominant spectacle; on the other hand, these photos and videos are in many cases so well-known that a reenactment will risk seeming like a sham, a poor substitute for the auratic images of the original event. In their video Fresh Acconci (1997), Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy based themselves on the film and video recordings of Acconci's works from the early 1970s. Some of these were "straight" recordings of performances, while others, such as Theme Song, in which Acconci talks directly into the camera, were specifically geared towards video. Kelley and McCarthy restage these works in the idiom of soft porn – naked men and women reenact Accon– ci's performances in a Californian villa, thus suggesting that the old footage just isn't sexy enough for today's visual culture, and that what is needed is not so much a live reenactment of Acconci's pieces as a filmed reenactment that effectively functions as a remake of the old films and videos.14

7524

#### Historicism in Action: Parade, Pageant and Reenactment

The success of the terms "happening" and "event" in the 1960s, which quickly outgrew their origins in the neo-avantgarde, is an indicator of the theatricalization of culture in the sixties and beyond. Just as the increasing performativity of capitalism led to the neoliberal ideology of work-as-play, which recuperates for capitalist purposes notions of the 1960s movements that were aimed against capitalism, happenings became a provider of images for spectacle in spite of the fact that they were originally aimed against the spectacular regime of commodity-images. In 1961, Daniel J. Boorstin noted the growth of "pseudo-events" that exist only to be reported, to be represented by the media; in his Blue Key Archive, artist Eran Schaerf presents war reenactments as one of several categories of these pseudo-events.15 These theatrical events result in two-dimensional representations, commodity-images. Artistic happenings were meant to be beyond this kind of representation, but they too were documented in photographs and sometimes on film, and some happenings indeed became pseudo-events intended to generate media attention. As the openings of trendy shops or art shows became "happenings," the happening became commodified. Warhol's Silver Factory was a permanent happening by exhibitionists presided over by a voyeur. Far from a "pure" live performance, the factory revolved around media of mechanical representations - film, audio tapes, silk-screens. Allan Kaprow withdrew increasingly from the art world, disgusted by this development.

In the early 1960s, when events and happenings conquered art, the United States were teeming with activities related to the centennial of the Civil War – activities that in many cases also became a kind of happening. The centennial of the Battle of Bull Run (or First Manassas) in 1961 was commemorated with a reenactment of the battle on the original site, which received a lot of press attention and proved very popular with tourists. The reenactors – led by a retired army general – were mainly members of the North-South Skirmish Association (NSSA), an organization founded in 1950 as the North-South League. Although standards of authenticity were low at the time, some units strove to be accurate – the predecessors of later "hardcore"

Digitized by GOOGLE

12 Erika Fischer-Lichte, Ästhetik des Performativen (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2004), pp. 9-30.

13 Roland Barthes, "The Third Meaning: Research Notes on Several Eisenstein Stills" (1970), in *The Responsibility of Forms*, trans. Richard Howard (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 41–62.

14 On remakes, see Sven Lütticken, "Planet of the Remakes," New Left Review, no. 25 (January/February 2004): 103-119.

15 Daniel J. Boorstin,
The Image: A Guide to PseudoEvents in America (New York:
Harper and Row, 1961); Eran
Schaerf, "Scenario-Data for
Demographic Design:
A Selection from the Blue Key
Archive," in exhib. cat. Territories
(Berlin: KW Institute for
Contemporary Art, 2003),
pp. 198-212.

16 Jenny Thompson,
War Games: Inside the World
of Twentieth-Century War
Reenactors (Washington:
Smithsonian Books, 2004),
pp. 29-33.

VERSITY OF MICHIGAN



reenactors. 17 After the First Manassas and similar reenactments, the modern reenacting hobby took off. Whereas the NSSA was and is focused on shooting contests, not on engaging in "realistic" fights or reenacting historical battles, these activities became crucial for later reenactors who became ever more precise in their quest for historical authenticity. In the late sixties, historical reenactment also crossed the Atlantic – the first reenactment group in the UK, The Sealed Knot, being formed in 1967 – it was named after a secret society that was active after the defeat of Charles I. It was, however, the Napoleonic era that would quickly become the European equivalent of the American Civil War as the most popular era for reenactments, supplemented by earlier but also by more recent conflicts such as the world wars of the twentieth century.

Reenactments are historicist happenings. At a time when pop art, Fluxus and minimalism celebrated the now, reenactments tried to create an experience of the past as present, or as much present as possible. Both war reenactments and many happenings and performances seemed to retreat from language into a realm of – seemingly – purely physical acts, away from preformed speech and its conventions, clichés and booby-traps. Happenings, and forms of 1960s and early 1970s avant-garde performance and theater in general, also eliminated the safe distance between performers and audience in order to create ambiguous, mixed states; similarly, the battle reenactment places viewers and performers in the same landscape, even if in the case of "public" events the audience is at a safe distance. In the case of "living history museums" the distance is much reduced performers in historical costumes and visitors who themselves become part of the performance mingle in what Stephen Eddy Snow has termed an "environmental theater."18 Some American living history museums – essentially historical theme parks based on reconstructions of historical towns or villages - date back to the 1920s or 1930s. Examples are Henry Ford's Greenfield Village or Colonial Williamsburg, restored with Rockefeller money. If the case of the Pilgrim Village of Plimoth Plantation, which was founded slightly later, is representative, it was only around the 1970s that museum guides or interpreters switched to first-person narration - that is, to actually performing historical characters rather than explaining history

17 Ibid., pp. 36-38. For a firstperson account of reenactments during the Civil War centennial of the early 1960s, see Ross M. Kimmel, "My Recollections as a Skirmisher during the Civil War Centennial: or, Confessions of a Blackhat" on http://wesclark.com/jw/k\_1960. html (accessed November 2004).

18 Stephen Eddy Snow, Performing the Pilgrims: A Study of Ethnohistorical Role-Playing at Plimoth Plantation (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993), pp.185-212.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



from a contemporary perspective. 19 In living history, the act 19 Ibid., pp. 21-37. is not abstracted into something existential and physical, outside of language. Living history shows daily life and hence subjects that are integrated in a society, through language and other means. Nonetheless these museums have merged with the historical reenactment movement – many reenactors in fact prefer to describe themselves as "living historians" and, apart from recreating battles, they also participate in less bellicose living history demonstrations. Conversely, the daily activities at living history museums are supplemented by occasional larger reenactments of exceptional occurrences, and in the case of the "occupation" of Williamsburg by British troops the "actors" are members of reenactment units.

Ultimately the roots of these contemporary forms of historicism lie in the period of historicism proper – the nineteenth century. This is not to say that the origins explain the current form, which is a transformation of historicism in a new cultural regime. By historicism here I understand the re-use of various old or "exotic" styles and models in nineteenth-century art and culture. This cultural historicism was shaped to a large degree by an approach in philosophy and history that is also often called historicism - fuelled by romanticism and German idealism, each historical period and its culture was conceived as having its own unique organic essence, which was the character of a particular stage in the development of Spirit, of Humanity or of a Volk. By integrating the unique essence that is a historical period and the march of progress or ethnic-spiritual continuity of a race, the past could gain relevance for the present. The recreation of historical styles, forms and details also helped to stimulate identification with the past and overcome the difference between it and the present; thus cultural historicism led to countless historical novels, to sumptuous history paintings and to neo-styles in architecture and interior design; European (and American) culture became a perpetual reenactment of any number of historical periods and "exotic" cultures. Thus a continuity was suggested that made the modern bourgeois the legitimate heir of his own people's past, but also of other cultures.

The historical accuracy suggested by many forms of historicism in literature, art, architecture and various forms of festivities did not prevent it from being phantasmagoric

Digitized by Google

2×29



and phantasmatic at the same time; on the contrary, constant fact-checking legitimated and strengthened its oneiric character. As Walter Benjamin noted, nineteenth-century interiors aimed to give the bourgeois the impression that a historical event such as the crowning or the murder of an emperor could have taken place in the next room.20 Actual reenactments were also an integral part of this culture. Whereas in the theater, dramas by playwrights such as Shakespeare were increasingly performed with sets and costumes that were painstakingly based on the period in question, historical parades or Festzüge brought the performed past onto the streets of the city.21 Although these parades have predecessors in pageants of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, mythology and allegory were much more prominent in those earlier forms; now history replaced myth. Unlike drama in the theater, these historical parades did not usually portray specific events; they reenacted history in the form of a procession, thus in a sense emphasizing the linearity of historical time while bringing back the past. In the late nineteenth century, crucial impulses for historicist spectacle came from art, especially from the Arts and Crafts movement and its romantic attempt to revive preindustrial crafts. Before Jugendstil, symbolism and the twentieth-century avant-garde abstracted the notion of style from specific historical precedents in order to create a uniquely modern style - modernism is historicism applied to modernity itself -, the Arts and Crafts movements looked back towards historical styles to revive culture and ennoble everyday life. Costumed events were a part of the Arts and Crafts movement, often in a private context. Historicism-in-action reached a new level in terms of scale, publicness and publicity in England with the 1905 Sherborne Pageant, organized by Louis Napoleon Parker - whose parents performed an intriguing linguistic reenactment when they named him.22

Parker's pageants, and many inspired by them both in the UK and elsewhere, were more narrative than most Festzüge. Typically they presented elaborate scenes from the history of the town or region where the pageant was performed, ranging from the Middle Ages to the nineteenth century, interrupted at some points by ballet or allegorical masques. These historical pageants were no parades: they were performed in front of a grandstand by a large troupe recruited from the town itself, in front of a picturesque

Digitized by Google

20 Walter Benjamin, Das Passagen-Werk, Gesammelte Schriften, vol. V.1, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1991), p. 286.

21 Werner Telesko, "Der Triumph- und Festzug des Historismus in Europa," in exhib. cat. Der Traum vom Glück: Die Kunst des Historismus in Europa (Vienna: Künstlerhaus Wien/Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Wien, 1996), vol. 1, pp. 290-296. On historical parades in nineteenth-century Belgium, see Tom Verschaffel, "Aanschouwelijke Middeleeuwen. Historische optochten en vaderlandse drama's in het negentiende-eeuwse België" (1999), Digitale bibliotheek voor de Nederlandse letteren, http://www.dbnl.nl/tekst/ vers059aans01/ (accessed October 2004).

22 David Glassberg, American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century (Chapel Hill/London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), pp. 43–44. Parker's grandson later continued staging pageants in the UK according to his grandfather's recipe, see Anthony Parker, Pageants. Their Presentation and Production (London: The Bodley Head, 1954).

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

NAME OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PR

background, such as a castle. A central aim was clearly to instill civic pride by celebrating local and - indirectly national history; the pageant attempted to blend continuity 24 Ibid., p. 64. and progress, tradition and the inevitable march of modernity. Parker's pageants were eagerly emulated in the United States; from 1910 onwards the USA were swept by a veritable reenactment craze. As in Europe, there had already been forms of historicist spectacle and festivity in the USA; at Fourth of July celebrations, veterans occasionally marched in historical costumes, and parades sometimes contained floats with tableaux vivants - sometimes inspired by history paintings. At a historical parade in Philadelphia in 1908, key roles were played by members of the city's elite; Benjamin Franklin was played by his own great-grandson.<sup>23</sup> Thus the ruling class used the historical parade to put forward a claim of ownership with regard to history; the new historical pageantry was also used in this manner. Others however tried to put the pageant to a different use: "progressive educators and playground workers viewed the new pageantry as a way to orchestrate the popular recreational features of celebrations so that the public would not only be exposed to history and art from the podium but also learn by doing through the medium of play. To them, historical pageantry was an elaborate ritual of democratic participation..."24

Compared to contemporary historical reenactments, pageants were less about individuals reenacting and more about a community being presented with an image of itself. If contemporary war reenactment is a kind of negative double of the performative imperative of postmodern capitalism, the pageant was community-oriented and opposed to the rising industry of cinema. Local participation was crucial. It was a (re)presentation for and by the people, yet most pageants were in fact directed by specialists imported for the occasion - the pageant directors, who often saw themselves as enlightened artists/educators. As in some historical parades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there were essentially two experiences of the pageant – from the inside and from the outside. The reenactors taking part – often thousands of them for a single pageant – were, as members of the community, also part of the intended audience. The "passive" part of the audience watched the pageant as a large-scale play, a sumptuous spectacle; the Digitized by Google

VERSITY OF MICHIGAN

12 MIKE BIDLO, AND ONE BLUE POLES FOR GERMANY, 1984. FROM:



people in period costumes were the active part of the audience; inside the spectacle, living and participating in it, but always constrained by a script.

In this they were similar to extras on stage and in films, yet in these media the link between representation and community is severed; film exacerbates the gap between players and audience, severing spectacle's ties with the audience's life even more drastically than is the case with mainstream theater; it was only much later that spectacle would come to infiltrate daily life, as post-Fordist economical conditions made constant self-reinvention the norm and reality shows and web cams a logical consequence. Warhol, who combined admiration for the great film stars of Hollywood's golden age with the stated conviction that everybody could be a star, at least for fifteen minutes, is perhaps the figure who most clearly marks the transition to the new regime. The permanent happening at the Factory, with the constant recording of screen tests, was the testing ground for much that came later.

25 Elisabeth Grossegger, Der Kaiser-Huldigungs-Festzug. Wien 1908. Mit einem Vorwort von Margaret Dietrich, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, 585. Band (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), pp. 30-36.

#### nees

### Representation and Immersion

Pageants tried to escape from the limitations of the stage into the countryside or some setting in the vicinity of the town that was celebrated in the pageant; the historical pageant is environmental theater that aims to merge with its context, representation that aims to blend into the represented community and its environment. The first plans for the Kaiser-Huldigungs-Festzug, organized in Vienna in 1908 to celebrate the emperor's sixty years of rule, still contained descriptions of floats with presentations of various dramatic scenes. However, the final concept of March 1908 did away with this device and concentrated on groups of people (often descendants of important families portraying their own ancestors, as in the Philadelphia parade of the same year) who march or ride on horseback or in carriages; rather than being paraded around in the form of tableaux, they move "naturally," more or less as they might have done in their respective eras, marching or riding along.25 They are not on moving platforms, images at a remove; their feet, the horses' hooves, or the wheels of their carriages touch the street. Representation comes off the pedestal and out of the frame. Original from Digitized by Google



Historical Pageantry, p. 118.

Although the capitalist exploitation of cinema stood for the 26 Glassberg, American opposite of what the pageant movement wanted to achieve, pageant-master Thomas Wood Stevens observed that "pageant workers can gain much . . . from a study of moving pictures, in which, of course, the interest is held entirely by action. Think your pageant through in terms of moving pictures; filter out the talk and find out how much action remains."26 Soon historicism on the screen triumphed over live pageants, and it could be argued that twentieth-century cinema witnessed both the apotheosis and the autocritique of nineteenth-century artistic historicism. Mainstream cinema adopted nineteenth-century conventions both in narrative and visual respects in order to gain quick mass acceptance, shunning overt avant-garde elements at any rate. Historicism was thus able to thrive in a filmic form after it had become taboo in "serious" art. As in numerous nineteenth-century novels, the past was presented as exotic yet fundamentally compatible with twentieth-century sentiments and preconceptions; it was spectacularly present, but only as a background to stories that were variations of plots that could be set anywhere. By contrast, in films such as Max Ophüls' Lola Montez (1955), Visconti's Ludwig (1972) or Stanley Kubrick's Barry Lyndon (1975), historicism enacts a self-critical turn. For Barry Lyndon, Kubrick used the research material for his abandoned Napoleon film, which would have shown the destruction of the Ancien Régime by the French Revolution and the rise and fall of Napoleon's Empire – a reenactment of Imperial Rome.

Contemporary hardcore reenactors are often critical of the ways in which history – especially military history – is portrayed in films, yet since the 1990s many reenactors have participated as extras in films such as The Patriot (2000), on the American revolutionary war, and Saving Private Ryan (1998). Perhaps the criticism of films, while usually confining itself to details, also betrays a certain general distrust of the ability of flat, screen-based representations to give a real sense of the experience of war. Reenactors want to break through two-dimensional images into physical experience: historical reenactment as it has developed from the 1960s onwards is characterized by what one might call the emancipation of the reenactor. Publications on "the hobby" emphasize that hardcore reenactors have a negative opinion of "public" events, when – as in the pageants of old – they Digitized by GOOSIC UNIVERSITY OF MI 14 VITO ACCONCI, CLAIM, 1971. FROM: EXHIB. CAT. VITO ACCONCI:



have to conform to a central choreography for an audience.27 Of course, these hardliners are only one faction within the reenactment hobby, and many are only too glad to perform a reenactment for a crowd of tourists. Nonetheless, the experience of the reenactor has become more important than it was in historical pageants; it is not so much a high-minded community affair as a hobby for groups of enthusiasts. Hence, it is not surprising that some prefer "private" reenactments, in which they can reenact historical battles strictly for themselves, without even a passive audience. Here, the active experience, the experience of acting – of reenacting - is everything. To make the experience more compelling, the battles are open-ended, which means that a reenactment of a historical battle that is known to have been won by the Germans can, in its reenacted form, be won by the British.28

Although hardcore reenactors are obsessively perfectionist in their attentions to minute details of clothing and equipment, even banning modern glasses, in this regard they seem to allow themselves surprising freedom. But since the outcome of the original battle was not clear in advance either, an authentic war reenactment must contain the elements of surprise and chance, and have an open outcome. For hardcore reenactors, the reenactment must be as close to an authentic act as can be managed without real bullets and real dead. In some battle reenactments at least the experience of the performer becomes more important than the desire to have a certain effect on an audience. Compared to earlier forms of historicism-in-action, the contemporary reenactment puts greater emphasis not only on first-person experience but also on the most extreme act of all, namely fighting in a war. For an everyday life which has become a constant activity of self-performance and thus rather representational, this authentic act of war is substituted which is far removed from acting in the sense of play-acting. And yet it is still turned into a theatrical happening that seems to transpose the pressures of daily life into a form of play. As Tom Holert and Mark Terkessidis have noted, the metaphor of a soldier or a lone fighter is often used to describe contemporary neoliberal subjects – especially those in jobs related to the financial market.29 Is a day in Wall Street not the ultimate battle reenactment? If many reenactors have more humble jobs than that of stockbroker or manager, this

27 Thompson, War Games, pp. 95-116, 141-163.

28 Ibid., pp. 153-154.

29 Tom Holert and Mark
Terkessidis, Entsichert. Krieg als
Massenkultur im 21. Jahrhundert
(Cologne: Kiepenheuer &
Witsch, 2002), pp. 104-116.

2530

will only increase their sense of identification with the "common soldier." Are they really reenacting themselves in the guise of some guy in the trenches?

Reenactment's emphasis on an immersive experience can be related to the "alternative tradition" that Lev Manovich has contrasted with the dominant mode of representation in modern culture, that of screen-based representation. This alternative tradition "can be found whenever the scale of a representation is the same as the scale of our human world so that the two spaces are continuous. This is the tradition of simulation rather than that of representation bound to a screen"; it can be traced back to the fake villages which Potemkin allegedly constructed to give Catherine the Great the illusion that her peasants were prosperous. 30 It also includes attractions from the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries such as waxwork museums, and to a certain degree also the panorama and the phantasmagoria - the magic lantern ghost show whose name Marx turned into a synonym for the illusions of the commodity fetish, a term later adopted by Benjamin in his analysis of commodified nineteenth-century culture. Although shunned in art during the reign of modernism, this tradition of simulation never disappeared, and in recent decades it has steadily grown in strength - not only in all kinds of theme parks but also in virtual reality, for instance in flight simulators. The first company for the development of computerized flight simulators was formed in 1968; in later decades, the same technology was increasingly used to produce computer games for the consumer market.31

While an "egoshooter" game obviously offers a different experience from standing frostbitten in some field during a reenactment, there is a fundamental similarity in that both seek to draw one into an experience that is much more immersive and engaging than looking at a two-dimensional representation. Although the game technically takes place on a two-dimensional screen, the gamer has the illusion of traversing a space and acting in it. Films have also increasingly attempted to place the viewer in the middle of the action, immersing him or her in the situation, although this effect is usually created by frantic montage rather than by the "single take" effect of games. Paradoxically it was Kubrick, the master of static tableaux, who from the 1950s to the 1980s created war scenes with an unprecedented

sense of closeness and of the reality of battle. But while Kubrick may place the viewer in the trenches of World War I or in bewildering Vietnam battle scenes, his camera style remains detached and does not encourage any identification with characters. This is a crucial difference with more recent films, however much they may have been influenced by Kubrick's camera-work – as in the case of Spielberg's Saving Private Ryan. Kubrick's camera is an observer and does not suggest participation, no matter how mobile it is; by contrast, many recent war and actions films turn the viewer into a quasi-gamer.

30 Lev Manovich, The Language of New Media (Cambridge MA/London: MIT Press, 2001), p. 112. 31 Ibid., pp. 276-277.

The more hardcore reenactors go to great lengths to make the illusion as authentic as possible, from conceiving a character with a clear identity for their "impression" down to soaking buttons in urine to give them the right patina. Any modern equipment must be hidden in order to be completely "in period," yet this does not prevent reenactors from using completely inauthentic photo and video cameras when in battle. In the end, it is vital that two-dimensional representations help to memorize the experience: like performance art, the reenactment gives rise to an almost endless procession of photographic representations, often displayed proudly on the websites of "regiments" or "units." Such websites also have the function of attracting potential new re-enactors; the act of clicking one's way through image galleries might lead to the desire to take part in reenactments. Screen-based representation and the "simulation" of the reenactment are interlinked and influence each other. In the case of moderate mainstream reenactors, the lure of fancylooking Napoleonic or Civil War uniforms that make for nice images is probably a factor of some importance. If such a picturesque approach is despised by hardcore reenactors, they too want to re-experience their experiences again and again by poring over pictures; some even revive the old process of wet-plate photography in order to come up with "authentic" images. On the one hand today's performative culture stresses subjective experience both in leisure and in the workplace, which can be transformed into a sphere of creativity and play if one's attitude is right; on the other hand it emphasizes the appearance of the performer, the visual result – the image. While offering a momentary release from ordinary performance, war reenactments and living history attractions replicate this tension between the experience and the image of the performance; it is this very tension that makes such theatrical forms compelling.

Writing about hardcore reenactors, Tony Horwitz has emphasized the notion of the "period rush," a momentary illusion of actually being in the past.32 But although the reenactor wants this fiction to become (almost) painfully real, he is no more likely to completely forget that he is participating in a fiction than the gamer is. If some forms of performance art create uncertainty as to whether the artist maiming himself or herself has to be seen as a representation or as a very real act of self-mutilation that should be stopped, hardcore reenactments go less far in erasing the distinction between performing in a play and acting in the everyday life of spectacle. While some of the discomforts of a battle situation are momentarily felt, it is clear that it is a game and that no one is actually supposed to get killed. Historical performance art often mimicked ritualistic forms at any rate to suggest a transformative experience. In the case of war reenactment the ambition is more modest – to step out of daily life for a limited amount of time in order to return recharged but fundamentally unchanged. The idea is to reenact history so as to cope with the daily performative demands of the reenactment that is postmodern life.

# Now-Time and Time-Travel

Writing about a 1998 Gettysburg reenactment, Christopher Hitchens noted that "those who can't forgive the past are condemned, not without pathos, to reenact it."33 This remark is obviously a variation of George Santayana's famous phrase, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." These words are endlessly repeated on all kinds of commemorative occasions, especially in Germany. In a slightly modified version - "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it" - they were also the motto of cult leader Jim Jones, recently the subject of the Jonestown Re-enactment by artist Rod Dickinson. Hitchens's substitution of "reenact" for "repeat" suggests that he sees the reenactment as denying history rather than really engaging with it. In this sense, it would be comparable to nineteenth-century culture, which according to Walter Benjamin no longer strove for the revolutionary

fetztzeit (now-time) in which the French Revolution had revived, relived, reenacted ancient Rome.<sup>34</sup> The republican rirtues of early Rome, with which the pre-revolutionary paintings of David and others had instilled the public, leapt from the canvas into social life and political action, changing dresses, ceremonies and political structures – before Republic turned into Empire under Napoleon, exchanging one Rome for another. As antiquarian as it may have been in architecture, letters, clothing, the French Revolution sought to revive antique virtues and political ideas in order to overthrow centuries of obscurantism, to break with the Ancien Régime through an act of radical anachronism.

Even though the Neoclassical culture of the late eighteenth century may have contained the seeds of historicism, in its most radical manifestations it used the old forms to shatter contemporary structures. If the revolution was a reenactment of Antiquity, it was one that used the past to transform the present, resulting in something unprecedented. Rather than reviving an earlier period in this way, historicism used historical styles to stabilize contemporary bourgeois society. If the revolutionary reenactment in a Jetztzeit shattered the Ancien Régime, the historicist reenactment of periods and styles reinforced the new status quo, clothing the ceaseless advance of modernization in forms that suggest continuity and a logical evolution. But while neo-styles were intimately linked to historicist notions of evolution and progress, stylistic historicism in the arts and in material culture also suggested a mythical, cyclic return. After all, as Benjamin argued, not only did the ideology of progress itself increasingly become an unquestioned modern myth, the nineteenth century also produced the theories of eternal repetition of Blanqui and Nietzsche. In Benjamin's view, such theories were a répétition du mythe befitting a culture that enveloped itself in a dreamtime of sameness in order to cement the bourgeois ownership of history by reenacting past styles.35 But if, as modern theorists maintain, myths are continually reenacted in rituals that make the mythic events genuinely present once more – thus creating a cyclic rather than a linear time -, modern répétitions du mythe have to deal with historical events rather than with "timeless" mythic events. Repetition thus comes to be a repetition of an "original" rather than one of many possible actualizations of a myth; this is the impoverished reproduction of a cyclic time

Digitized by Google

32 Tony Horwitz, Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War (New York: Vintage, 1998), a.o. p. 7.

33 Hitchens, quoted in Thompson, War Games, p. 284.

34 Walter Benjamin, "Über den Begriff der Geschichte" (1940), in Gesammelte Schriften vol. I.2: Abhandlungen, eds. Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1991), p. 701.

35 Benjamin, Passagen-Werk, pp. 169-178.

2×43

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

15 ROD DICKINSON, RECONSTRUCTION – JIM JONES SIGN: CIRCA 1970, JONESTOWN, GUYANA, THE JONESTOWN RE-ENACTMENT, 2002. DETAIL FROM THE INSTALL ATION AT THE CENTRE FOR

THOSE WHO DO NOT REMEMBER THE PAST ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT.

ander modern, industrial conditions. But the original that is copied is perhaps all too much a product of the contemporary imagination, not allowing for complexity and difference to break through the status quo. For all the accuracy it may possess, this repetition is above all a historicizing reproduction of what is conservative about the present.

Although Benjamin read Nietzsche's theory of eternal return as an ideological expression of bourgeois historicism, Nietzsche himself criticized the historicism of his day for stultifying life with antiquarian learning, and Gilles Deleuze has argued that Nietzsche's notion of the eternal return was aimed against the reproduction of archetypes and of originals. Deleuze's Nietzsche wanted to replace such mythic repetition and its modern equivalent with a decentered, productive repetition that does not copy any models. "But is not repetition capable of breaking out of its own cycle and of 'leaping' beyond good and evil? It is repetition which ruins and degrades us, but it is repetition which can save us and allow us to escape from the other repetition . . . To the eternal return as reproduction of something always alreadyaccomplished, is opposed the eternal return as resurrection, a new gift of the new, of the possible."36 Although for Benjamin, Nietzsche's eternal return was "bad" rather than "good" repetition, Benjamin too theorized a form of repetition that refused to remain bogged down in the passive consumption of the past. After the bourgeoisie had gained power, it attempted to control the revolutionary forces it had itself unleashed; on the cultural level, this manifested itself in the bad repetition of historicist art, which naturalized bourgeois ideology and tranquilized rather than activated the public. By contrast, during the French Revolution, when the bourgeoisie was still a revolutionary class, it reactivated the Roman past in the revolutionary repetition of now-time – an explosion that breaks the circle of "reproductive" repetitions. Of course, the distinction between a revolutionary now-time and a conservative historicism is a simplification,

useful though it is. It could well be argued that Victorian

England and Louis Napoleon's Second Empire had their

own imperial now-time, identifying with the later Roman

Empire with an anguished passion that was still largely

absent in Napoleon's "original" Empire, which never

completely relinquished the dynamic now-time of the revo-

36 Gilles Deleuze, Cinema 1: The Movement-Image, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p. 131. For Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche's eternal return, see Logique du sens (Paris: PUF, 1968), p.121.

₹**45** 

DAN GRAHAM, PERFORMER/AUDIENCE/MIRROR, 1975.
COURTESY GENERALI FOUNDATION COLLECTION, VIENNA.



Empire is also seen as a rather problematical return of Imperial Rome even by its own culture industry.

The use of historical elements from past periods in contemporary culture is often seen as a superficial recycling of nostalgic signs, and is contrasted with the historical consciousness of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Yet – if we look at Steven Spielberg's output – the popcorn nostalgia of the Indiana Jones films coexists with endeavors such as Schindler's List (1993) and Saving Private Ryan, films that clearly aspire to being serious historical drama. One could argue that they are no less phantasmatic than the Indiana Jones adventures, and in this they resemble nineteenth-century historicism: historical detail adds to the ideological pull of the representation of World War II and the Holocaust. Something similar is the case with living history museums such as Plimoth Plantation or Colonial Williamsburg, in which the utopian beginnings of the USA are reenacted. On the one hand, a strange conservative nowtime pervades these historicist environments/happenings the early Pilgrim settlers and the (pre-)revolutionary period are seen as highly relevant to the contemporary situation. On the other hand, these periods in question are integrated into a grand historical narrative of America's destiny; the early Pilgrim settlers and the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary periods seem condemned to becoming an ideological justification for the contemporary American Empire. It is telling that the metaphor of time-travel is often applied to such attractions: one travels into the past as an historical tourist, only to return to the present unchanged; the theatrical equivalent of a time machine enables one to experience a distant period without experiencing any temporal disorientation, without any risk of the past disrupting the present. As in nineteenth-century historicist culture, a potentially disruptive now-time is thus grafted on a teleological narrative in order to create a watered-down, picturesque reenactment of the past that can indeed appear like a répétition du mythe. If Williamsburg constantly reenacts (the eve of) the American Revolution, it does so in order to conserve and freeze it - that is, to turn the revolution into a stabilizing factor for the present.



18 THE PAGEANT OF THE PATERSON STRIKE, MADISON SQUARE GARDEN, 1919, FROM DAVID GLASSBERG, AMERICAN HISTORICAL PAGEANTRY, CHAPEL HILL/LONDON, 1950, P. 191.

### The Revolution Will Be Reenacted

Something similar can be said of, for instance Napoleonic reenactment in Europe. In a sense, this is a reenactment of nineteenth-century nationalism itself, as the rise of nationalism in European countries was greatly fuelled by Napoleon's wars. As European events however, these wars can also be seen as a kind of founding myth for a united Europe, while reassuringly displaying the picturesque qualities of the nations that constitute Europe. The American Civil War is a potentially more disruptive event: its reenactment seems to have a much stronger contemporary significance than Napoleonic reenactment. In the highly selective and idealized version of history in American historical pageants of the early twentieth century, the decline of Indian civilization after the arrival of the white settlers was usually presented as a historical necessity and the revolutionary war was presented in a highly romantic way. The more recent and traumatic Civil War was represented only indirectly, in the form of soldiers departing for the battlefield or returning after the conflict was over. Whereas the pageant emphasized community and continuity, today's historical reenactment is principally concerned with the common soldier and his experience of war, and in this context the Civil War becomes the war par excellence: the fact that Americans are fighting Americans adds to its tragedy. Not that both sides are equally attractive: in a climate of widespread suspicion of big government and the ruling elite, Confederates are considered much more tragic and noble than Union soldiers. If the common white male is presented as the heroic victim of history, women and black men meet with less empathy, and are sometimes discouraged from taking part on grounds of historical authenticity - and dubious sentiments may lurk behind such historical arguments. In the case of some World War II reenactors, there seems to be a disconcerting fascination for adopting the posture of SS Herrenmenschen. Far from the lunatic fringe, in a major film production such as Der Untergang (2004), there is an astonishing amount of empathy for Hitler, whose last days in the bunker are reenacted by Bruno Ganz as an all-too human tragedy.

In some cases, there have been (proposals for) reenactments that react against conservative and reactionary 19 HANS VON UND ZU AUFSESS, FOUNDER OF THE GERMANISCHES



37 Glassberg, American Historical Pageantry, p. 128.

38 "London Riot Re-enactment Society", http://c8.com/ anathematician/lrrs.htm (accessed October 2004).

tendencies in reenactment. During the American pageant craze, the Industrial Workers of the World organized the Pageant of the Paterson Strike at Madison Square Garden, with John Reed directing striking workers from the Paterson mills who reenacted their picket-line and the violent confrontations with company agents.37 This was the heyday of trade unionism; artist Jeremy Deller on the other hand recently returned to a moment that symbolizes the decline of workers' organizations with The Battle of Orgreave (2001), a reenactment of the violence encountered by the striking miners in Thatcher's Britain. If normal historical re-enactments present history as a series of wars and battles, Deller added a different kind of battle to the repertoire. The event resulted in a book and a film of the battle by Mike Figgis once again flat, screen-based representation emerges as the destiny of the reenactment. Whereas Deller staged a professional event funded by an art organization, the web site of the "London Riot Re-enactment Society" opts for anarchist pranksterism, proposing to reenact historical London riots in London itself: "... there are inherent difficulties in asking, or even informing, the relevant bodies of our plans. For example, if we asked the Corporation of London if we could use the City for a week or so to re-enact the Gordon riot they might charge us some considerable sum of money, which we don't have, and there is really not much point in writing to Mercedes Benz about using their showroom as part of a June 18 re-enactment, or to the monarch about our desire to sack the Tower dressed as Wat Tyler's army. It may be best to just go ahead and re-enact. Hopefully no one will mind."38

Such (proposals for) alternative reenactments pale in comparison with the French Revolution as a reenactment of ancient Rome in a state of revolutionary now-time; in its turn, the Russian Revolution – rather than the countless reenactments of the storming of the Bastille in France and elsewhere – could be seen as the real reenactment of the French Revolution. Here we are of course dealing with a type of reenactment beyond historicism, beyond faithfulness to details and a mythic submission to an original which is only perverted and debased in the act of copying. But the young Soviet Union also staged reenactments in a stricter sense of the word. The storming of the Winter Palace, a crucial event during the revolution, was later repeatedly reenacted for commemorative purposes – for the first time in

20 OMER FAST, GODVILLE, 2005. PRODUCTION STILL.



1920, three years after the event. Slavoj Žižek has described the significance of this reenactment as follows, "On 7 November 1920, on the third anniversary of the October Revolution, a re-enactment of the Storming of the Winter Palace was performed in Petrograd. Tens of thousands of workers, soldiers, students and artists had worked round the clock, living on kasha (tasteless porridge), tea and frozen apples, to prepare the performance, which took place just where the original event had occurred. Their work was coordinated by army officers, as well as avant-garde artists, musicians and directors, from Malevich to Meyerhold. Although this was theatre and not 'reality', the soldiers and sailors who took part played themselves. Many of them had not only participated in 1917, but were, at the time of the performance, fighting in the civil war - Petrograd was under siege in 1920 and suffering from severe food shortages. A contemporary commented: 'The future historian will record how, throughout one of the bloodiest and most brutal revolutions, all of Russia was acting'; the Formalist theoretician Viktor Shklovsky noted that 'some kind of elemental process is taking place where the living fabric of life is being transformed into the theatrical.' Such performances particularly in comparison with Stalin's celebratory Mayday parades – are evidence that the October Revolution was not a simple coup d'état carried out by a small group of Bolsheviks, but an event that unleashed a tremendous emancipatory potential."39

Regardless of one's feelings about Zižek's reenactment of revolutionary pathos, it is beyond doubt that such reenactments attempted to engage the people in a kind of participatory mass theater that was intended to be in total contrast with the consumerist spectacle of capitalism. The reenactment's program emphasized that artistic freedom should be allowed to dominate over historical details, perhaps implying a criticism of Western historical pageants: "The tone of the historical events that serve as the raw material for the making of this spectacle is here reduced to a series of artistically simplified moments and stage situations. The directors of the current spectacle did not give any consideration to a precise reproduction of the events that took place in the square in front of the Winter Palace three years ago. They did not, and indeed could not, because theatre was never meant to serve as the minute-taker of history."40

39 Slavoj Žižek, "Seize the Day: Lenin's Legacy," London Review of Books 24, no. 14 (25 July 2002) at www.egs.edu/faculty/ zizek/zizek-seize-the-daylenins-legacy.html (accessed October 2004).

40 Program for the 1920 reenactment, quoted by Richard Taylor, www.bfi.org.uk/bookvid/books/catalogue/sample/text.php?bookid=349 (accessed October 2004).

V2553

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

21 BARBARA VISSER, A DAY IN HOLLAND/HOLLAND IN A DAY, 2001. COURTESY ANNET GELINK GALLERY, AMSTERDAM.



This reenactment then was intended somehow to be a coninuation of the revolution, activating the masses and giving nistory a forward impulse. Apart from 8.000 active participants, there was an audience of 100.000 – a quarter of the city's population. Just as the historical pageant competed with cinema, so the storming of the Winter Palace was restaged both in a live reenactment and on film. Eisenstein reenacted the event again for October (1927). The revolution ended up as cinema, yet this was to be a very different film from those produced in Hollywood or Berlin: one that reminds the people both of their achievements and of their historical mission. In the case of October too many of the reenactors taking part had been involved in the original storming. Later, and on a more modest scale, Deller's Battle of Orgreave was also in part performed by (former) miners who had taken part in the original event.

In 1976, when the Soviet Union was in lethargy and the backlash against the 1960s movements was beginning in the West, a group of art critics and theorists named their new journal October in a kind of symbolic and academic reenactment of the October Revolution and its filmic reenactment by Eisenstein: "We have named this journal in celebration of that moment in our century when revolutionary practice, theoretical inquiry and artistic innovation were joined in a manner exemplary and unique."41 One could see this statement of intent as a - written - speech act that tries to use language to effect something rather than to describe a state of affairs; in J.L. Austin's classification of linguistic utterances, this is language that wants to be performative rather than constative. But as Judith Butler - who has written extensively on the performativity of language - has noted, not all speech acts succeed. 42 Has October's? One can hardly claim that the magazine has led once again to an exemplary combination of "revolutionary practice, theoret-ical inquiry and artistic innovation"; what it has succeeded in doing is to open up a sphere of discourse, of language that may be constative and performative in varying degrees. The creation of such a discourse has itself a performative quality. Cynics might claim that October's main effect so far has been as a career-boosting device for its editors, but one can also argue that this kind of success is indicative of a widely felt need for the practice proposed, though not realized, by October.

41 From the first October editorial, quoted in Roger L. Conover, "1-100: Some Particulars," October, no. 100 (Spring 2002): 229.

42 Butler, Excitable Speech, p. 16.



22 STILL FROM: ED HARRIS, POLLOCK, 2000. COPYRIGHT SONY





## Reenacting Contemporary Art

In art as elsewhere it is not always clear if something is "the eternal return as reproduction of something always alreadyaccomplished," or if instead it achieves "the eternal return as resurrection." It is unlikely that an artistic reenactment will prove to be "an event that unleashes a tremendous emancipatory potential," but what contemporary art can do is investigate the modalities of reenactment and the possibilities and problems inherent in them. The appropriation art of the late 1970s and 1980s is of crucial importance here. While Sherrie Levine rephotographed works by Walker Evans or Edward Weston, creating an infra-thin difference out of sameness, Mike Bidlo emphasized the performative aspect of appropriation in his Pollock works. Apart from producing paintings, Bidlo also made a remake of Hans Namuth's Pollock film, and in the installation/performance Jack the Dripper at Peg's Place (1982), Bidlo had an actor (and thereafter, a dummy) repeat an essential element of the Pollock myth, namely the artist urinating in Peggy Guggenheim's fireplace. The episode also features in Ed Harris's feature film *Pollock* (2000), for which Bidlo served as a consultant, teaching Harris how to paint like Pollock. The best sequence in *Pollock* is dedicated to the making of Hans Namuth's film. Restaging Pollock's traumatic encounter with the spectacularization of the Act, Harris gets a lot of amusement out of showing Namuth bullying Pollock and ordering him around.

Perhaps Warhol's Piss Paintings with their queer take on the mythical Pollock and his macho acts are the ultimate Pollock reenactments. If language can take the form of performative speech acts, Warhol saw Pollock's mute acts as discursive moves whose meaning could be manipulated, rather than as originals to be copied. Military reenactments and living history museums are usually pragmatic combinations of extreme literalness and license; the most successful artistic reenactments or reflections on reenactment upset the balance, disrupting the clichéd assemblage of detail and delirium that is as typical of contemporary historicism as it was of earlier forms. While some reenactments in contemporary art take the form of very free variations, others follow

24 BARBARA VISSER, ARS FUTURA, 1994. COURTESY ANNET GÈLINK GALLERY, AMSTĒRDAM.





appropriation art in attempting to generate difference from extremely literal repetitions; apparently bad, slavish repetition is pushed to an extreme to show how the de- and recontextualisation of a seemingly unchanged image is able to effect a profound change. Explicit reflection on reenactment and its complexities and contradictions is also an important element of artistic reenactment in art. Pierre Huyghe, for example, in his video installation The Third Memory (2000), provided the bank robber John Wojtowicz with the opportunity to reenact his own acts. He invited him to reenact the robbery in a film studio, so as to reclaim his history from the Hollywood version of events in Dog Day Afternoon, in which he was played by Al Pacino. The literalness with which Wojtowicz shows what happened becomes an act of liberation from the film image; yet the old man on the abstract studio set also looks very unreal, as if this reenactment is a dream – a dream created in part by himself and in part by Hollywood.

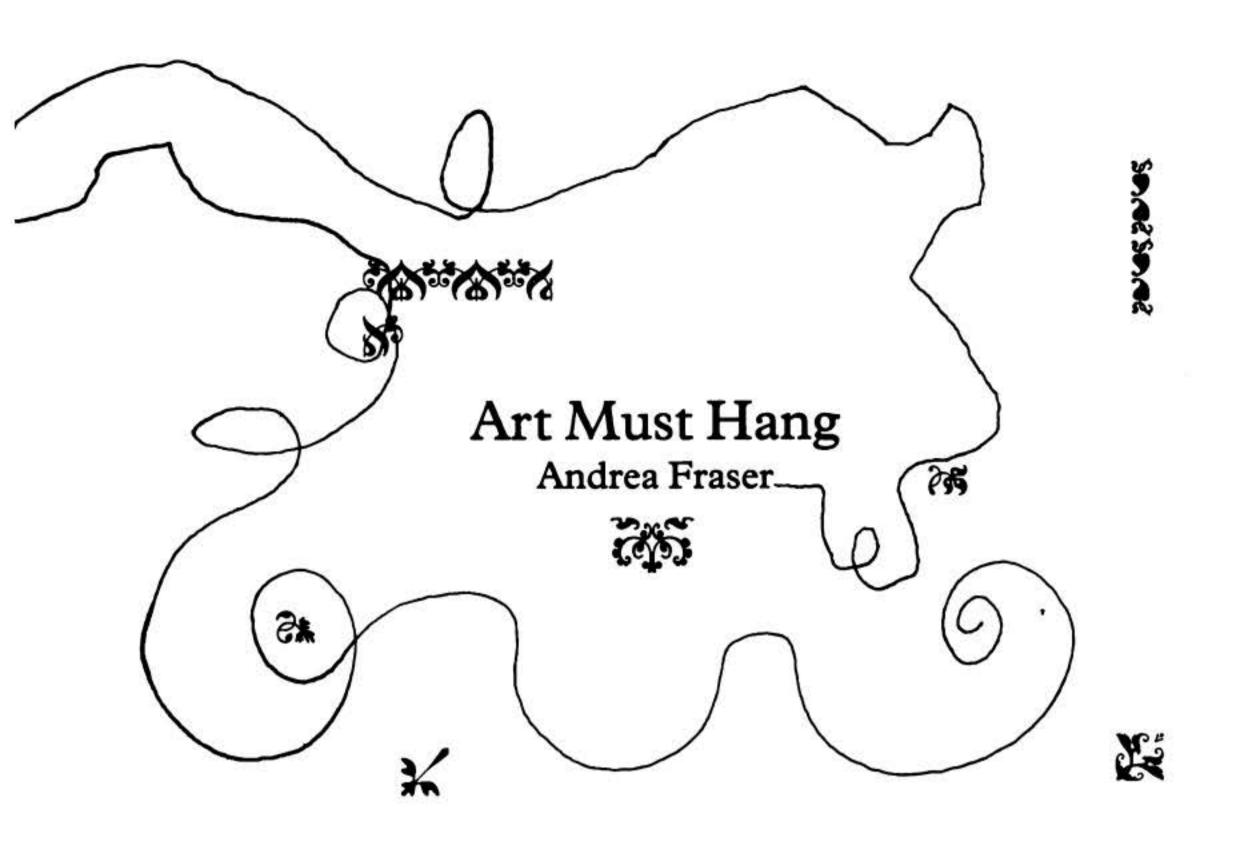
But what role can artistic reenactments play in a world that is increasingly shaped by neoconservatives and religious fundamentalists who impose their own dismal nowtime on society and culture? Islamists try to reenact a phantasmatic "pure" Islam, which is largely a modern ideology, and, in spite of their aversion to images and modern media, they use spectacular effects, with 9/11 as the supreme example. The Taliban too were great anti-theatrical performers, who used the primitivist theme park into which they had turned Afghanistan to tremendous effect. Western neoconservatives on the other hand try to recreate a pre-sixties modernity, in less violent ways and accepting of most modern technology. Some want to go beyond the fifties to the more distant time before the French Revolution; contemporary philosophy and politics have had their share of pathetic Edmund Burke reenactors. The situation is complex: George W. Bush's infamous – and hastily retracted – use of the term crusade gave us a glimpse of the program of Christian fundamentalists in the United States, who would gladly return to the days of the Pilgrim Fathers or even to the time of the Crusades. Outside the Christian fundamentalist camp, most Western neoconservatives would probably be content with a somewhat neo-Victorian modernity, the restoration of a lost status quo. "Conservative revolutions" are restorations; if they reenact the past to change the

JNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

present, it is not at the service of creating something unprecedented, but at the service of restoring, of copying a hallowed model of order and "natural" inequality. The performative imperative of capitalism is often taken for granted, but the permanent happening must now be organized along more traditional lines; the excesses of contemporary self-performance – especially in leisure activities and the media – have to be curbed. The performative imperative is acceptable if we model ourselves on the Pilgrims or on the 1950s.

The left seems to have lost the initiative completely, and artistic acts – or theoretical speech acts – cannot be a substitute for a political force that is lacking. But space for reflection is also badly needed, and to a certain extent the art world can offer it. Art can examine and try out - under laboratory conditions, as it were – forms of repetition that break open history and the historicist returns of past periods; it can investigate historical moments or eras as potentials waiting to be reactivated, in forms that need not resemble anything. Operating within contemporary performative spectacle, if from a marginal position, art can stage small but significant acts of difference. From this perspective, historical reenactment and living history too may constitute a potential waiting to be activated. It is obvious that they are fatally implicated in the current conservative climate, as diversion and relaxing play that also performs an ideological justification for the state of things as they are. Yet everything is open to appropriation, and mainstream historical reenactment may provide impulses that go beyond its limits. It may lead to artistic acts that, while not instantly unleashing a "tremendous emancipatory potential," create a space a stage – for possible and as yet unthinkable performances.





"Art Must Hang" is based on a transcript of a speech delivered by Martin Kippenberger on the occasion of an exhibition of work by Michel Würthle at Club an der Grenze, Burgenland, Austria, October 1995, as performed by Andrea Fraser at Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, Germany, June 2001.

#### KIPPENBERGER

Can we have some quiet here, so one can say a few words? Would one of our top art dealers and teachers, for example, be, uh, so kind as to take a seat?

(pause)

At the moment, I'm not representing myself – one and a half years to live, completely uninteresting.

(laughter)

Uh, talk about your new friends, uh, later, now be quiet! Because, uh, now there's going to be a little hymn. Is that possible? Are we capable of just a little bit of discipline?

(pause, six pings on a glass)

I don't care for how long you've been married to your husbands, now it's my little time. Quiet please! I ask you . . .

(pause)

This is a serious matter! Quiet! Because that's called respect! Quiet! Also, also in the back room, also the people in other parts of the bar! (pause)

This is an exhibition!

(pause)

Even, even foreigners, like Yugoslavs (points) . . . can find their place here. We're all equal, so there's room here for everybody.

(pause)

Shut up!

(pause)

Can that foreigner finally be quiet?!

(pause)

Okay . . . uh, whoever, at, at this point, has an odd view, uh, of opinion can leave the room now, before we begin. Now's your opportunity. Uh, if anyone, if anyone, has some sort of problem – okay! There we already have a few . . . bye-bye!

(laughter)

So, now it's already almost like home!

(laughter)

Of course, we naturally have to say that I, first of all, flew in on a world-class company, uh, that means, we were told that there, where we were flying, there is crème-de-la-crème food. What was there, um, in the plane, there you look around and then, then you accept, you accept yourself. So, uh, you leave everything and travel off . . . Olympic . . . it's a competition. Olympic competition. Olympic games. The first, the second, the third. So, what we have here is a competition, of the most intimate kind, at the end of the world.

And then the guy called me to the gallery, the gallery called . . .

But I've always read it as "the end of the world," the Gallery at the End of the World. So, when you're there, there you have your breakthrough. (laughter, applause)

Well, what do you say . . . very, very good red wine; very, very good . . . (looks around at art on the walls)

... yeah, whatever.

2 (pause)

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

So, (with a lisp) uh, normally you start a speech . . . (very softly)

Well, my speaking-style is, uh, I'm not a man of big words . . . But, since we've flown in from so far, what are you supposed to do? Should you also go into detail? Because, because . . . now, children, take note, this is not a juried exhibition here!

(laughter)

One may not say what, what, what a person can think; one may not say whatever one wants, no, instead, one may sometimes, one may sometimes emphasize things, uh, like the Olympic . . . the competition, that isn't one.

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Could we hear about synchronized swimming now?

#### KIPPENBERGER

Someone who looks like you do shouldn't laugh so loud.

(laughter)

Well, the artist on view here tonight is someone I've been very close to, uh . . . I have to add that when I met him, no, I never met him, I'd only seen him – I thought it was really crazy . . .

(laughter)

. . . in a funny business, that also happened to be his.

Oh, may I kiss your hand, Madame? It was ... blech! I don't know if there's ever been anything worse in my past than this slime shitter. . . Well, I wonder, should I translate this into Austrian and then for a year and a half they'll all be saying iiiiii, oooooo . . . Have we got it, folks? (laughter)

Or should we just chat about the artist on view here tonight?

MAN IN AUDIENCE

Faggots!

KIPPENBERGER

Repulsive!

MAN IN AUDIENCE

French faggots!

#### KIPPENBERGER

But later I, later I found out that he really wasn't a faggot at all. It was, well, it was sort of, some kind of mannerism from . . . out of Austria. But that's not what we want to talk about.

This is, for example, not a restaurant. It's about, for example, it's a question of faith, a, um, maybe it's, maybe it's the highest distinction you can achieve. And, I mean, at the end of the world?! That's where you show? That's the hit? I mean, that's where you make a breakthrough? What I didn't know, is that this is the very first exhibition of all. For a man of opinion. The opinion is also now framed . . . blah, blah, blah, blah.



What appears suddenly, after many noble – no? Well – noble days of art, an opening, flight, poster, catalogue, and – one marvels and wonders – a gesture! No?

(laughter)

That is a very, very special, small . . . maybe one can classify it under ideology, under what is special.

I'd like to ask the children, um, keep an eye on them. They should shut up, too.

(takes his glass and looks in it)

There's no fizz in it at all; there's not even a frog.

So, do ya wanna, um, hear more? I'm not a man of big words.

Well, anybody who wants to disappear during the intermission may now stand. Shoo! Shoo!

(laughter)

Okay, I'll try to keep it short. So . . . what are we here for tonight? (laughter)

There's enough evidence about the artist on view here tonight.

What's amazing is – and it's something I'd never thought of, I don't mind admitting – the pictures are not only white, but also, grey! I mean, here at the end of the world or whatever this gallery here is called. Unbelievable! What new mechanisms that have emerged!

(long pause, he leans against the wall)

No . . . I have to, I have to make it just a little bit, brighter, I have to . . . Okay, the thing is, because you have an ego – it's not visible to me, but anyway I can assume it!

I mean, it's about, about – and maybe that's the best you can get out of culture and what's already been made by . . .

(points to audience)

... the guy even went to art school, I know that for a fact. In Cologne, too, to make an important point.

But, that doesn't bring you anything either, bragging in culture, we're all, when we're big, we brag, now one's just getting by. How? How do we swank around? Without being too, too conspicuous.

So, what kind of material do we have here? What have you seen here, we assholes, yes assholes, naturally everybody has to come clean, this is really very interesting, these . . .

(points to paintings)

... these glorious tones. Do they also come in reds?

So, have you guys already jerked off? Yeah, you with-it types. I'm a with-it type too. Yeah, I'm getting so old and all of a sudden I won't be with it anymore. So, it wouldn't be a bad idea to take a good look at a work.

But, they always look the same, like being pink, they always look the same, a period, a line, a comma, no?

(draws a face with his hand)

What was so great about Dalí? He wrote a great biography. What was so great about Picasso? Damn it, he had a good-looking companion. (laughter)

But, but what we have here, is a "sujet" – as they say in France, no? – that we can actually completely understand, if we only look.

Digitized by Google

(sings)

I know my own . . . And we'll go there again . . . And there'll be a lot of

drinking ... Blah ...

(laughter)

Is that a job? Art? Naw!

(laughter)

Look at the stuff again, damn it, and what've we got there?

(acting out, in a high voice)

"You didn't really look. Forty-two years of work, and now you've got

a toddler . . . "And then somebody comes along, says, hey is it worth it?

Fifty years . . . An artist, I mean, I haven't believed him since we've been

friends.

(in a high voice again)

"People, people, this is really terrible, what we're talking about here."

(pause)

A round of thoughts.

(nods twice, thinks, laughter)

So today, at this dumb-ass exhibition, let's drink to the artist. Here!

But let's not forget what mean, petty, little bourgeois assholes we are, who

can't even look at the stuff. So, to the assholes, to the assholes . . .

(audience)

What? Yeah, I'll come back here and make a solo show.

(laughter, applause)

So, in closing, the moment, the moment, the statement ... I dunno.

Am I boring you already? Otherwise, I'll tell a joke. There's this joke that the innkeeper, uh . . .

(audience)

What's not in your pants, is in your mouth or what?

Okay, it goes like this: at St. Stephan's Square . . .

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Turtle joke, please.

#### KIPPENBERGER

Well, what I'm going to . . . I have to retire for a minute to a wind-sheltered corner . . . Um, I'm doing this for the artist. This is an evening for the artist. This is his evening. These are his pictures, these are his things, and they're very, very – I really treasure them, I mean personally, I really treasure them and, ummm, and . . . I don't expect anybody else to. The only thing I won't tolerate is unattentiveness. That's true. I'm not a thug, but I can be unpleasant. Can we spare ourselves that today, perhaps? Because this evening is for the artist, for his dumb-ass exhibition.

(laughter)

You know that the gentleman, uh, I mean, the man with the hat . . . uh, what's his name? Beuys? He was forty-two when he had his first show.

(laughter)

Can we agree on that?

(audience)

So, now we can skip over the official part of the ceremony. So, um, now, umm, it's time for a joke. Wanna hear it?

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

So, it goes like this, it goes like this: basically, it's not actually a joke, but rather there's, I mean, the whole world talks politics. We, naturally, talk only about art, right? Only the best.

So, um, okay, leave the negative tone behind, and we're already at St. Stephan's Cathedral and the people swarming around, in front of, an insane building designed by an insane architect. You don't recognize anyone there anymore, don't talk to anyone, also don't claim I was their friend or anything . . . Anyway, there we are on the square in front of the cathedral, and the masses of people milling around on the square.

(he screams)

Manni! Manni!

(laughter)

Surrounded by . . .

(pause)

No? Not everybody can be called Martin.

(screems)

Manni! Manni! After all, we're all a little bit vain, right?

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Herbert!

#### KIPPENBERGER

Okay, Herbert sees a friend on St. Stephan's Square.

- "Haven't seen you for ages, like maybe for twenty years. So, what're you up to?"
- "Uh-uh-uh-uh-su-su-su-super, uh-uh-uh su-super, yeah, super."
- "And, everything's alright? What have you been doing work-wise?"
- "Uh-uh-uh, y-y-ye, uh, y-y-yes, yes, ev-ev-ev-everything's, uh, f-f-f-f, uh f-f-fine. Uh, I, uh, I, uh, I, uh, I, a-a-a-ap-ap-ap-ap-applied, uh, I a-a-a-a-applied f-f-f-for a, uh, a j-j-j-j-job, uh, a j-j-job as a, as a, r-r-r-radio, a r-r-r-radio an-an-an-an-announce-announce-announce-announce-nuh, a r-r-radio anounce-announce-, uh, a radio anouncer."
- "You did? Really? Had no idea you were interested in doing that. How's it going?"
- "Th-th-th-th-, uh, th-th-they, uh, tu-tu-tu-tur-tur-tur-, uh, tur-turturned, uh, m-m-m-me, uh, tur-tur-turned me, uh, tur-tur-turned me, uh, d-d-d-down."
- "What?! Turned you down?! They turned you down! What's the world coming to?"!
- "I, uh, I, uh, I, uh, al-al-al-al-al-almost, I al-al-almost, uh, m-m-m-maa, m-m-m-maaa, m-m-m-made it, I almost m-m-made it, b-b-b-ut, uh, b-b-b-ut, uh, but they f-f-f-, uh, f-f-f-found, uh, f-f-f-found out th-th-th-th-thhh-thhh-tthat I, uh, th-th-th-th-that, uh, that I, uh, that I w-w-w-wa-wa-waaa-waaa-waaa-was a, wa-wa-wa-was a, wa-wa-wa-wa-was a, a, a, a, a N-N-N-Na-, N-N-N-Na-, N-N-Na, that I was a N-N-N-Naaa, that I was a N-N-N-Naaa, a NAZI."

Okay, now, jubilation! Come on, you can respond already.



#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Applaud! (applause)

#### KIPPENBERGER

Everybody!

So, how does one say it, there aren't many signs about the works of the artist showing here tonight. So, how should I explain it?

What I can do is tell a joke.

(laughter)

Wanna nother one?

MAN IN AUDIENCE

Turtle.

**KIPPENBERGER** 

Yes, I would gladly tell you a good one.

MAN IN AUDIENCE

Turtle joke, please.

#### KIPPENBERGER

Okay, the turtle will come if – come as an encore. Well, you know, for me you guys are a bit primitive. Should it be an artist's joke for a change? Okay, there's this man, and he makes really beautiful things but he gets it across to dealers and pigheaded collectors and all those people who only pocket fifty percent, so there's nothing left, right?

And then he has to go to the employment office and, uh, not today, not mornings only, not at lunchtime, then closed afternoons, and lights out and, uh, the wife, she just rolls around a bit like a roll mop, because, uh, she says, "I'm the wife of a genius artist. What's it got to do with me?" Like, "I provide the warmth, don't I?" So he goes to the employment office. Not good. Goes up the stairs – uh, that's where you work your way up, uh, never to the top because then the only way left is down, so you work your way up. It's there so that people . . . suicide is always committed through windows and not in halls, no, because there's a railing, and down this railing slides his wife, the one who's supposed to be his muse, uh, slides down the railing, from the fifth floor, totally, uh, naked. So, she slides down, down the railing of the stairs and even gets to the bottom on time. And he thinks, "Man, haven't I got enough problems, now what's wrong with my wife?" And she runs all the way up again and slides down again, completely naked. "What's going on? What the hell is this?!" And then the wife says, "I'm just warming up dinner."

(laughter)

Bravo!

(applause, laughter)

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

The turtle joke, please! The turtle joke, please!



#### KIPPENBERGER

Okay, now, whoever would like to leave of his own free will may leave.
(a long pause)

This is a good pause. So? Who wants to leave? Ladies first.

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Turtle, please!

#### ANOTHER MAN IN AUDIENCE

Please do the turtle for Jörg and for me too. I can't hear it enough.

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Turtle!

#### KIPPENBERGER

We're not speaking here about female asses! We're not speaking here about female asses, rather, about, uh, what has to do with culture, so, my great admiration for this artist – otherwise I wouldn't have flown so far to come here – because this person embodies one thing for me, uh, one knows of this person, that . . .

Okay, the point is that, what the artist has made in a style and a manner, so, always in the form of culture, of art, I mean, I . . .

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

...love! Of love!

#### KIPPENBERGER

... not an appetizer, not a main dish, not a dessert, but rather ...

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Love!

#### KIPPENBERGER

Uh, one has some kind of idea of culture, one wants to be a cultivated person. Yes! Well, I want that, uh, and I think the artist too, and he had to manage through various, various . . .

(long pause)

... conditions. At home, there was always culture, there were always fine things. I mean, it didn't matter if it was, uh, more commercial, uh, but rather, what mattered was to make the structure, a culture, uhmum, an existence, in all severity, fine, no matter in what field and, uh . . . No? Good.

Down he plopped. Right? Plopped down. But the thought of a direction, of a, an existence, a representation, an abstract representation... What is fine art? It's abstract art! Right? So, he carried through and fought through up to the can't-take-anymore. Right? And now he's

decided to be an artist. Well, what can I do about it? Well, I can't hold that so high, but one should, so a person can really, uh, uh be supported with such a, uh, uh, artistic caliber. But . . .





f, if those speaky little bunnies back there can manage to throw their ampons out the window, we might be able to resume our conversation. peak only when spoken to.

#### ANOTHER MAN IN AUDIENCE

second that.

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

'lease, the turtle joke!

#### KIPPENBERGER

This is not about turtles and jokes, this is about art. There's no humor in Germany. But at the time, I mean, at first I didn't think this artist was so reat.

Okay, here's another joke, um, and I ask all the women who have omething to do, do it out there!

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Out! Send them away!

#### KIPPENBERGER

Okay, who, uh, insists on smut?

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Nobody.

#### ANOTHER MAN IN AUDIENCE

Who doesn't?

#### KIPPENBERGER

Okay, um, who, um . . . I'd like to give you a special example . . . uh, uh, can . . . hey . . . here . . . here we are . . . you two-legged creatures . . . who . . . who wants a little, um, a little smut? Who? Who's ready for it? (raises his hand, waits)

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE

Would you be so kind as to tell the joke about the turtle?

#### KIPPENBERGER

I think that compared to you I'm a racist if people come in here and say they wanna hear something smutty.

(pause)

Agreed? Yes? No? . . . Agreed? Smutty? Yes? No? . . . Yes? Smutty? Yes? No? That doesn't count. Yes or no? . . . Okay, no.

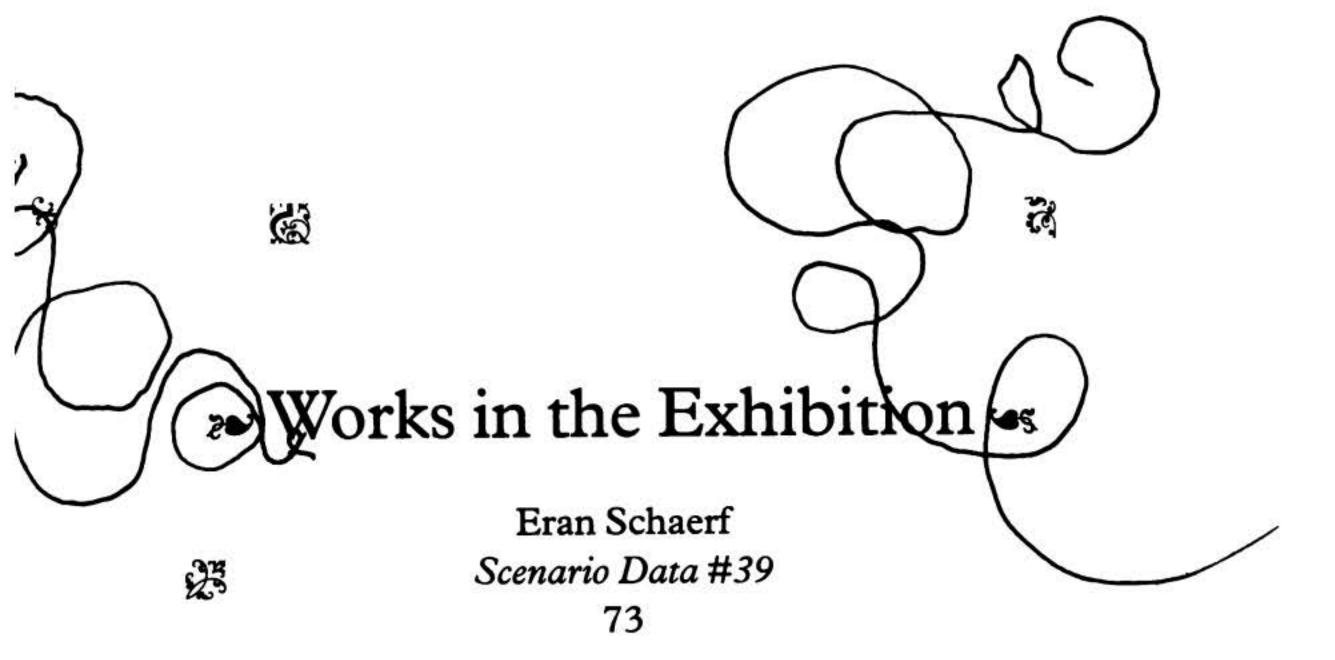
#### ANOTHER MAN IN AUDIENCE

There's no red wine, there's only white wine.

(to someone else in the audience)

Do you know the turtle joke?





Robert Longo
Seeing the Elephant
83

Barbara Visser

Lecture on Lecture with Actress

Hilton/Bed Piece

89

Bik Van der Pol Past Imperfect 101

Catherine Sullivan
'Tis Pity She's a Fluxus Whore
103

Rod Dickinson

The Milgram Re-enactment

109

Andrea Fraser
Art Must Hang
117

Omer Fast Spielberg's List 125

Mike Bidlo
Re: Painting Blue Poles
135



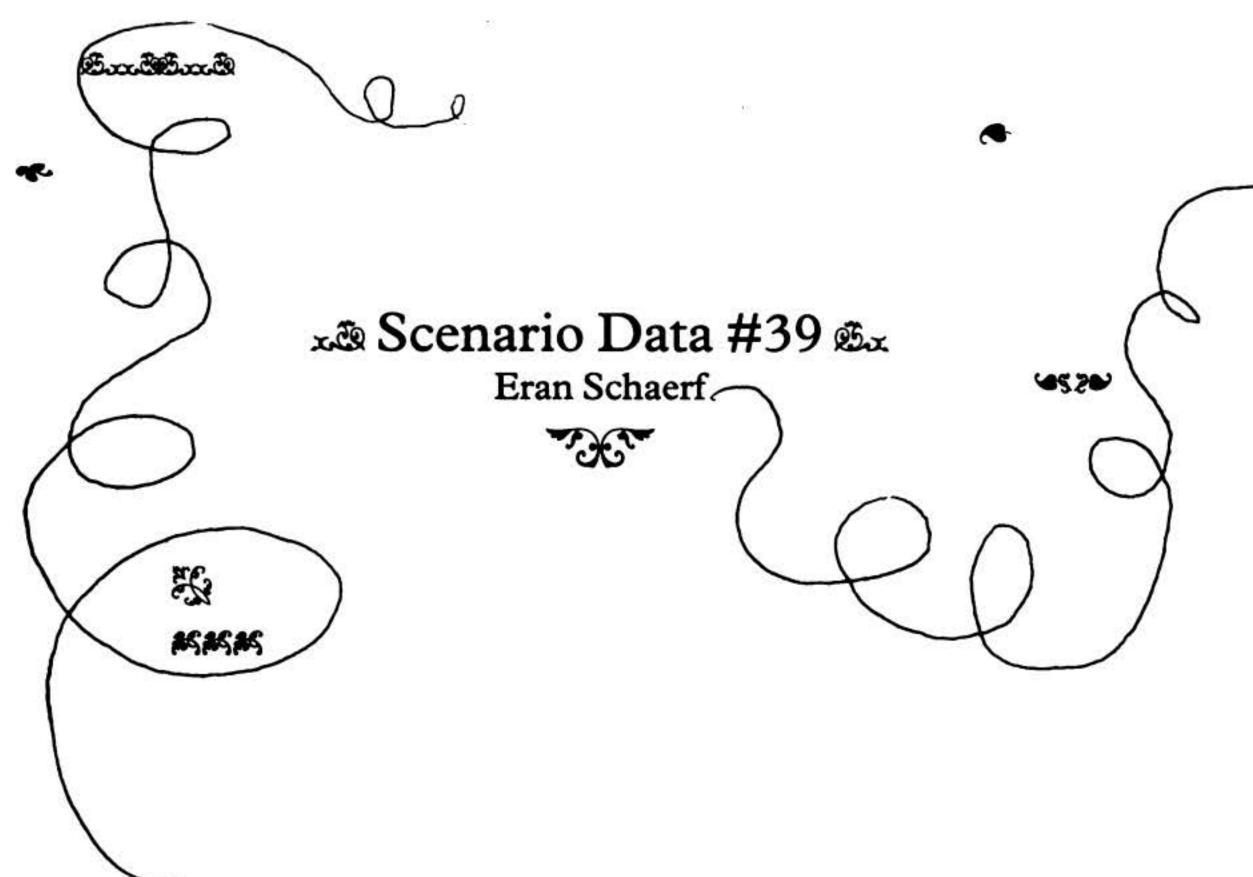
E.

C



27 MIKE BIDLO, JACK THE DRIPPER AT PEG'S PLACE, 1982.





Eran Schaerf describes some of his works as "reenactments of the procedure of reenactment itself"; rather than investigating specific reenactments or staging them, Schaerf is interested in concepts of historical time as manifested by such forms. By projecting moving slides of various reenactments and other mediated performances across the exhibition space, turning twodimensional representations into three-dimensional experience, Schaerf mimics the reenactor's emphasis on experience and immersion while also maintaining a sense of distance. The repetition and permutation of images is linked to the functioning of the mass media, which also repeat "pseudo-events" in endless variations. Like some earlier, related works, the installation Scenario Data #39 (2005) is based on a script about a missing futurologist of the "Kubrick Corporation" who was last seen in an eighteen-century salon - a reference to the end of Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968). Schaerf combines a Kubrick still and a photograph of the Rothschild Room (1969) with a photograph of a campfire with Louis Quinze chairs during the Yom Kippur War (1974). Around this core, he assembles images of Napoleonic reenactments as well as of a topsecret Israeli unit whose members disguise themselves as Palestinians. If Schaerf's staging of a scripted reality in which the future gets lost in the past may seem dystopian, Schaerf also indicates possibilities for enacting transformations: A new film by Schaerf and Eva Meyer, which will be screened in conjunction with the exhibition, meditates on the possibility for a "flash forward" that would be an actualization of latent possibilities - an event erupting among pseudo-events.





Eran Schaerf, Scenario Data #39, 2005. Installation with revolving slide projectors, soundtrack on CD players (2001: A Space Odyssey, 1968).

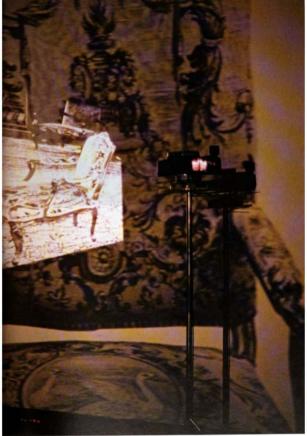






Eran Schaerf, Scenario Data #39, 2005. Installation with revolving slide projectors, soundtrack on CD pluser (The Rothschild Room at the Israel Museum, 1969; Last day of the Yom Kippur War, west side of the Suez Canal, 1974).





Eran Schaerf, Scenario Data #38, 2002. Installation at Bonner Kunstverein.

29 PHOTO TAKEN BY AN EXTRA ON THE SET OF SCHINDLER'S LIST, 1993.

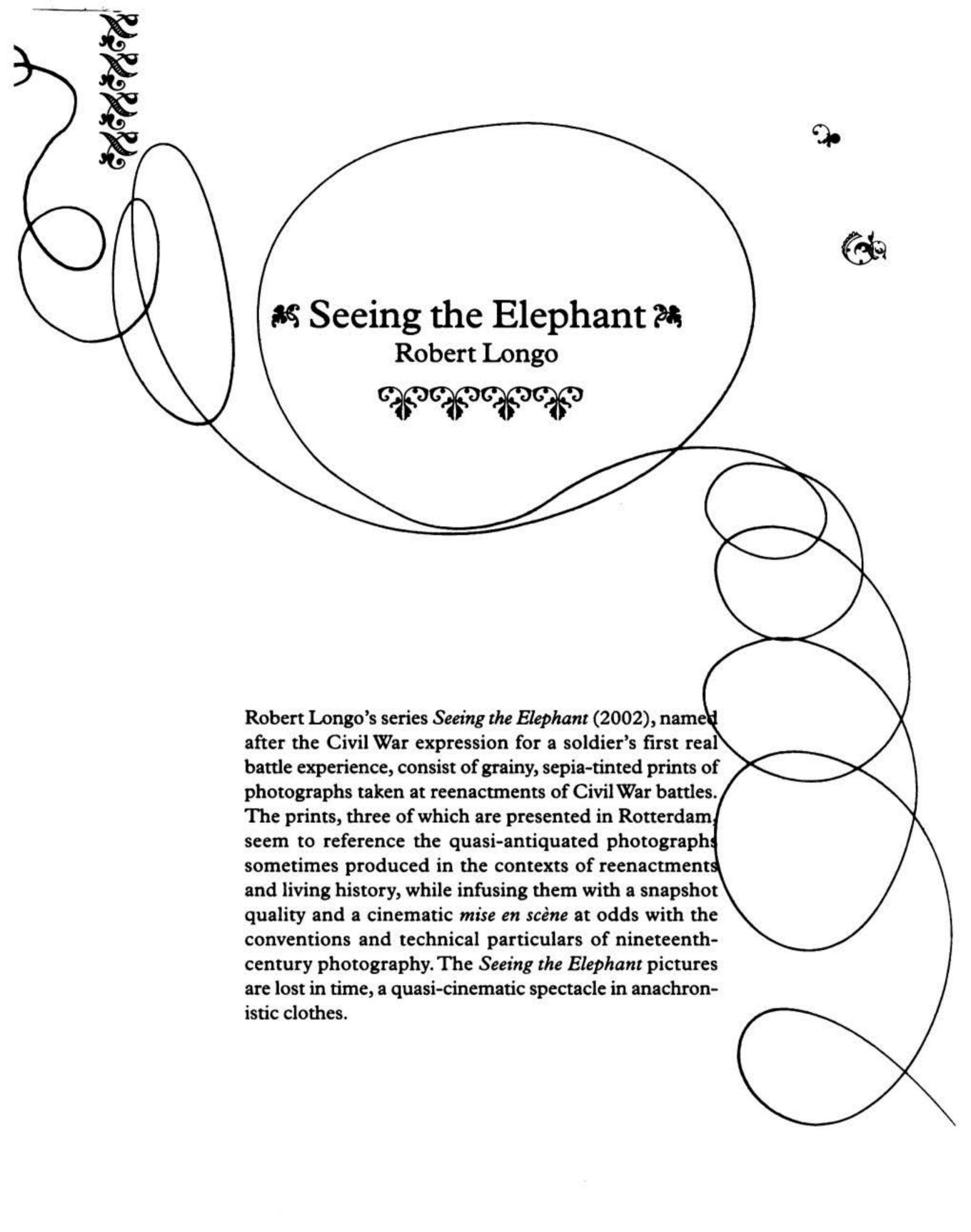




Eran Schaerf, Scenario Data #38, 2002. Installation at Bonner Kunstverein.

90 PHOTO TAKEN BY AN EXTRA ON THE SET OF SCHINDLER'S LIST, 1999.





9) CLERGY AND KNIGHTS IN A MID-TWENTIETH-CENTURY BRITISH PAGEANT, FROM: ANTHONY PARKER, PAGEANTS: THEIR PRESENTATION AND PRODUCTION LONDON, 1954, PLATE 9.





Robert Longo, Untitled (Third Day – The Center), from the series Seeing the Elephant, 2002. Iris print, 29.2 x 67.3 cm.

Robert Longo, Untitled (First Day – Buford's Cavalry), from the series Seeing the Elephant, 2002. Iris print, 50.8 x 67.3 cm.

92 IAN HAMILTON FINLAY, REVOLUTIONARY PURSUITS, PART OF A

You cannot step
into the same Revolution
twice.

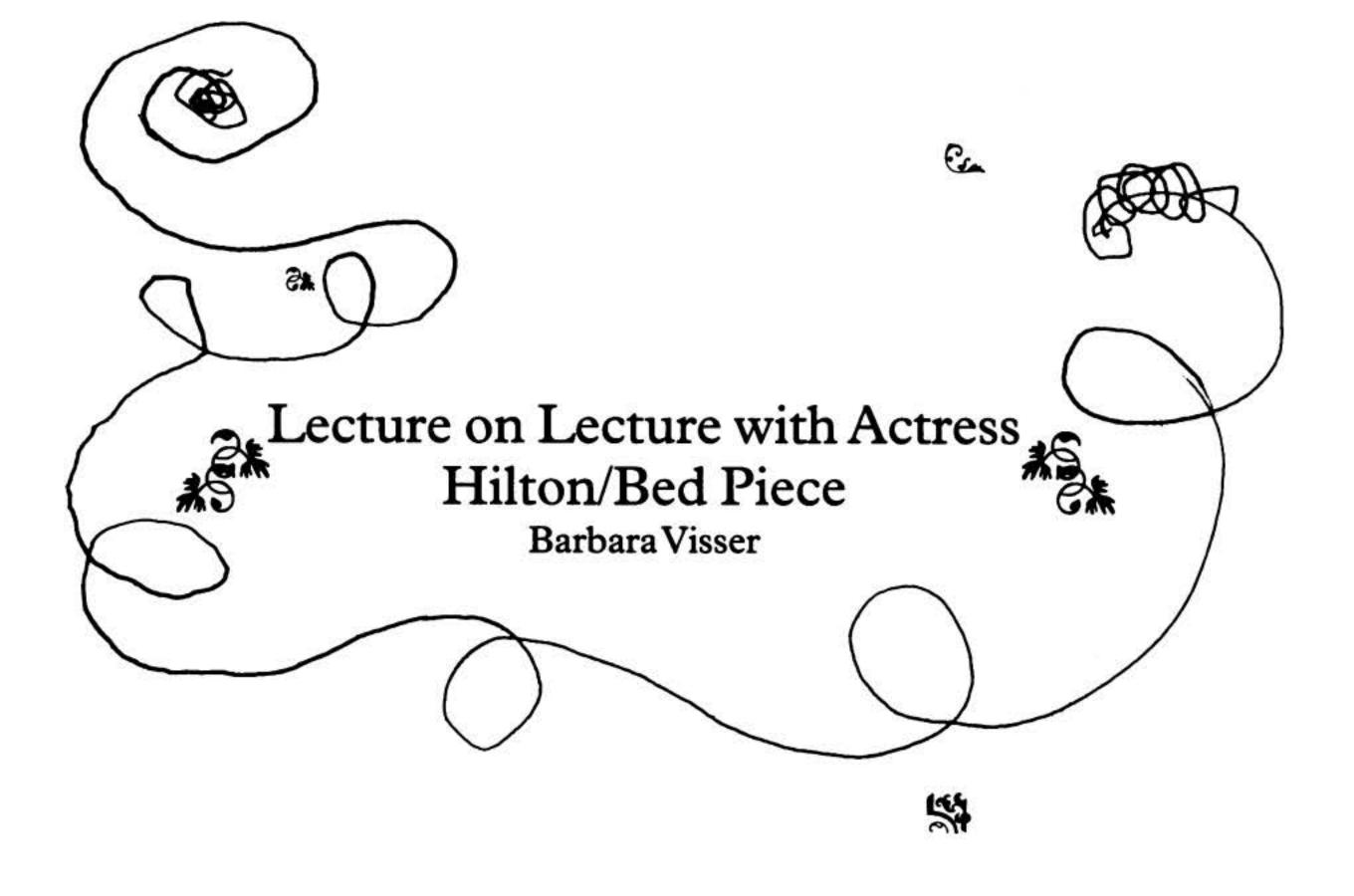
lan Hamilton Finlas "Resolutionary Pursuits" Fondation Cartier 198



obert Longo, Untiled (Engagement), from the series Seeing the Elephant, 2002. Iris print, 24.1 x 67.3 cm.

99 ANDRÉ BROUILLET, CHARCOT LECTURING AT THE SALPÊTRIÈRE





Lecture on Lecture with Actress (2004) by Barbara Visser is a return to an earlier work, in which an actress gave an artist's talk as Barbara Visser, while Visser told her what to say through an earpiece. The video Lecture on Lecture with Actress shows a different actress giving a lecture, again as Barbara Visser, on the first performance, illustrating her talk with video footage. Self (re)presentation becomes entangled in conceptual strategies that result in carefully choreographed confusion. The second video, Hilton/Bed Piece, is a short version of Visser's Hilton Piece (1994), a performance recorded at the John Lennon and Yoko Ono honeymoon suite at the Amsterdam Hilton, and broadcast on the hotel's cable TV system during an art event. The suite itself is a recreation of the 1969 Bed-In held by John Lennon and Yoko Ono at the hotel during their honeymoon trip. Given Yoko Ono's background in Fluxus, the Bed-In could be seen as a mass media version of a Fluxus event or a happening; the androgynous Asian person lying on the bed in the video - whose looks vaguely recall that of the later Yoko Ono - could be seen as engaging in nostalgic meditation of a historical moment that, for the moment, seems beyond reenactment.



Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



uestion nce here?

Digitized by

Original from

## 34 EXCITATION OF FACIAL MUSCLES DURING HYPNOTIC LETHARGY.





Fig. 1





Fig. 3



Fig. 4













Barbara Visser, Lecture with Actress, 1997. Performance (photo: Erik Weeda).











Sarbara Visser, Lecture on Lecture with Actress, 2004. DVD, 18.06 min. loop (production stills: Erik Weeda)

Courtesy Annet Gelink Galery, Amsterdam.

Digitized by Courtesy Annet Gelink Galery, Amsterdam.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

95 DOORS OF THE 21ST CENTURY. DOORS MEMBERS ROBBY KRIEGER AND







Barbara Visser, Hilton/Bed Piece, 1994. Video transferred to DVD, 7.30 min. loop (production stills).

Courtesy Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam.

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN 207



ACE.

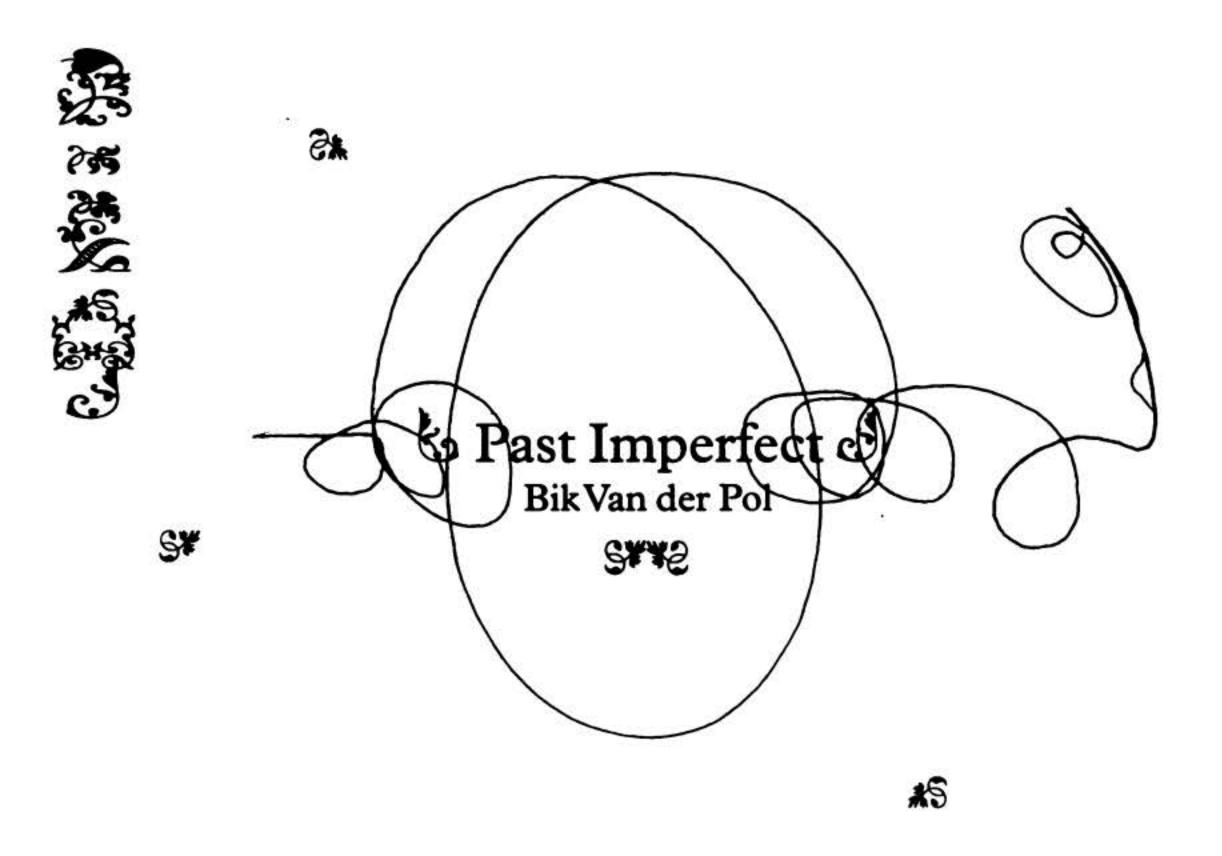
BED PEACE.

Google

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

36 MIKE KELLEY AND PAUL MCCARTHY, FRESH ACCONCI PORTFOLIO,





Bik Van der Pol (Liesbeth Bik and Jos van der Pol) stage a reenactment of passivity, of withdrawal from the world; a reenactment of disappearance. The installation is part of their project Past Imperfect, which centers on people - mainly artists, such as Lee Lozano or Bas Jan Ader - who in some way or another dropped out or disappeared altogether. In this installation, the central but absent character is Howard Hughes, the legendary aviator and film producer. Martin Scorsese's new film about Howard Hughes's life, The Aviator (with Leonardo Di Caprio as Hughes) concentrates on his active early life and conquests, but in doing so searches for presages of his contrasting later years, blighted by compulsion and reclusion. When he had a breakdown at the Beverly Hills hotel in 1944, Hughes sat in a white leather Eames chair, naked because he was afraid of germs that might nest in clothes, watching movies. This set the scene for his life from the 1960s onwards, when he would stay in darkened suites on the top floors of hotels (which he sometimes bought in order to prevent eviction), watching movies, usually wearing no clothes, and paying little attention to hygiene. The man of action had become a compulsive spectator, and in Bik Van der Pol's installation any visitor is a potential Howard Hughes, watching images in a darkened room from a white chair rotating around its axis.

How To Disappear Completely

and Never be Found

Planning a disappearance, arranging for new identification, finding work, establishing credit, pseudocide (creating the impression you are dead), and more.

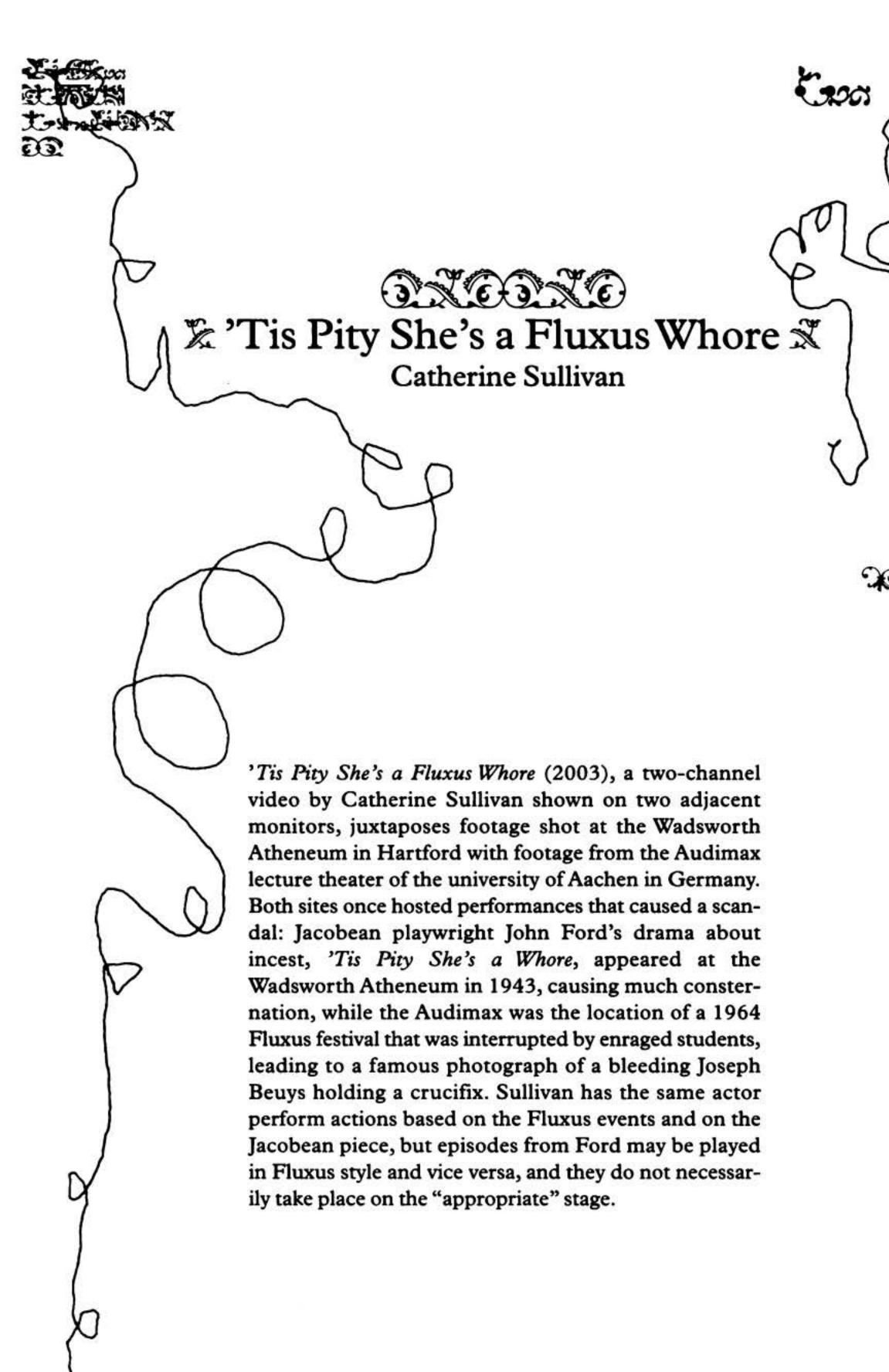
**Doug Richmond** 

Bik Van der Pol, Past Imperfect, 2005. Installation with chair on revolving platform and projections (cover of Doug Richmond, How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found, 1986/1997).









Digitized by Google

97 DAVID WILKIE WYNFIELD, THE PAINTER J. SWINDEN BARBER IN TUDOR COSTUME AND REPORT FROM SHIP. CAT. TABLEAUX VIVANTS,



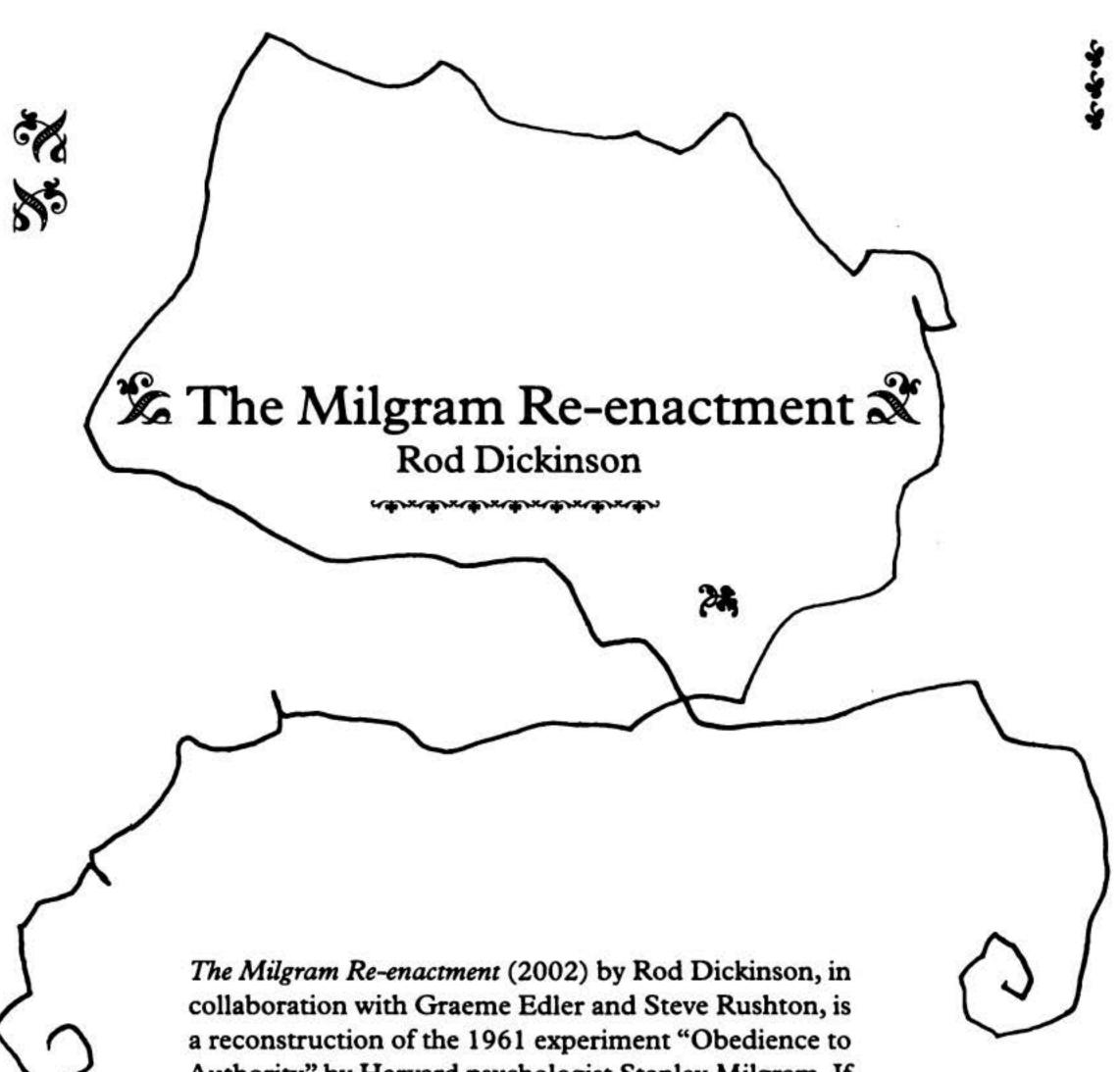


Zatherine Sullivan, 'Tis Pity She's a Fluxus Whore, 2003. Two-channel video on monitors, 25.35 min. production still). Courtesy Galerie Catherine Bastide/Galerie Christian Nagel, Berlin/Cologne.

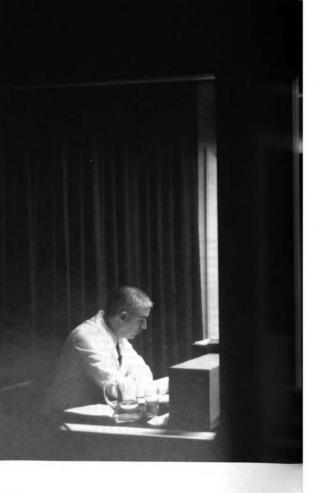
39 JEREMY DELLER, CONTRIBUTION TO ARTFORUM, SEPTEMBER 2004, P. 24).

## A photograph of Donald Rumsfeld shaking hands with Saddam Hussein

Baghdad, December 20, 1983



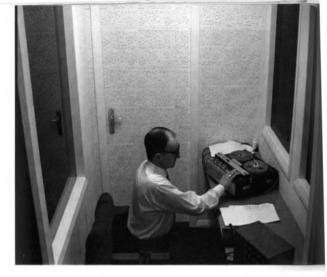
Authority" by Harvard psychologist Stanley Milgram. If most historical reenactments are based on messy military events that could only be scripted to a small degree by those who were in charge, the Milgram reenactment is based on events that were scripted to a much greater degree. Milgram staged a bizarre theater of cruelty: the tested persons were led to believe that they were assisting an experimenter in finding out if giving electric shocks to a person behind a partition every time he gave a wrong answer to a question would increase the percentage of correct answers. However, instead of "assisting" the experimenter, they were in fact the guinea pigs: the aim of the experiment was to see if they would obey the authority figure who told them to continue administering shocks even if the person who was supposedly behind the partition screamed and seemed in great pain. As Dickinson and Rushton argue, this was in a sense a World War II reenactment, inspired by the Eichmann Trial and Hannah Arendt. Reenacting this reenactment in a reconstructed set of the laboratory (in this show, the video of the live reenactments is shown, coupled with a series of photographs) turns it into completely scripted theater: actors now portray the original test persons, following the transcript of the original experiment.

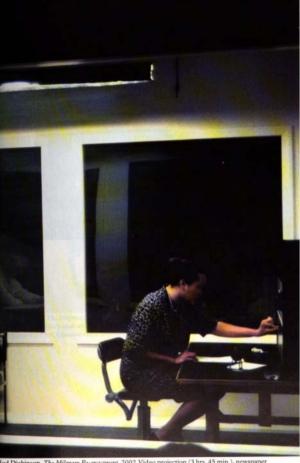




Rod Dickinson, The Milgram Re-enacment, 2002. Video projection (3 hrs. 45 min.), newspaper lipping and 19 black-and-white photographs (17.6 x 12.6 cm each) of performance at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow (view of performance).

W111



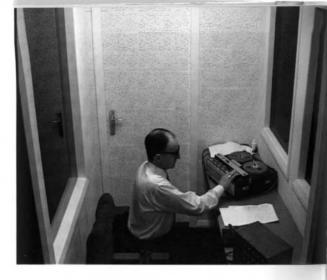


Rod Dickinson, The Milgram Re-enactment, 2002. Video projection (3 hrs. 45 min.), newspaper clipping and 19 black-and-white photographs (17.6 x 12.6 cm each) of performance at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow (view of performance).





Rod Dickinson, *The Milgram Re-enactment*, 2002. Video projection (3 hrs. 45 min.), newspaper clipping and 19 black-and-white photographs (17.6 x 12.6 cm each) of performance at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow (view of performance).

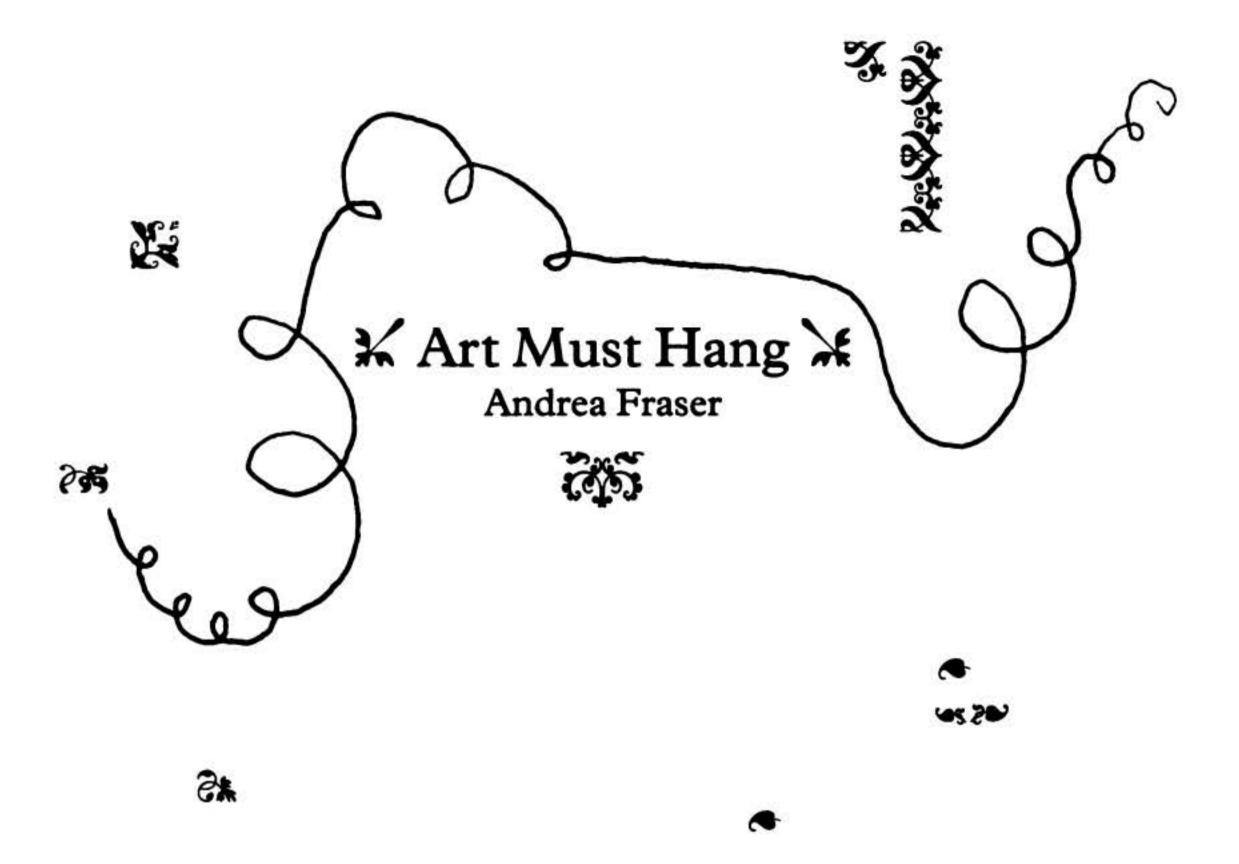




Rod Dickinson, *The Milgram Re-enactment*, 2002. Video projection (3 hrs. 45 min.), newspaper clipping and 19 black-and-white photographs (17.6 x 12.6 cm each) of performance at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Glasgow (view of performance).

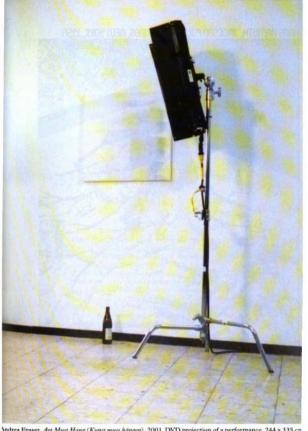
40 ROD DICKINSON, RECONSTRUCTION – JIM JONES SIGN: CIRCA 1978, JONESTOWN, GUYANA, THE JONESTOWN RE-ENACTMENT, 2002. DETAIL FROM THE INSTALLATION AT THE CENTRE FOR

THOSE WHO DO NOT REMEMBER THE PAST ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT.



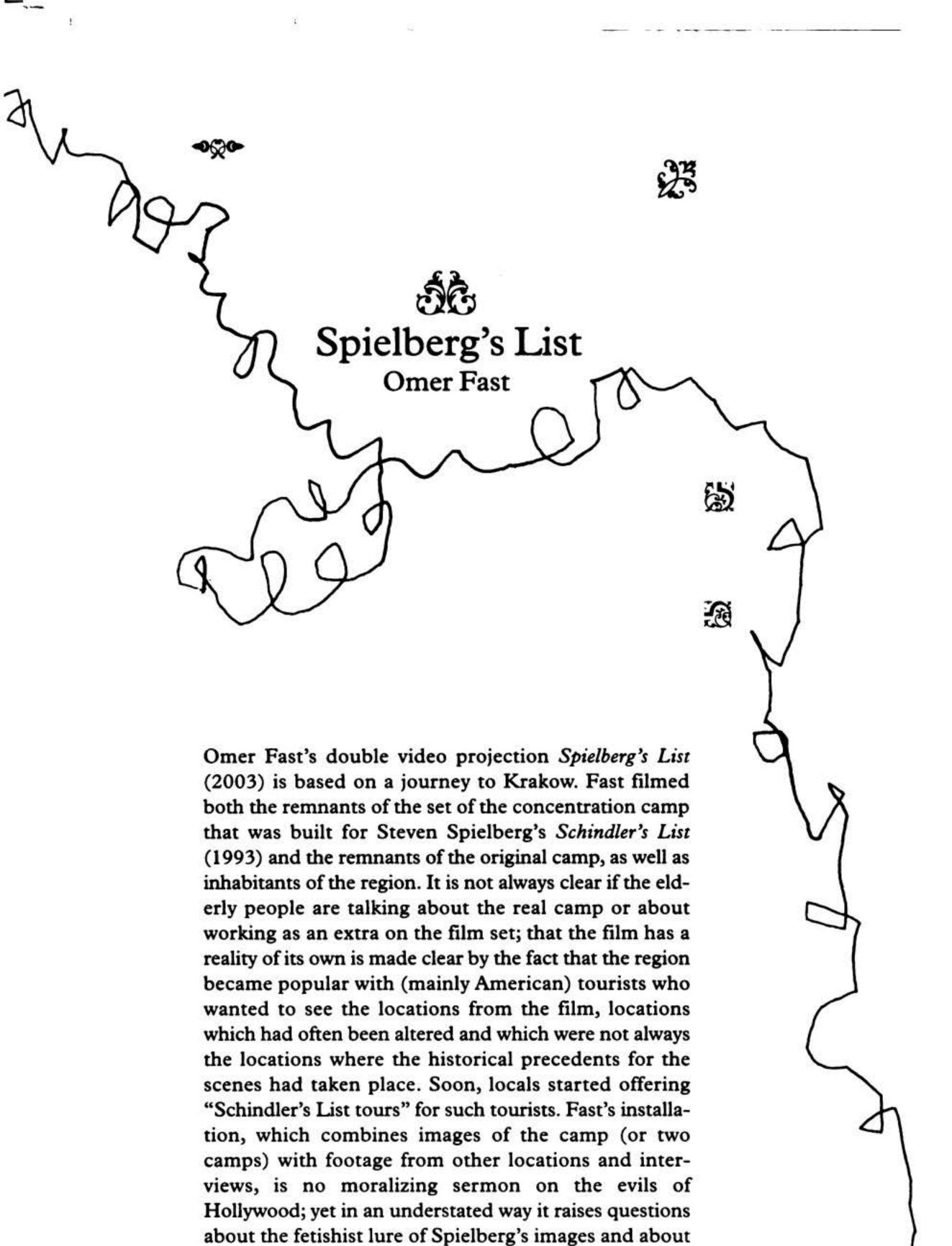
In Art Must Hang (Kunst muss hängen) from 2001 Andrea Fraser performs a drunken speech Martin Kippenberger once gave at an opening. Using a recording of this event Fraser, who does not speak German, learned Kippenberger's ramblings by heart. In some of her performances, Fraser collated fragments from a number of textual sources, resulting in a permanent slippage of meaning and uncertain authorship; monolithic discourses are fragmented and integrated in montages that make their rhetorical sleight of hand explicit, with often hilarious results. In Kippenberger's case, the German artist already performed a bizarre textual amalgam - the elements of which are often outrageous - that Fraser can appropriate wholesale. Her reenactment can be seen both as a critique of the deceased artist and as a radicalization of an impulse inherent in Kippenberger's own work and self-performance. As Fraser has stated: "It may be that misogyny, homophobia, and xenophobia were attributes of a certain position of the German art world that Kippenberger consciously took up and performed. It may also be that he was, in fact, misogynistic, homophobic, and xenophobic on some level. Maybe he knew that and maybe some of the self-loathing in his work sprang from such recognition. But rather than simply disavow such attitudes, he performed them in extraordinary acts of self-objectification that were at once comic, violent, pathetic, and grotesque."





Andrea Fraser, Art Must Hang (Kunst muss hängen), 2001. DVD projection of a performance, 244 x 335 cn 10 min, and a painting, Jetzt kommt ein Künstlerwist, 2001, oil and graphite on canvas, 65 x 65 cm view of performance). Courtesy Galeric Christian Nagel, Berlin/Cologne.



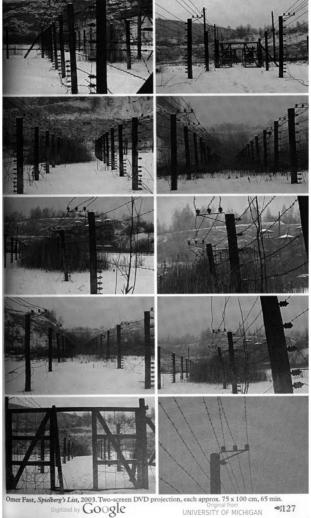


the heroic, redeeming story that has been extracted from

the Holocaust.



Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN Digitized by Google



49 STILL FROM: STANLEY KUBRICK, BARRY LYNDON, 1975. COPYRIGHT HIGR BROS





Picture taken by an extra on the set of Schindler's List, 1993.



Pictures taken by extras on the set of Schindler's List, 1993.

44 ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER VISITING AMERICAN TROOPS IN BOSNIA, FEBRUARY 2002. FROM: WWW.USO.ORG/PUBS/UPLOADS/USO ARNOLD 23.JPG





















Omer Fast, Spielberg's List, 2003. Two-screen DVD projection, each approx. 75 x 100 cm, 65 min.≠

# 45 COVER OF OCTOBER NO. 1, SPRING 1976.

Att | Theory | Crincum | Politics

# **OCTOBER**

1

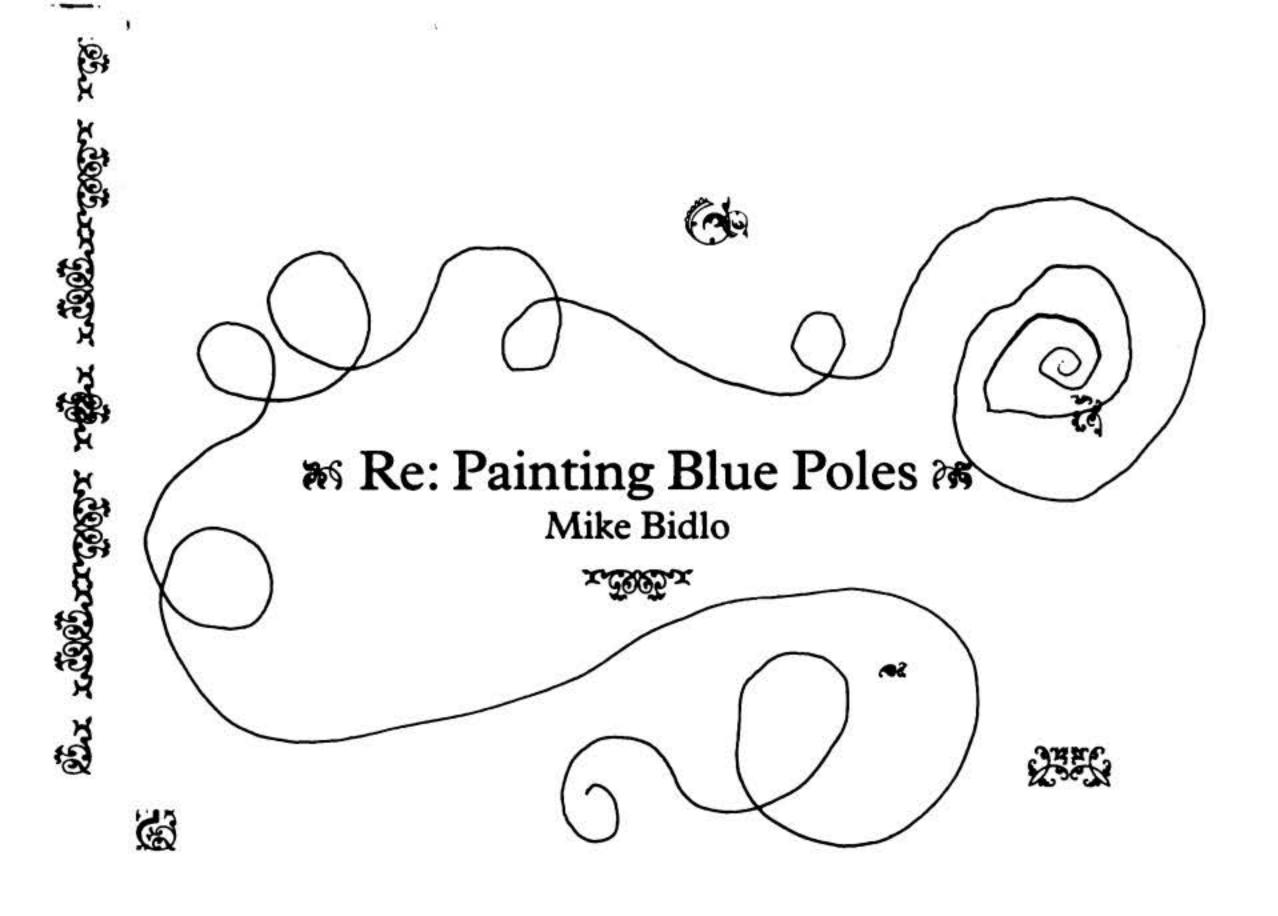
Michel Foucauls Richard Foreman Notil Burth

Richard Howard Resaland Kraus Jerems Colbert-Rolfe and John Johnson Jean-Claude Lebensonyo Hollo Frampton "Cecs n'est pas une pape"
The Carrot and the Stick
To the Distant Observer
Towards a Theory of Japanese Film
The Gioni on Giant-Killing
Videa: The Aesthetics of Narcussian

Granty's Rainbow and the Speed Jeth Star Notes on Compoung in Fibra

Spring 1976

-



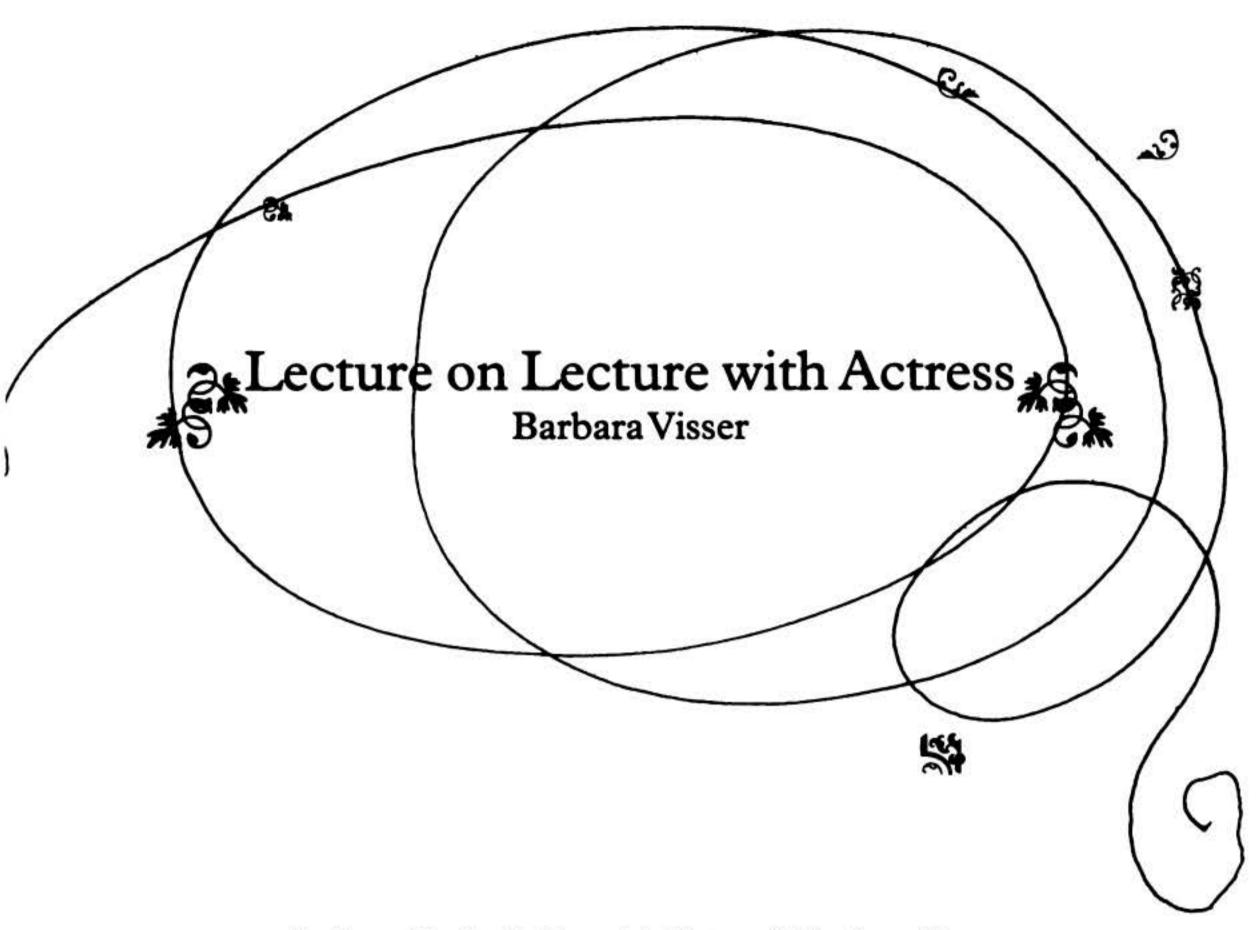
Mike Bidlo did several Pollock-related works in the early 1980s, including a remake of Hans Namuth's Pollock film. While much appropriation art of the period focused on presenting appropriated pictures on gallery walls or in publications, Bidlo put an emphasis on the act of (re)making, and consequentially on the artist and the making of art as a spectacle. Re: Painting Blue Poles (1982–2004) consists of stills from a film that shows Bidlo painting a new version of Pollock's Blue Poles on the steps of the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The event became a media happening recorded by TV; when it was finished, bystanders could take portions of the painting – which was divided up into squares – home with them.



iike Bidlo, Re: Painting Blue Poles, 1982-2004. Video stills transferred to DVD, 5 min.



ike Bidlo, Re: Painting Blue Poles, 1982-2004. Video stills transferred to DVD, 5 min.



Performed by Saskia Temmink (Actress II) for the exhibition Funky Lessons at BüroFriedrich in Berlin, 2004. The live lecture is accompanied by video footage of Lecture with Actress (1997), in which Jolien Wanninkhof (Actress I) played Barbara Visser at a symposium on "reality as fiction." The original event was in Dutch; the video has English subtitles. Like Actress I, Actress II receives her lines live through an earpiece, but unlike her predecessor she has been allowed a glimpse of the text beforehand.

#### **ACTRESS II**

Good evening. My name is Barbara Visser. Lecture with Actress takes place in Amsterdam, April 1997. The location is a small cultural center called The Bathtub.

In the video, you can't see me, but I am sitting behind this curtain on a wooden box, and I will remain sitting there for three-and-a-half hours. It's almost blacked out, and it's hot too. I sit there bent over in a corner, whispering words into a microphone.

I'm getting warmer and warmer in there. Is it because I am nervous? I'm in the course of an experiment that I have initiated myself, but I have lost track of my idea. Sitting in the dark, whispering, and starting to regret what I'm doing, I wonder why I put myself in this position.

A small group of philosophers and art-historians have organized this forum, with an ambitious theme: Reality as Fiction in Art and Media. Reality as fiction?

I am wondering what kind of people will come to a forum on this topic, and what they will say. What does a subject like that suggest to people? To ask what a real experience is, is asking for trouble, or for the truth.

Once the evening is underway, the moderator takes the plunge . . .

#### MODERATOR

(on screen)

What is a real experience?

# WOMAN IN AUDIENCE I

(on screen)

Is that supposed to be a contradiction?

#### MODERATOR

(on screen)

You don't see a contradiction there?

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE I

(on screen)

No, not at all.

#### MODERATOR

(on screen)

You mean, everything you experience is real?

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE I

(on screen)

When I walk outside, isn't that a wonderful experience? Being in the fresh air ... that's a real experience.

### MAN IN AUDIENCE I

(on screen)

But the cars, the fumes.

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE I

(on screen)

No, no, the street is being repaved, so there is none of that.

#### MODERATOR

(on screen)

So there is no difference in your view between the real and the fictional?

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE I

(on screen)

Not when it concerns experiences.

#### **ACTRESS II**

Against my will, I have been pigeonholed in the art world as the queen of ake documentary, and this is why they've invited me to give a lecture on my work. I accepted the invitation on two conditions: I wanted to hide behind a black curtain and I did not want to get personally involved in a reality-as-fiction debate.

The moderator introduces me. He urges people to raise their hands if they lose their grip on tonight's theme.

#### MODERATOR

(on screen)

I would like to give Barbara the opportunity to show her work now.

#### **ACTRESS I**

(on screen)

Thank you. Good evening. As you have been told my name is Barbara Visser. I was invited here tonight to show my work. From preliminary conversations with the initiators of this evening ... about my work ... we have decided on a theme ... reality as fiction ...

#### **ACTRESS II**

As I am sweating my words into a microphone, sitting on a box in a dark hole in a cultural center called The Bathtub. My words work their way through the space into the left ear of a tall, blonde woman. Her name is Jolien, and I first met her the day before. Jolien doesn't know anything about my work, but has agreed to be Barbara Visser for a night, and to repeat whatever I whisper into her ear.

#### ACTRESS I

(on screen)

I find myself in the convenient position where I can now . . . start a videotape . . . while the other members of the forum . . . mentally prepare . . . for the philosophical knot . . . they will find themselves in, later on.

# **ACTRESS II**

No one seems to notice the fact that the blonde woman is an empty shell, repeating the words she receives through a small device in her left ear.

To produce these words is difficult for both of us: I speak, she listens, she repeats, I think, I speak, she waits, I listen, we're both silent, we speak.

The long silences between her words seem to be accepted by the audience. Her behavior is peculiar; retarded is the word for it.



I urge Jolien to show some work on video. She introduces a clip from my guest appearance in a Lithuanian soap series. There, everyone will see the real me featuring in the trailer, and may notice the difference. This will be the test.

(The monitor shows excerpts from Visser's work "Gimines".)

#### **ACTRESS II**

There is scarcely any resemblance between the tall blonde woman on the stage and me, appearing in the video, but the audience sees what they expect to see. They say to each other, "My, hasn't she changed in two years!"What we see always depends on what we are looking for. Then, at last, there is a question from a woman in the audience . . .

# WOMAN IN AUDIENCE II

(on screen)

I was wondering, what image did you have of your presence here? Did you rehearse it with an actor, and did you decide in advance what form the evening would take?

#### **ACTRESS I**

(on screen)

It resembles my role in the Lithuanian soap, where I had to think about how to play myself, and about what an artist looks like.

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE II

(on screen)

Will this be aired on Lithuanian TV?

#### MODERATOR

(on screen)

Please continue. Why this question?

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE II

(on screen)

I was afraid I would ask a rude question.

#### **ACTRESS I**

(on screen)

Please do!

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE II

(on screen)

Of course she has the liberty to do whatever she likes, but it would be more exciting if she extended her role as an artist. That is the essence of her work, after all.

#### ACTRESS I

(on screen)

Do I appear natural to you?

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE II

(on screen)

I don't know you, but your behavior appears to be rather stilted.

Digitized by Google

Original from

#### ACTRESS I

(on screen)

I would prefer to be in the audience instead of on stage.

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE II

(on screen)

That's a different matter.

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE III

(on screen)

All behavior is coded, even being a parent. In Japan some artists wear a French beret. That's a code too.

#### **ACTRESS I**

Against my will I have been drawn into a "reality as fiction" debate. I am somewhat encouraged by seeing how easily the audience complies with the situation as presented, but at the same time this is becoming a problem. They seem to enjoy circling around the topic, taking it in a variety of directions.

#### **MODERATOR**

(on screen)

You were talking about a real experience. What do we mean by that?

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE III

(on screen)

An orgasm for example. No one doubts that.

#### WOMAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

In the movie Fatal Attraction there's a really scary scene, where the murderess creeps up behind the main character in the bathroom. This has become a reality for me. When I am staying on a camping site, I'm scared to go to the toilet. It really bothered me, this scene.

#### MODERATOR

(on screen)

May I ask why you are all laughing, at the back there?

# MAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

Hearing all these comments you start wondering what is true and what's made up. If you keep asking the same question, it makes our presence here seem a bit weird.

#### **MODERATOR**

(on screen)

And does it matter?

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

No, but you start to listen in a completely different way. Asking the same question all the time, the whole thing becomes kind of unreal, like a play.



#### **ACTRESS II**

The moderator is really starting to enjoy the evening, but behind my black curtain, I hope this will all be over soon. Even though we have determined that we are all actors in the same play, I don't suppose the audience will realize what they're really looking at. Nor do my fellow experts at the table: apart from the moderator, none of them knows that Jolien is a friendly remote-controlled doll. Someone asks for my opinion about reality.

#### **MODERATOR**

(on screen)

I would like Barbara to reply.

#### **ACTRESS I**

(on screen)

I can say two things about it: everything is fiction, and everything is reality. Now we can all go to the bar and have a drink. But I agree with René, that they're intertwined. Maybe the aim of the artist is to approach reality as closely as possible.

#### **ACTRESS II**

Now that Jolien has the undivided attention of the forum, some action is called for. But I can't whisper any instructions in her ear, because all she will do is repeat them. So I let her ramble on about why producing works of art can make tonight's main question comprehensible, and I make her lie about the power of television.

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

Aren't you quite confused, in your emotions?

**ACTRESS I** 

(on screen)

Confused?

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

Yes, confused. Everything is emotion in the end. The thoughts and products of the artist have become more and more abstract, and this has added to his problems, for this is a very complicated area to go into. And for the artist, or anyone of some intelligence, who tries, let's say, to make a difference.

#### **ACTRESS I**

(on screen)

Are you suggesting it used to be less complicated?

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

Yes, because these emotions used to be defined more clearly. It has to do with industrialization: everything has become very cerebral. You see it in industry and in computers. It's also evident in art, for example in your own work. And one also notices your bewilderment in your work. I sense a very strong confusion.



#### ACTRESS I

(on screen)

nd what does this confusion consist of?

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

hat you perceive fiction and reality as a chaos, and you can't clearly istinguish them.

#### **ACTRESS I**

(on screen)

don't get it.

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

If course you don't get it. Because you're in the middle of it.

# **ACTRESS I**

(on screen)

Ind how!

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

That's not so bad, is it?

# **ACTRESS I**

(on screen)

Vot at all.

#### MAN IN AUDIENCE IV

(on screen)

We're all in the middle of it, we just don't like to admit it.

# **ACTRESS II**

We're all in the middle of it, we just don't like to admit it. I'm practically dying behind the black curtain, and from my hiding place I notice the members of the forum. They seem to have plenty of ideas about reality as fiction. The question is: what can I do to wake up the audience? Should I just leave them thinking that Barbara Visser is a slightly retarded, big blonde woman, playing an artist? If the aim of the artist is to approach reality as closely as possible, what am I doing here, sweating in the dark? Now the moderator wants to pull the rabbit from the hat.

#### MODERATOR

(on screen)

Barbara, is there anything we can say about the great mystery of tonight, or do we leave it at this?

#### ACTRESS I

(on screen)

I think everyone is a big expert on fiction, but hardly anyone knows anything about reality and it's all the better like that.

She wants to finish with this.



# MODERATOR (on screen)

She?

**ACTRESS I** 

(on screen)

That's what I understand.

# **MODERATOR**

(on screen)

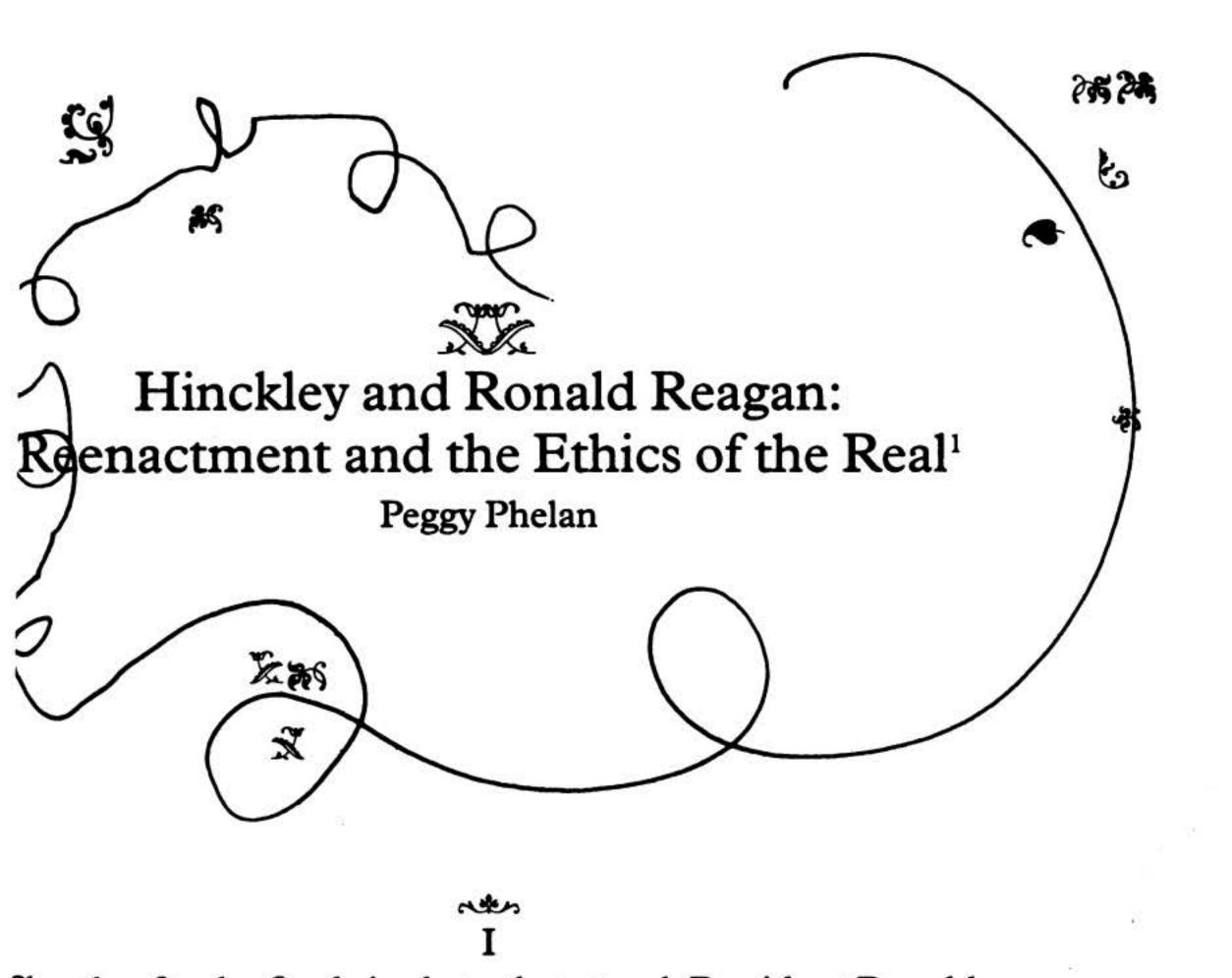
And now, will the real Barbara Visser stand up?

(Actress I, on screen, looks up, surprised. Image freezes.)

#### **ACTRESS II**

Thank you very much for your presence. Good night.

(Actress II removes the earpiece, which she puts into a hand that appears through a small door in the woodwork behind her.)



Shortly after he fired six shots that struck President Ronald Reagan and three others, John W. Hinckley, Jr. asked the Secret Service and F.B.I. agents interrogating him if his crime would pre-empt the broadcast of the 53rd Academy Awards scheduled for that evening.2 Hinckley's immediate concern on the afternoon of March 30, 1981 seemed both bizarre and thoroughly in keeping with the film-obsessed Reagan White House. Like Hinckley, the Reagan White House also had been anticipating the Academy Awards disabled. in March 1981. Eager to exploit the new president's old Hollywood connections and intoxicated by the size of the international television audience, Reagan's staff had arranged for the president to pre-record a welcome to the broadcast. Shot on 5 March, Reagan's filmed address complimented the Academy for their good judgment in selecting that year's theme: Movies Are Forever. Characteristically, he salutes the audience with a joke: "Film is forever – I've been trapped in some film forever myself." The joke perhaps is less funny as time goes on and the consequences of such trapping proliferate. For Reagan, as he explained to the audience that night, "It is the motion picture that shows us not only how we look and sound but - more important how we feel." Sutured into a delayed broadcast, complete Original from

Digitized by Google

1 This is an excerpt from a much longer chapter in my forthcoming book, Death and Performance: Andy Warhol and Ronald Reagan.

2 In addition to shooting
Reagan, Hinckley shot Reagan's
press secretary, James Brady;
Washington, D.C. police officer
Thomas Dehanty; and secret
service agent Tim McCarthy.
All three survived, but Brady's
brain injury has left him
disabled.

**◆147** 

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

YE IAN HAMILTON FINLAY, REVOLUTIONARY PURSUITS, PART OF A SERIES OF INLAYS IN EXHIB. CAT. POURSUITES RÉVOLUTIONNAIRES,

You cannot step into the same Revolution twice.

Lin Hamilton Finlay "Revolutionary Pursuits" Fundation Cartier 198

ith jokes from Johnny Carson (including this one about eagan's call to decrease funding for the arts: "Reagan's rongest attack on the arts since he signed with Warner rothers"), Reagan addresses the audience from the Oval office, as if he were addressing the world about a matter of ate. While invoking the architectural and symbolic force of ne White House, Reagan nonetheless concludes his address y citing his former career as an actor, "As a former member f the Academy, I ask you now to join Nancy and me in njoying this year's ceremonies." The decision to address the cademy Awards was the consequence of a political calculaon, but it had the perhaps unintended side-effect of lendng the film industry a kind of seriousness it had previously icked. This elevation of film was somewhat ironic because he following year John Hinckley's lawyers argued that he ad shot the president and his men because of how a Iollywood film made him feel. The late Michael Rogin has cutely described the odd confluence of the shooting and he Academy Awards in his brilliant book, Ronald Reagan, he Movie:

3 Michael Paul Rogin, Ronald Reagan, the Movie: And Other Episodes in Political Demonology (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 4.

Millions of Americans experienced the assassination attempt by vatching it over and over again on television. The power of the ilm image confirmed the shooting; it also allowed Reagan to peak to the academy the next night as if the shooting had never rappened. The television audience watching a screen saw a Hollywood audience watch another screen. One audience saw the ther applaud the image of a healthy Reagan while the real presitent lay in a hospital bed. Reagan was president because of film, hospitalized because of film, and present as an undamaged image because of film. The shooting climaxed film's ingestion of reality.3

Rogin's notion of "the real president" might strike some of us now as sweetly naive. For as film and television have continued to ingest reality with ever more avidity, we have begun to forget how fundamental a part Reagan played in the fusion of these two realms. His wife Nancy announced the difference between her husband and other politicians in the public eye when she explained: "There are not two Ronald Reagans. There is a certain cynicism in politics. You look in back of a statement for what the man really means. But it takes a while for people to realize that with Ronnie you don't have to look in back of anything." Reagan's drive to Digitized by GOOGLE

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

47 REAGAN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT SCENE, OUTSIDE THE WASHINGTON HIL TON HOTEL, MARCH 3U PICHAEL EYANS, BETTMAHA/CORBIS.

nd the inner man might have been due to a certain inward pacity, a kind of emotional and psychological blankness, ut its success surely has to do with a transformation in the elationship between the real and the representational that we are only now beginning to understand.

Using his intimacy with Hollywood film as a kind of rop for his political popularity, Reagan also lent Hollywood Im a new kind of interpretive force. His presidency helped hift the role of fictional film to a discourse of action in he real world, a shift further reinforced in Hinckley's riminal trial, although under the sign of "insanity." The trial corrowed the language and import of Reagan's message of the Academy that film shows us "how we feel," and used ilm's enormous affective power as a way to discuss how Hinckley felt.

From the very beginning of Hinckley's trial, his lawyers pressed the judge to allow them to project the Hollywood ilm, Taxi Driver in the courtroom. Part of their argument was that Hinckley's identification with Robert De Niro, the protagonist of Martin Scorsese's 1976 film, was so complete ne was essentially reenacting a scene from that film when he shot Reagan, Brady, Dehanty and McCarthy. At the very end of the two-month trial, Judge Barrington Parker agreed that the film counted as relevant evidence and arranged for a screening of Taxi Driver in the courtroom. Immediately after projecting the film for the jurors, the defense rested.

ruks II

Hinckley's trial was, at the time, the most expensive defense ever conducted, with the government spending three times more than the Hinckley family. The majority of the trial transcript, which is more than 8484 pages long, concerns Hinckley's mental health. The portrait of Hinckley the defense painted was one of a man so over-run by the force of representation he could not discern fantasy from reality. In this, they essentially braided theories of postmodernism with the philosophical tradition of pragmatism, a long and strong characteristic of thinking in the US courts. After deliberating for three days, the jury returned a verdict of not guilty by reason of insanity on all thirteen crimes with which Hinckley had been charged. He was immediately committed

4 See for a full breakdown of all expenses Lincoln Caplan, The Insanity Defense and the Trial of John W. Hinckely, Jr. (Boston: David R. Godine, Publisher, 1984), pp. 59-62.

5 United States of America v. John W. Hinckley, Jr. The United States District Court for the District of Columbia. Criminal Case No. 81–306. All citations from the trial come from these transcripts.

Digitized by Google

itted 🐟 151

40 JEREMY DELLER, THE BATTLE OF ORGREAVE, 2001. COMMISSIONED AND PRODUCED BY ARTANGEL, LONDON, PHOTO: MARTIN JERKINSON



o St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington D.C. where he emains today.6

After he was arrested, in addition to inquiring about vhether or not his crime would pre-empt the Academy Awards, Hinckley told the officers that if they went to his notel room (he provided them with the address and room number), they would understand his motives for the shootng. When they arrived, the officers found a long letter Hinckley had written to Jodie Foster, the star of Taxi Driver. Hinckley wrote, in part:

Dear Jodie,

There is a definite possibility that I will be killed in my attempt o get Reagan. It is for this very reason that I am writing you his letter now.

As you well know by now I love you very much. Over the past even months I've left you dozens of poems, letters and love nessages in the faint hope that you could develop an interest in ne. Although we talked on the phone a couple of times I never had the nerve to simply approach you and introduce myself. Besides my shyness, I honestly did not wish to bother you with my constant presence....

fodie, I would abandon this idea of getting Reagan in a second if I could only win your heart and live out the rest of my life with you, whether it be in total obscurity or whatever.

I will admit to you that the reason I'm going ahead with this attempt now is because I just cannot wait any longer to impress you. I've got to do something now to make you understand, in no uncertain terms, that I am doing all of this for your sake! By sacrificing my freedom and possibly my life, I hope to change your mind about me. This letter is being written only an hour before I leave for the Hilton Hotel. Jodie, I'm asking you to please look into your heart and at least give me the chance, with this historical deed, to gain your respect and love.

I love you forever, John Hinckley

This letter framed Hinckley's actions on 30 March 1981 in relation to Foster's performance in the film Taxi Driver, which had been released five years earlier. While at first Hinckley rejected his lawyers' advice to plead not guilty by UNIVERSITY OF MIC

6 As of this writing (November 2004), Hinckley's request for unsupervised trips away from St. Elizabeths is being heard once more. This is the first time since Reagan's death that Hinckley's appeal is being heard and some think that the court might be more sympathetic to his request therefore. In these petitions, the lawyers have effectively changed sides. Whereas during the original trial, Hinckley's lawyers tried to make the case that he was insane, now a new team of lawyers argues that he has been cured and is not insane, while the government's lawyers, who had originally argued that he was sane,

now argue that he is insane.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

reason of insanity, he eventually agreed. Responding to question sent to him by Newsweek magazine shortly before the beginning of his trial, Hinckley framed the issues upon which his case would rest. Newsweek asked Hinckley is he believed "seeing movies and reading books influence the way people behave in real life?" Hinckley replied: "The line dividing life and art can be invisible. After seeing enough hypnotizing movies and reading enough magical books, a fantasy life develops which can either be harmless or quite dangerous."

The attorneys Roger Adelman, Robert Chapman, and Marc Tucker handled the government's case, while the defendant was represented by counsel from Williams & Connolly, one of the most successful law firms in Washington, D.C. The summation of the case by Vincent Fuller, the lead lawyer for the defense, has been widely heralded as a "classic of the courtroom," because in addition to reviewing the facts of the case, Fuller's summation employed a map on which he retraced, if not quite reenacted, Hinckley's peripatetic wanderings across the US in the months before the shootings.8 Seeing Hinckley's travels on the map influenced the jurors. One of them, Glynis Lassiter, a janitor, argued, "Nobody, no matter how much money he has, would spend it like that. He pays a jet fare and stays a day. I can't see that." But school cafeteria worker Maryland Copelin said, "Anytime you can buy airplane tickets and go anywhere you want and get the money to do it, you're sane." While one might expect that a trial about sanity would provoke differing ideas about what constitutes rational behavior, this debate, more surprisingly, was often subordinate to a larger argument about healthy and unhealthy responses to representation.

The defense contended that Hinckley was operating under a delusion prompted by his unhealthy identification with Travis Bickle, the protagonist of *Taxi Driver*, played by Robert De Niro. Hinckley, Fuller contended, "lives in a world where the only reality is that which he makes for himself . . . When he was alone in Hollywood, he saw the movie *Taxi Driver* and he made identification, sympathized with Travis Bickle. [There's] a photograph in evidence . . . which shows a very, very distressing picture of the defendant with a gun to his head. Much in the likeness of the character Travis Bickle from *Taxi Driver*." Claiming that Hinckley's reality

7as composed from bits and pieces of films, books, and omantic myths, the defense lawyers implicitly engaged theries of postmodernism and performance in their argument. 'ostmodernism, according to Fredric Jameson, goes beyond uotation or citation and creates a kind of endless series of ppropriations and borrowings that lend subjectivity an air f endless reenactment and texts a kind of endless series of eferences and allusions: "this whole 'degraded' landscape of chlock and kitsch, of TV series and Reader's Digest culure, of advertising and motels, of the The Late Show and the rade-B Hollywood film, of so called paraliterature with its irport paperback categories of the gothic and the romance, he popular biography, the murder mystery, and scienceiction or fantasy novel: materials they [postmodern artists] to longer simply 'quote' as a Joyce or a Mahler might have lone, but incorporate into their very substance." I Jameson's ist describes some of the reading found among Hinckley's ossession after the shooting: Gerold Frank's The Boston Strangler; Arthur Bremer's An Assassin's Diary; Max Lerner's Ted and the Kennedy Legend; Joan Baez's autobiography, Daybreak; a newspaper clipping about Elvis Presley's death; Doug and Bill Wead's Reagan in Pursuit of the Presidency: 980; and a compilation of New York Times articles entitled Reagan: The Man, The President.

1

Reagan himself was no stranger to kitsch or popular rulture: he read the Reader's Digest avidly; he was both a star and a fan of B-movies and television series and he had a long and deep passion for sci-fi movies. Moreover, his interpretaion of what occurred during the shooting and immediately fter was thoroughly informed by cinema and quotation. Reagan initially believed that his secret service agent, Jerry Parr, had broken his rib when he tackled him and got him nto the presidential limousine. When he was wheeled into he emergency room, he tried all the jokes and quotes he ould remember. Citing the heavy weight boxer George Tunney, "Honey," he said to Nancy, "I forgot to duck." After the surgery, when the medical team asked how he was, Reagan quoted W.C. Fields, "All in all I'd rather be in Philadelphia" and Winston Churchill, "There is no more exhilarating feeling than being shot at without result." While Reagan was quoting Churchill, he himself was being widely quoted in newspapers and television coverage. Thus, the shooting inaugurated a series of edits that called on UNIVERSITY OF MI

7 "Answers from John Hinckley," Newsweek, 12 October 1981. Hinckley's language here imitates that of the forensic psychiatrists who had been interviewing him steadily for some five months. And it should be noted that Hinckley contacted both Time and Newsweek and offered to answer twenty questions. He promised each magazine that they would have an exclusive scoop and then he answered both questionnaires. See my longer paper for a fuller discussion.

- 8 James W. McElhaney, "Foreword" to Fuller's summation in Classics of the Courtroom, vol. XII (Minnetonka, Minnesota: Professional Education Group, 1988), iii.
- 9 Quoted in Denise Noe's summary of the case on the web at http://www.crimelibrary.com.
- 10 Fredric Jameson, "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," New Left Review (July-August 1984): 55.

**◆155** 

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

### 49 WEB SITE OF THE AMERICAN WW II REENACTORS UNIT, GROSSDEUTSCHLAND, WWW.GROSSDEUTSCHLAND.COM

### Grossdeutschland!

The Official Website of 7./ Kompanie Grossdeutschland



#### 7./Rompanie Groodbentochland-H221

Ou Group portray is Kompative of German Amry's little Place\*
Oursider Division Christian Cristian (1981), it is through the feeling visibilities at Living National Resident Control of the Care of the Control of the Control of the Care of the Care

### rlawren3@optonline.net

Grossdeutschland PO Box 12

- Acrosal Beurson
- \* Equipment
- Events Cales
- \* Links
- Newsletter. Action
- Nonprofit.Attiliatio
- Single Activities
- Period Photo Assisse
- · Prospective.Members
- Recommended Reading
- Decrecipent Photo
- Unit Brochers.
- · Unit. Hatory.

to question the relationship between original action and eenactment, and between fantasy and reality, for both linckley and Reagan.

. - ---

The bullet that hit Reagan first struck the rear of he limousine, grazed the bumper, then ricocheted off the teel and entered Reagan's body just below the left armpit. ly being displaced in its trajectory, the bullet sliced through leagan's skin, made a large hole in the lung cavity before esting at the bottom of his lung's left lobe. After the urgeons' removed the bullet, Reagan was attached to a venilator and was unable to speak so he took up a pen and vrote.11 One of his hospital notes reads, "Can we rewrite this cene beginning at the time I left the hotel?" Can we, that is, e-edit the film and cut out the part that did not work? Reagan's reality was, in a very literal way, composed of film and the logic of film-making. Near death, Reagan's response s to call for a do-over, a re-shooting of the scene in which he was shot. While on one level this request is funny, on another t reflects Reagan's propensity to believe, as Hinckley also lid, that it is only through and in film that reality can be altered. Crucial to such alteration is the capacity for reenactment.

By his own report, Hinckley saw the film Taxi Driver for the first time in 1976 and watched it fifteen times thereafter. If the reality-effects of representation inspire actions, particularly violent actions, "outside" the border of that frame, then such actions make that frame extraordinarily porous. Thus this "outside" remains representation's supplement; it functions as both source for representation and the arena in which to reenact the reality-effects wrought by it. Some theories of postmodernism have been insufficiently alert to the feedback system at work between representation and the real; each reflects, inspires, and copies the other. Hinckley's trial was about the consequences of merging reality and representation, not in order to demonstrate their seamlessness as postmodern theory often suggests, but rather as an illustration of the robust desire to use representation as a way to transform reality. In this, Hinckley is a kind of negative shadow of Reagan's more successful manipulation of the same logic. For Reagan, the line between film and reality was also unclear: "Maybe I had seen too many war movies, the heroics of which I sometimes confused with real life."12

11 For a fuller discussion of Reagan's notes see Peggy Phelan, "Performance and Death: Ronald Reagan,"

Cultural Values 3, no. 1 (January 1999): 100–122. A Dutch translation appeared in De Witte Raaf, no. 100 (November–December 2002): 9–12.

12 Quoted in Lou Cannon, President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime (New York: Public Affairs, 2000), p. 40. 50 ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER VISITING AMERICAN TROOPS IN BOSNIA, FEBRUARY 2002. FROM: WWW.USO.ORG/PUBS/UPLOADS/USO ARNOLD 23.JPG

A cynical observer might contend that Reagan's confusion about the line between representation and reality was as great as Hinckley's but by virtue of being president, Reagan and the power to conform external reality to his inner fancasy, while Hinckley suffered from his inability to influence external reality in the way he most wanted. In this sense, strange as it might seem, shooting Reagan and his men night have had a curative effect on Hinckley because it gave him, however briefly and however tragically, a small measure of power over external events.

All III

The prosecution conceded that Hinckley had what they called a "personality disorder," but argued that this disorder was not serious enough to interfere with his ability to appreciate the criminality of his behavior and conform his behavior to the law. While the government wanted to focus on the events of March 30th, the defense wanted to put Hinckley's actions that day into a larger narrative of mental deterioration. In order to do this, the defense introduced extensive examples of Hinckley's writing and reading in order to create a psychological portrait of his life as an artistobserver. But the government prosecutors countered that art is always a mode of fiction and that any attempt to read art as evidence of anything other than an aesthetic sensibility is futile.13 The defense argued that the putative line between sanity and insanity could best be apprehended by establishing a line between "a normal fan" and one who suffered from unbalanced delusions.

The argument about spectatorship grew out of a distinction both the government and defense psychiatrists employed between *imitative* and *rehearsal* behavior. These terms were used by psychiatrists to isolate behaviors borrowed from artistic or other representational sources to inspire similar behavior in the real world. In Hinckley's trial, the novels and nonfiction books he owned, which the government labeled "assassination literature," were seen as stable sources that inspired the real action of shooting of the president and his men. For the government, Hinckley's rehearsal behavior in relation to the assassination literature indicated a rational process of research and deliberation, an arena in which he planned and thought out his decision to

13 In the years since the trial, members of Reagan's party have taken the exact opposite approach to the relationship between representation and action. During the debates about funding the National Endowment for the Arts in 1989-1991, republican senators Jesse Helms (North Carolina) and Alfonse D'Amato (New York) argued that the public needs to be protected from art depicting homosexuality because of the fear that looking at such art will cause the viewer to accept homosexuality and then become a homosexual. See for a fuller discussion my essay, "Offensive Plays: Money Talks, Again," TDR: a journal of performance studies (Fall 1991): 131-141.

**€159** 

5) STILL FROM: MARTIN SCORSESE, TAXI DRIVER, 1976. COPYRIGHT: COLUMBIA

100t Reagan and his men. Thus, this evidence showed preneditation and conscious decision-making. Paul Schrader, ho wrote the screenplay for Taxi Driver, said he used rthur Bremer's An Assassin's Diary, a book in which remer recounts his decisions about shooting George Vallace, then the Governor of Alabama, on 15 May 1972, as loose source for Travis Bickle. Hinckley read Bremer's ook when he was a student at Texas Tech; he also read lobert Blair Kaiser's book about Sirhan Sirhan, RFK Must ie, and Priscilla Johnson McMillan's biography of Lee Iarvey Oswald, Marina and Lee. For the government's awyers, non-fictional sources had a different value than rtistic sources. They wanted to draw a casual line between Iinckley's decision to read non-fiction texts about killers to is decision to attempt to become a killer himself. (The hetorical slippage between "to attempt to become a killer imself" and "to attempt to kill himself" was also borne out n Hinckley's life. He tried to kill himself both before and fter he attempted to kill Reagan and his men. It is signifiant that all these attempts were failures).

The defense, on the other hand, used Hinckley's relaion to reading, writing, and screening fictional and nonictional texts to demonstrate that he inhabited a fantasy vorld that did not often meet reality. For the defense, Hinckley's behavior in relation to Taxi Driver and the assasination literature was not rehearsal behavior, but was rather mitative behavior, a more dangerous response because it nspired reenactments that took on a life of their own. Rehearsal behavior, then, refers to all the activity that could be seen as practicing and training for the crime. This ncludes buying guns, taking target practice, reading about assassinations, stalking President Carter, and surveying Blair House after Reagan's election. For the government, such rehearsal behavior indicates pre-thought; it suggests that the shooting involved deliberation, intent, logic, and planning. But the defense argued that Hinckley's rehearsal behavior accelerated and accumulated as time went on because his contact with the external world was diminishing; this led him to imitative behavior. Without a reality check against which to test the plausibility of his plans, the defense argued, Hinckley's fantasy life became his only reality. Thus, for the defense, moving from the relatively passive act of reading about assassinations, to the more active act of

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

52 HANS NAMUTH, JACKSON POLLOCK, SPRINGS, NEW YORK, 1950.



riting a letter to a movie star about shooting the president, effects deterioration in one's mental health because there is to external check to point out that writing love letters to trangers saying you will "get Reagan" is insane, and nothing o distract you from indulging such fantasies. For the government, Hinckley's behavior in response to representation lemonstrated his contact with reality – he selected certain books to help him with his plans, just as he selected certain bullets (Devastator bullets) to help him do the most damage. For the defense, however, Hinckley's behavior was mitative and demonstrated the ever-encroaching power of his fantasy life.

14 Ben Jonson, "De Vita Humana" in "Timber, or, Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter," Workes, vol. 2 (London: R. Meighen, 1640): lines 894–899.

Rehearsal behavior and imitative behavior are very difficult to distinguish from one another. Imitative behavior, such as buying a jacket that looks like Travis Bickle's, or drinking the same liquor as the character, expresses identificatory logic that is the bedrock of both capitalism and advertising's raison d'être. Imitative behavior becomes dangerous when the imitation is so complete it erodes a sense of self, and a sense of a world independent of one's own relationship to it. It also indicates a failure to discern source from copy. Writing in 1640, Ben Jonson reflected on the infectious power of imitative behavior in his De Vita Humana "I have considered that our whole life is like a Play: Wherein every man forgetfull of himselfe, is in travaile with expression of another. Nay, wee so insist in imitating others, as wee cannot (when it is necessary) returne to ourselves." 14

For Jonson, the idea that there is a self to whom one might return is axiomatic, but in the age of Reagan, such interiority is not so certain. The defense argued that Hinckley was sick because he could not find an interior self to measure his actions against. The essence of the defense case was extremely Jonsonian: Hinckley was so caught up "in the expression of another," that he was driven to shoot the president and his men because he had no self to which to return.

While Hinckley was primarily caught up in the expression of Travis Bickle, his imitative behavior also drove him to copy elements of previous assassination attempts. The biographer of Lee Henry Oswald, Priscilla Johnson McMillan, writing in the immediate wake of the verdict, details the uncanny similarities between Hinckley and Oswald: "In the months before he shot Kennedy, Oswald

53 BARBARA VISSER, ARS FUTURA, 1994. COURTESY ANNET GELINK GALLERY, AMSTERDAM.

ad two photographs taken of himself in which he held his ifle and had a pistol at his waist. Before Hinckley shot leagan, he too had two photographs taken. In one photo he eld his rifle and in the other he held the rifle and had a pisol at his waist. In the farewell note which Hinckley left for odie Foster in his hotel room, he says "Give me the chance ith this historical deed to win your respect and love." )swald, as Hinckley knew from reading Marina and Lee, alled his diary his "Historic Diary", and frequently listened o an aria from a Russian opera in which the hero, who is bout to commit a murder, sings to the young girl he loves, I would perform a heroic deed of unheard-of prowess for our sake."15 Hinckley purchased the same kind of rifle Iswald used to shoot Kennedy, and he bought the same number of guns as Travis Bickle. In addition to Oswald, Hinckley may well have been also imitating Mark Chapman, Lennon's murderer. When he shot Lennon, Chapman was carrying a copy of The Catcher in the Rye; Hinckley left his copy in his hotel room, with his letter to Foster. This letter is ust one among many letters he wrote to Foster. In another, ne told Foster that he would rescue her; a statement she recognized as a reference to a note Travis Bickle had written to her character, Iris, in the plot of Taxi Driver. The more textual evidence introduced in the trial, the more other references and sources in other texts and "historical acts" proliferated. In this sense, the length and expense of Hinckley's trial testified to the efficacy of postmodernist theories of representation, even while it tentatively outlined a new conception of the relationship between acting and fantasy.

15 Priscilla Johnson McMillan, "An Assassin's Portrait," The New Republic, 12 July 1982: 16-18; quote p. 18.

# IV

Hinckley has been confined for twenty-three years and in that time the relationship between action and fantasy has continued to dominate US politics. We are now witnessing an activist administration determined to act and to act again to bend external reality to an imperialist fantasy. This notion of the relationship between reality and action has been expressed with a dangerous clarity by the administration of George W. Bush. The journalist and political reporter, Ron Suskind, recently reported this remarkable exchange he had with one of Bush's (unnamed) aides:







16 Ron Suskind, "Without a Doubt," The New York Times

he aide said that guys like me were "in what we call the realityased community," which he defined as people who "believe that Magazine, 18 October 2004. plutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality." nodded and murmured something about enlightenment prinples and empiricism. He cut me off. "That's not the way the orld really works anymore," he continued. "We're an empire ow, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're udying that reality - judiciously, as you will - we'll act again, reating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's ow things will sort out. We're history's actors . . . and you, all of ou, will be left to just study what we do."16

At first glance, Bush's aide sounds a bit like Baudrillard naking the now familiar argument that representation cretes its own reality-effects. But while the poststructuralist nalysis reflected a certain kind of pessimism, a sort of rielding to the vast complexity of representational logic, the performance version eliminates that complexity by insisting on a direct link between action and reality: "when we act, we reate our own reality . . . we'll act again, creating new realties." Action derived from faith and will, as against empirial evidence and enlightenment principles, as the Hinckley rial showed, can be delusional. But when actions are underaken by a superpower, discussions of delusion become archaic throwbacks to "enlightenment thinking." We need a nore sophisticated theory of action and performance to begin to track the complex reality in which we are currently suffering. Such a theory would begin with an ethics of the encounter between fantasy and reality, an encounter whose import grows exponentially more important in the emerging paradigm of the society of the performer, the age that follows on from the society of the spectacle. There is most certainly a line between action and reality but it is not nearly as linear or causal as Bush's administration believes. For with each action undertaken by a superpower a re-action occurs. It is here in these reactions that ideas like "control" and "will" become subject to the enormously complex laws of reenactments.

In California, we recently witnessed Arnold Schwarzenegger's campaign to "terminate" the sitting governor, Gray Davis's, term. Extending Reagan's use of reenacting and reciting lines from his Hollywood career during his campaign, Schwarzenegger promised to be an action hero in the Digitized by Google

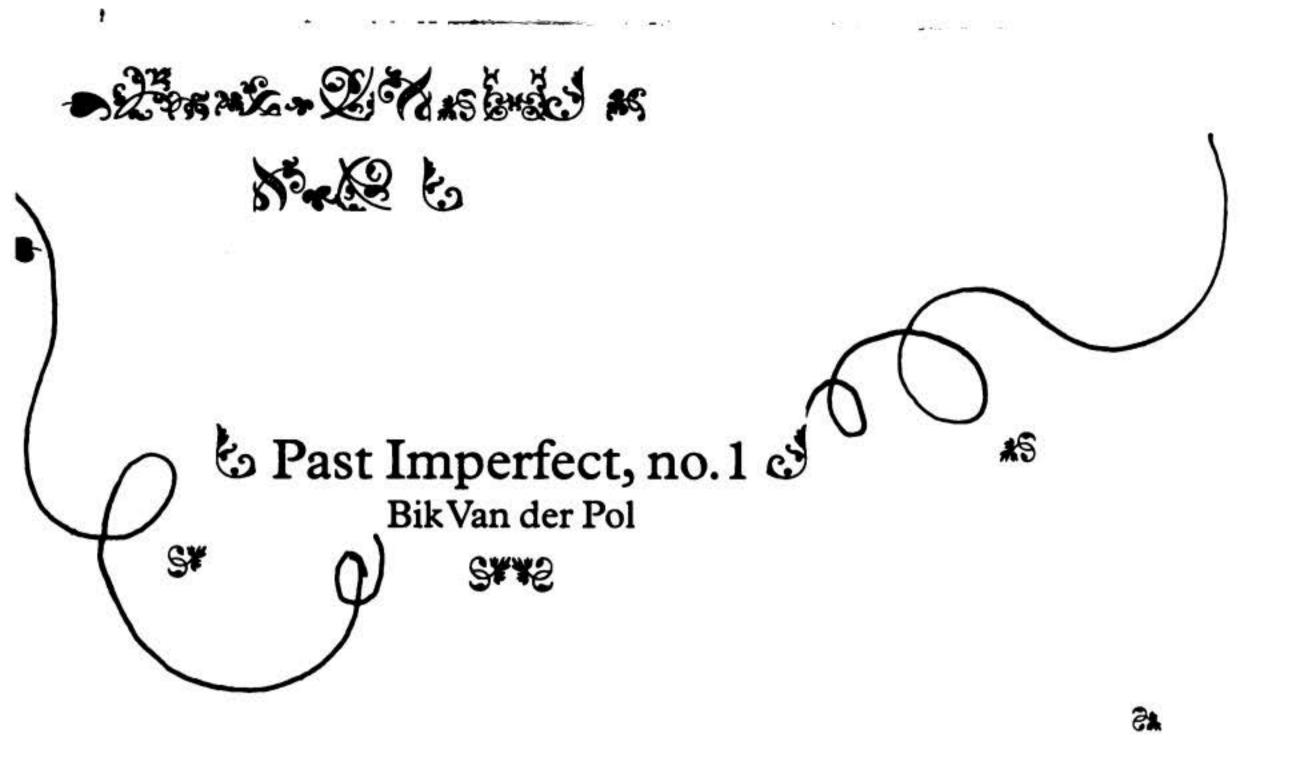
**◆**167

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

real world of California politics. Suggesting that the state's problems were so large they required a larger-than-life hero to solve them, Schwarzenegger's campaign was remarkable for its condensed reenactment of his film roles. Schwarzenegger now holds press conferences in which he continues to reenact his role as *The Terminator*. In the forty-year period between Reagan's term as California's governor and Schwarzenegger's, we have accepted without blinking the idea that film reenactments might save us from the all too dreary politics of the real. Such an acceptance puts us much closer to Hinckley's logic than we might have dreamed only twenty years ago.

In saying this, I am not so much lamenting the loss of the line between the real and the filmic as I am wistful for a more rigorous analysis of this erosion in terms of a broader understanding of the ethical. My fear is not that we will lose, or have lost, some edifice called the real. Rather, I am troubled because I believe that in collapsing the distinction between representation and the real, we have also elided the distinction between self and other, between the world out there and the clamorous claims of the ego. And this collapse in turn makes it possible to reenact the old, although ever more brutal, drama of imperialism. The United States, with its long-term investment in both the Hollywood film industry and the military industrial complex, is currently reenacting an old fantasy whose consequences for the disenfranchised are all too real. Art dedicated to examining the logic of these reenactments usefully reminds us why we need to forestall an uncritical acceptance of these particular repetitions.

notes.



# **8** Preface

This is the first issue of Past Imperfect. Issue no. 2 is due to 1 The Past Imperfect issues are appear in spring 2005 in collaboration with the Secession in Vienna, and our expectations are that issue no. 3 will come out in the summer in collaboration with Casco, Utrecht.

Past Imperfect searches for hidden pasts by lifting stones, poking about underneath and trying to get a glimpse of the events that form history. The past is subjective; its interpretation and therefore the experience of it - and the way that experience rests in memory – is moldable.1

> 3 Excerpts and notes

The artist performs a function, the writer an activity. Every artist is eventually digested by the artistic institution, unless they cease to identify their being with that of language: this is why so few artists renounce object making, for that is literally to kill themselves, to die to the being they have chosen; and if there are such artists, their silence echoes like an inexplicable conversion.<sup>2</sup>

realized partly due to the financial support of CBK, Rotterdam; Fonds bkvb, Amsterdam; Cascoprojects, Utrecht.

2 An unknown writer in Switch http://switch.sjsu.edu/web/ art.online/matt.links/matt. article 17.html, an electronic journal published by the CADRE Institute at San Jose State University. It is produced by graduate students who foster a critical viewpoint on issues and developments wherever crossovers between art and technology occur.

When Lee Lozano became the subject and object of her own art, and conceptual art was increasingly moving towards the disappearance or "dematerialization" of the art object, there was only one consequential possibility that was totally in line with her previous practice: to disappear from the scene. It was inevitable.

Sometimes we wonder how important art is. Not at all, one might conclude. But what if art, in some cases, manages to create possibilities for change, and hence really makes a difference? Even if this exhausts its role, it would still be quite an important accomplishment. Perhaps rigid definitions of art that lead us to treat this kind of art as unimportant, because it is merely temporary, need to be reexamined. Why shouldn't art be temporary and contemporary, as opposed to eternal? Changing our ideas about value and value systems could stimulate thinking about other possibilities even if they last a split second and have an immeasurable impact.

If the research into Loos is organized by the gaps in the archive, the research into Le Corbusier is organized by archival excesses. Loos vacates a space and destroys all traces behind him. Le Corbusier fills a space ahead of him, but not just any space: a domestic space, literally a house. To think about Loos one has to occupy a public space, the space of publications, his own and others', but also the space of word of mouth, hearsay, gossip, tips etc.; the enigmatic space of circumstantial evidence. To think about Le Corbusier is necessarily to enter a private space. But what does private mean here? What is this space? And how does one enter it?<sup>3</sup>

The past is perfect and imperfect at the same time. The notion of loss, both in a positive and in a negative sense, is everywhere in our search: for example, in the work of Bas Jan Ader and the use and abuse of his archival notes and material long after his disappearance, or OMA/Koolhaas who have their archives exhibited as an open source of information and inspiration, but also connected to the idea of archiving as a strategy of control. The threat of loss and disappearance – the opposite of life – can lead to the will to control, which promises to stave off the specter of loss, taking over life.

Digitized by Google

Look at the current map of Israeli-held territory: it looks like military camouflage, dispersed and scattered. If this situation were not so perverse, it might be seen as a brilliant new way of warfare. No front-line troops, no old-fashioned avant-garde, but everything happening at the same time everywhere, on several different scales. Both sides are very good at this type of warfare, but it does not get them very far. "Lay of the Land" by Stephen Zacks and A Civilian Occupation by Rafi Segal and Eyal Weizman both reveal these camouflage tactics, the architecture of disappearance.5 Here, the loss of the object means: the loss of an overview, the loss of visibility.

3 Beatriz Colomina, Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media (Cambridge MA/ London: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 3-4.

4 See Wade Saunders, "In Dreams Begin Responsibilities,' Art in America (February 2004) Can be found on http://www.findarticles.com.

5 Stephen Zacks, "Lay of the Land,"www.metropolismag. com/cda/story.php?artid=752; Rafi Segal and Eyal Weizman (eds.), A Civilian Occupation. The Politics of Israeli Architecture, (London/New York: Verso, 2003).

When we were at the Marres center for contemporary art watching The Battle of Orgreave, a film by Jeremy Deller which reconstructs the 1970s coal miners' rising against the conservative government and the planned mine closures, Mat Verberkt said that this was the turning point in the last century, when it was acknowledged that "the enemy" - in the words of Mrs. Thatcher – is not the other, but the enemy within; the enemy is actually amidst us, inside of us. At the same time, the enemy was and still is described in technical, abstract terms; people become mass, a movement becomes the enemy, and that enemy within the mass needs to be eliminated. By making people abstract, it becomes possible to get rid of them. Camouflaging again.

Lozano's physical disappearance was a disappearance from the existing order, from the art world as a system of commodities. But disappearing is not literally vanishing from the world. The works were always relevant but due to her withdrawal they did not become part of art history and its discourse. Therefore her pieces literally disappeared from that field. But Lee Lozano is reemerging: since recently her artistic estate - which includes her early drawings and paintings as well as her more radical instruction pieces - has been represented by Hauser & Wirth, one of the most influential players on the art market.

So it now seems that Lee Lozano's work is on the verge of becoming a commodity. It makes you curious about what will happen in some years: will her work be hijacked, like the work of Bas Jan Ader Will the hunger of the art lover be UNIVERSITY OF MI

#\$171

accommodated by the possibility of buying a certified remake from the estate (as happens with the work of Bas Jan Ader)? Will the purchaser then own the right to reenact the Boycott Women Piece or the Drop Out Piece and disappear beyond the point of no return?

In contrast, art in the world of TAZ is a condition of life, and then, disappearance is not too bad and could be seen not only as a negative refusal, since it is becoming a "beyond": beyond definition, beyond control, beyond understanding, beyond naming, beyond enslaving, and . . . beyond owning. Actually, TAZ is freedom, gained through psychological liberation. In that sense it is becoming romantic, adventurous and maybe utopian again; who would not want to be liberated, revolutionary, beyond control? Still, it is somewhere here, in between, where the radicalism is hidden. Silent revolution cracking through the walls.6

Greed (1924), a film by Erich von Stroheim, was considered a masterpiece. First consisting of 47 reels of film, it was cut to 42, then 24, then 18 and finally 10 reels – which is two and a quarter hours, one quarter of its original length. The film is of mythical proportions, but the project was considered to be an impossible undertaking both for the maker and the viewer. Greed is based on Frank Norris' novel McTeague. Von Stroheim, whose career moved from acting to directing, initially wanted to film each and every page of the book, from cover to cover. He took a very radical position in both concept and execution. According to his statements, he regarded the film as an act, a gesture, an idea, more than a material object. The outcome was that nobody saw the film. And though he is surrounded by a mythical image as the allpowerful director and fanatical perfectionist, Von Stroheim remained perpetually out of reach. He "disappeared."7

McTeague is imbued with Darwinism and naturalism; naturalism developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in response to realism, which was considered to be not sufficiently scientific. When art aims to reproduce life in a 1:1 manner, does it become an impossible mission? When art and life stick together with no breathing space in between, as absolute clones held together with a vacuum seal, does this mean that life itself disappears along with art?

The Situationist International asked how critical art can play a role in the revolution. One of their conclusions was that art should not only be critical in its content, but it must also be self-critical in its form; a communication which should contain its own critique.

and the transferance in

Despite all the energy that was spent on it, the revolutionary project was defeated in the third part of the twentieth cenury. Reforms have led to a camouflaged preservation of the old order: radicalism often ends up in appropriation by the old order, by the institutional formats. But when taken to its ogical conclusion, radicalism may lead to total silence and lisappearance: a continuous struggle between resistance and frustration.9

6 Hakim Bey, The Temporary Autonomous Zone, (New York: Autonomedia, 1985/1991), pp. 130–133.

7 Adapted freely from: Jonathan Rosenbaum, *Greed* (London: BFI, 1993), pp. 10–13.

8 A full version of McTeague can be found on http://etext.lib. virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/ NorMcTe.html.

9 Guy Debord,
"The Situationists and the New
Forms of Action in Art and
Politics" (1963),
www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/ne
wforms.html, 1963.

## 2

### Contents and cases

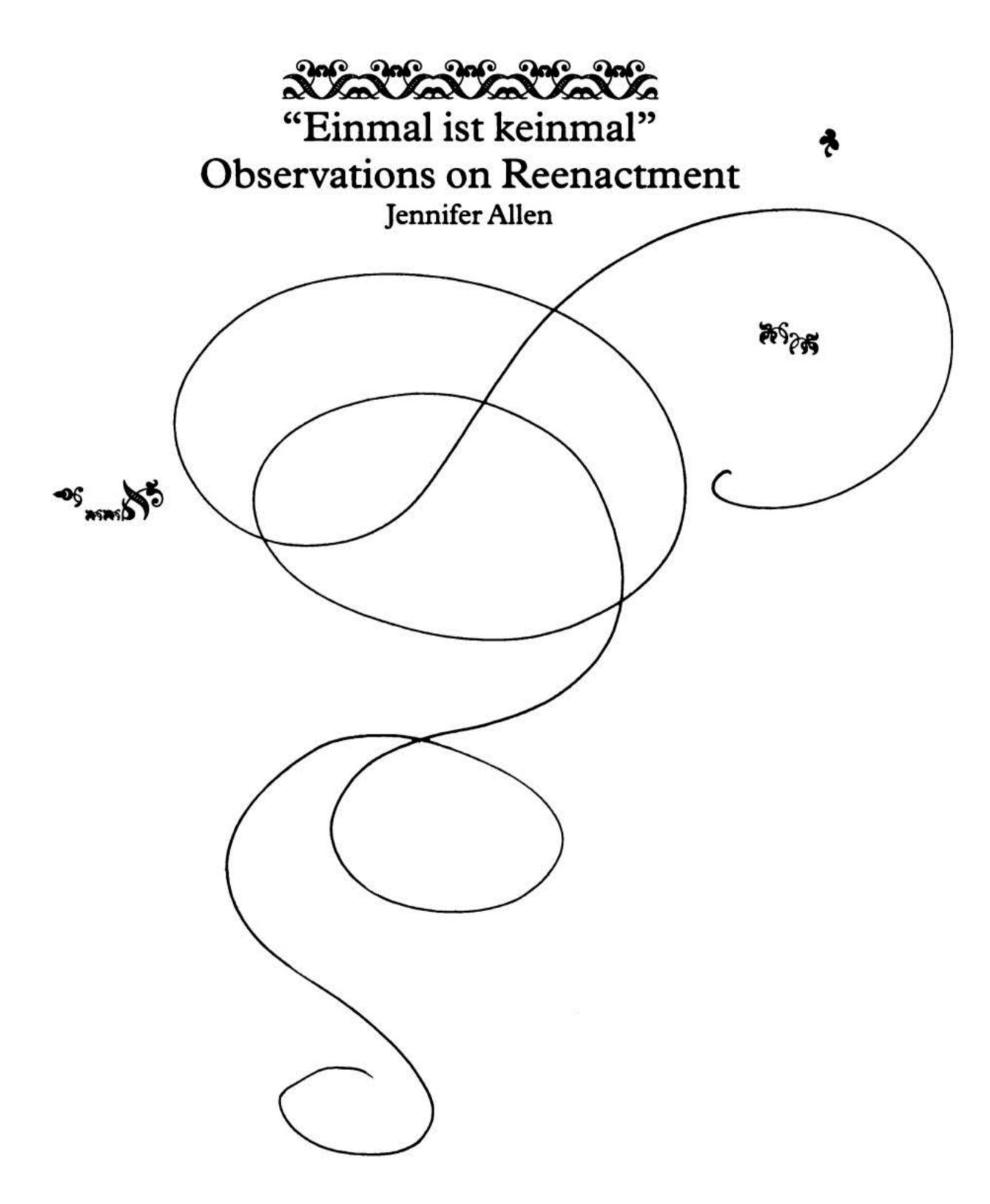
- 1 Hotel Angst.
- 2 Prora, Hitler's holiday resort at Rugen.
- 3 Hohlweltlehre: hollow/inverted earth theory.
- 4 Saddam Hussein imprisoned at what the CIA calls "Hotel California."
- 5 Rock My Religion by Dan Graham ("Does history have any particular relevance in the context of our daily lives?").
- 6 The creation of Absolut Vodka.
- 7 Like Lee Lozano, Ian Wilson is an artist of whom you could say that he disappeared. The difference is, however, that Wilson chose the dialogue as his medium, while Lozano stretched her borders far beyond dialogue. For her there was no point in returning.
- 8 Ritt Goldstein, "Homeland Security: A Bridge from Democracy to Dictatorship," in Abuse Your Illusions, ed. Russ Kick (New York: The Disinformation Company, 2003), pp. 241–245.
- 9 Radioactive: fiction created to consider the implications and intersections of the "war on terror" and "homeland security" within the realm of culture. See: http://www.16beavergroup.org/radioactive/.
- 10 Marcel Duchamp, Sixteen Miles of String, installation for the exhibition First Papers of Surrealism, 1942.
- 11 www.loompanics.com.
- 12 Marc Augé and the acceleration of history.
- 13 Re-appropriation of historical events.
- 14 Elvis meets Nixon.
- 15 Seeds of Change: Five Plants That Transformed Mankind by Henry Hobhouse.
- 16 History of Shit by Dominique Laporte. Unmentioned, unspoken means unheard, and non-existing.
- 17 The artist performs a function, the writer an activity.

- 18 Non-Disclosure. Agreement by Carey Young.
- 19 Erased De Kooning Drawing by Robert Rauschenberg (1953). In 1995, the artist Felix Gmelin made a new painting after Rauschenberg's Erased De Kooning Drawing.
- 20 An empty room where just the wind can blow, to take a breath of air.
- 21 Nothing (edited by Graham Gussin and Ele Carpenter) is not really nothing, nor just something. This book, with an empty hole in the middle, is a collection of case studies, with a wide range of works from the fifties until now. No Lee Lozano in this collection; she is the queen of disappearance.
- 22 Lost Artists contains a list of 17 pages with lost artists.
- 23 How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found by Doug Richmond.
- 24 An article about the work of Bas Jan Ader by Wade Saunders in Art in America (February 2004) is a case study of the exploitation of a disappearance.
- 25 Michael Petry, You Are Here. Re-siting Installations, about the reuse, remake and reinstalling of works of art.
- 26 "Bas Jan Ader: Lost at Sea" by Samuel P. Klaus.
- 27 The relation between language, immateriality and flexibility and the readiness of conceptual art to become a social activity.
- 28 There is a rumor that the PS1 studio contains a cutting by Gordon Matta Clark.
- 29 Search for "Matta Clark" in the computer database of the public library of New York: no hits.
- 30 Was it because Lozano was a woman that nobody seemed to notice her disappearance, or are some people such a pain in the ass that nobody misses them?
- 31 Alfred Loos destroyed his archives so that nobody could do anything with them he would not approve of.
- 32 The resemblance between map and camouflage gear. Camouflage and Israeli warfare.
- 33 Recycling Recycling, a lecture by Mark Wigley on the invisible radical.
- 34 A Clockwork Orange by Stanley Kubrick was withdrawn by Kubrick from British cinemas.
- 35 Punishment Park by Peter Watkins.
- 36 Break Down by Michael Landy.
- 37 Appear and Apparition by Alexis Vaillant.
- 38 TAZ is . . . refusal to participate, to have, to be and to (inter) act. This could be seen negatively but also as a source, a possibility, an opening up to an alternative.
- 39 Cases of disappearance, perfectionism, excessive control, withdrawal: Howard Hughes, Michel de Montaigne, Henry David Thoreau.
- 40 Melatonin: night becomes day and day becomes night.
  History accelerates and the question of time, or the lack of it, can be resolved.
- 41 The singer Amanda Lear archived, conserved and stopped time.
- 42 David Reed and The Vampire Study Center.
- 43 Michael Jackson, Neverland and the wish to influence time.
- 44 Celebration, a Disney-designed new urbanism. No birds fly around in Celebration. Life is excluded.



- 45 The Palm is a palm-shaped island and a luxurious holiday resort overlooking the Persian Gulf, just off the Dubai coast.
- 46 Invented utopias.
- 47 From gated communities to plastic surgery to hyper-fabricated reality to cryogenics: freeze, wait, reanimate.
- 18 Getting lost.
- 19 Mapping without a map.
- 50 The First Guided Tour Into The Void by Yves Klein.
- 51 Narcotourism by Francis Alÿs.
- 52 Baudrillard on disappearance and anorexia.
- 53 The survival guide for demonstrations by Jota Castro.
- 54 Bermuda triangle.
- 55 Collection of manifestos, protocols and conferences that deal with rejection, progress, destruction, disappearance, dropping out, all part of a continuous movement of change; fix, establish and loosen up.
- The Commune: the self-empowerment of the proletariat, which made them masters of their own history, not so much at the level of governmental politics as at the level of everyday life.
- 57 The Futurist Manifesto.
- 58 "Some Void Thoughts on Museums" by Robert Smithson.
- It was at the Chelsea Hotel that Yves Klein wrote his Manifeste de l'Hôtel Chelsea during his first one person show in New York at Leo Castelli in 1961, when the response to his show made him feel it was necessary to explain himself.
- 50 Henrik Oleson: "Lack of information and art is a device to bring back a non-existing history."
- 51 To take part is not to drop out.
- 52 Looking for Mr. Fluxus: In the Footsteps of George Maciunas by Grady Turner, Raimundas Malasauskas and Skuta Helgason.
- 53 Luther Blisset and the disappearance of the individual.
- 54 Elaine Sturtevant's withdrawal.
- 55 Fake weapon company.
- 56 Corrections & clarifications.
- May 1968 graffiti: It seems important to keep up the long tradition of direct response, to testify without interference.
- is to have dialogues, not to make a piece. No recordings or notes are made during dialogues, which exist solely for their own sake as joyous social occasions."
- i9 Semantic web?
- 10 Ian Wilson presents oral communication as an object: all art is information and communication.
- James Collins realized Introduction Piece No. 5 (1970). A certificate proves that he, as a complete stranger, approached a person in Hyde Park, to whom he introduced himself. The person agreed to participate in this artwork and signed a document with photograph showing that this meeting took place. This document constitutes the art piece.
- 72 Lies, disinformation and urban legends are part of media-related misleading information. Past Imperfect is a product of this dynamic.

- 73 Gianni Motti took photographs of war scenes in Bosnia –
  beautiful photographs of landscapes, smoke and destruction.
  The photographs are so beautiful that they look as if they were
  staged rather than real, but they are all photographs of actual
  situations encountered during this war. No manipulation.
  No disinformation. No lies. Just facts. The photographs were
  rejected as unsuitable for news-paper publication. They were too
  beautiful. They look like a Jeff Wall.
- 74 What You See Is Where You're At by Luke Fowler (1999).
- 75 Mythological aspects and myths.
- 76 Erich von Stroheim, Greed, 1924.
- 77 Radicalism might, when taken to its full consequences, lead to total silence and disappearance: a continuous struggle between resistance and frustration.
- "If a government no longer knows how to solve a problem within the borders of legislation and the tolerance of public opinion, then they call on the secret agent." Willem Velthoven, "Editorial," Mediamatic, no. 9.
- 79 The Italian Autonomists.
- 80 Who was to blame? Timothy Garton Ash welcomes an independent inquiry into the Paris bombing of 2009.
- 81 "The margin may be a place of relegation, or of voluntary exile, but for those whose natural habitat it is (and I speak of my friends), this is one place for active people to be. There are others."
  Norman Potter.
- 82 On July 4, 1845, Independence Day, Henry David Thoreau retreated to Walden Pond where he would declare and practice his own independence.



56 ROD DICKINSON, RECONSTRUCTION – JIM JONES SIGN: CIRCA 1978, JONESTOWN, GUYANA, THE JONESTOWN RE-ENACTMENT, 2002. DETAIL FROM THE INSTALLATION AT THE CENTRE FOR

# THOSE WHO DO NOT REMEMBER THE PAST ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT.

Reenactment always presupposes a missing ody. Consider how the term "enactment" elates to the law (decree, edict, mandate) and to the theater (dramatization, acting, mpersonation). In both cases, a unique body has been replaced by an endless series of bodies that are interchangeable with one another, across time and space. The law in a democracy cannot be personified as can the law in an absolute monarchy, which s embodied in a despot-king who signs decrees according to his inclination: "Tel est notre grand plaisir." In a democracy, law is enacted by the abstract collectivity of the nation-state and then reenacted by countless citizens who succeed or fail to perform according to its terms. The theater performance functions in a similar way, since the script can direct anyone and everyone to brood like Hamlet, to wait for Godot or to suffer a 4.48 psychosis. A theatrical representation may be based on an individual's life, but this person is always already assumed to be gone. Behind every reenactment, there is a "little death," be it the beheading of the king or the passing episode in the life of an individual, grand or insignificant. Although no one really dies in the reenactment, all language becomes an epitaph.

57 STURTEVANT, BEUSS LA RIVOLUZIONE SIAMO NOI, 1988.



Reenactment uses the body as a medium for reproducing the past. Every reenactnent is a form of natural history, which is centered upon the comings and goings of numan beings. While a reenactment may depend upon historical documents and artifacts - from newspaper reports describing an event to the clothing worn by key figures - the body remains the vehicle that can carry the past into the present, that can give the past presence. After all, the reenactment is much closer to the zookeeper's living charges than the taxidermist's stilted creatures. Mediated by living bodies, the reenactment also emerges as an egalitarian way of doing history, which is inherited by humans through the mere incidence of their birth. As everyone has a body and therefore the same means to reproduce history, there is no division, specialization or alienation of labor, which all arise with the evolution of material property. Indeed, there is no property in the reenactment, no possession that can be held longer than the breath.

58 JEREMY DELLER, THE BATTLE OF ORGREAVE, 2001. COMMISSIONED



The reenactment often searches for a lost otality. Take the reenactment of a crime, vhere the pieces of a puzzle are put ogether through a careful restaging of the nisdeed. Here, the missing body inherent to every reenactment becomes the body of he missing criminal, who leaves a script of clues. The reenactment can also be found n psychoanalysis and its offspring (both egitimate and illegitimate), therapies that seek to cure the patient by reliving a traunatic past under qualified supervision. In this case, the missing body belongs to the patient himself, who has lived his past selectively by repressing certain experiences. As Freud and Breuer wryly remarked, hysterics suffer from reminiscences, which they are condemned to repeat as pathological symptoms in the body. The talking cure liberates the body by revisiting the trauma, by turning partially repressed memories into completely cognizant ones. Where the hysterics deny part of their own history, the participants in a historical reenactment – whether players or spectators – attempt to deny the passage of time itself and seek to be at one with the past, like a child in the womb: immersed in history and without history.

CLERGY AND KNIGHTS IN A MID-TWENTIETH-CENTURY BRITISH
PROGRAM. FROM: ANTHONY PARKER, PAGEANTS: THEIR
PRESENTATION AND PRODUCTION, CONCON, 1954, PLATE 9.

Whenever the search for a lost totality akes place in the reenactment, there is ılways a witness – specialist or spectator – who turns the many parts into a total sum. The presence of witnesses guarantees that omething complete has taken place, even f the reenactment strays in its portrayal of he original event. What is reproduced is not only a series of past occurrences but ilso an experience of duration, which ends the past a clear beginning and an inmistakable ending. In contrast to the haotic unfolding of the original event, the reenactment knows what will happen and, nore importantly, when this happening starts and finishes. In the eyes of the witness, the original event becomes historical by taking up time, and claims its status as nistory by appearing as a discrete event with a finite duration. In other words, the eenactment makes the origin, gives the origin a definition and an identity that it nay not have had for itself. The witness casts a particular gaze at the reenactment of the origin: not looking, nor seeing, but ecognizing something that has already nappened, even if the event was never experienced firsthand by the witness. In ecognition – which is linked to the verbs dentify, admit, endorse and honor – the gaze fulfils the promise of instant knowedge while legitimizing this knowledge as recurring truth.

Digitized by Google

60 HANS YON UND ZU AUFSESS, FOUNDER OF THE GERMANISCHES



Reenactment depends upon a linear construction of time. Of course, the "re" denotes a return to an earlier time, the existence of an event that has expired and therefore can be safely enacted once again, without being confused with itself. In this model of time, many predicaments inherent to the reenactment - such as splitting one's experience between the past and the present – are resolved. While forging one straight line into the future, time leaves a set of train tracks in its wake and only sells return tickets, whatever the destination in the past. Hegel theorized this model of time by linking Spirit's creation of world history with the sun's motion from east to west; H.G. Wells penned a fictional version of the time machine, which could travel through the unified time of world history as if traveling through space. Indeed, like Hegel and Wells, the reenactment confounds history with geography, spatializes the past and treats its linearity and continuity as an architectural site, if not a stage that can be animated by new players. While proclaimed as universal, this model of time did not have the same consequences for everyone and put some people in the past and others in the present. Like world history, the global day humbly begins in the orient only to culminate in the occident; the West is not a relative geographical marker but an absolute one that Digitized by Google

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

61 OMER FAST, GODVILLE, 2005. PRODUCTION STILLS.



defines progress; the most progressive, Westerners are the most privileged travelers who can buy the most tickets to the past. Since only the West is assumed to be contemporaneous with the present, all other destinations are equated with time traveling in history. Herein lies the violence of the reenactment: other societies appear as the backward reenactments of the Western world's history, or they have been forced to reenact parts of this history in order to "catch up" with the present. Every sunset is not a sign of progress, yet the reenactment asserts that the West is now's timekeeper.

#### 62 STAR WARS MOVIE POSTER PARODY BY MAD MAGAZINE, NOVEMBER 2002.



There is repetition, but not reenactment, in orality. Of course, oral cultures also use the body as a medium for reproducing the past, but they do not assume the temporal split between now and then, which renders the "re" in reenactment possible. Instead, the past and the present mingle with each other; they exist in cohabitation because there is no library, no archive, no museum, where the past could be safely stored. The body plays all these roles, juggling new events without dropping any from the past, because dropping one would mean losing it forever. In the everexpanding archive of oral cultures, accumulation is indistinguishable from distribution. Each new event is "recorded" with an older one in the archive, which consists of portable tales, poems, songs. The wife in a union that has gone sour may slightly alter a poem to address the sad state of affairs. By singing the modified poem, she spreads "news" that everyone can "read", because they are familiar with the traditional version. While inspired by her life, the woman does not explicitly address her situation but rather transforms an unfortunate turn of events into an opportunity to revive a collective culture through repetition. Here, repetition does not strive for an exact copy of the past. Rather, the past incorporates novelty into itself; the novelty serves to recollect Digitized by Google

63 JEREMY DELLER, CONTRIBUTION TO ARTFORUM, SEMPTEMBER 2004,

## A photograph of Donald Rumsfeld shaking hands with Saddam Hussein

Baghdad, December 20, 1983

the past; both are bound to each other through the creative interventions of the collectivity. Fahrenheit 451 – François Truffaut's film based on Ray Bradbury's novel – offers a close approximation of orality for a literate culture: the characters learn novels by heart from one another, and wander around reciting the tales, because books are forbidden. Relying on the body, the reenactment – like Fahrenheit 451 – sits oddly between orality and literacy, poised between the book and the body, between learning by rote and living by remembering.

### GY DAVID WILKIE WYNFIELD, THE PAINTER ROBERT T. PRITCHETT IN TUDOR COSTUMENTS.



The society of the spectacle and its many attendant visual technologies, from photography to television, complicates all reenactments by transforming them into reproductions. Captured by the camera lens, the reenactment becomes a reproduction of the past and a reproduction of itself; the reenactment emerges as yet another original with its own claims to authenticity that are inextricably linked to its reproduction. Indeed, the spectacle is so omnipresent that a reenactment must be recorded to have an authentic existence, if to exist at all. The camera is the only ticket for traveling on the time machine. Since the reproduced reenactment can be endlessly circulated, it may seem to come even closer to the repetitions of an oral society, albeit as a perfect copy that never strays from itself. There is no doubt that the society of the spectacle borrows mnemonic techniques from orality. Yet the spectacle uses these techniques to colonize time with a continuous now instead of perpetuating the past to prevent its irrevocable loss, as in orality. Consider how reshooting a film sequence a mere day later involves erasing any signs of the passage of that day. Time traveling on the camera is no longer about visiting the past but about organizing the present. The fact that the most historically advanced technologies for conserving events have Digitized by Google UNIVERSITY OF M

65 STILL FROM: FRANCOIS TRUFFAUT, FAHRENHEIT 45), 1966.



occasioned an increase in the circulation of the past – instead of its safe storage in the archives – attests to a shift from production to reception, where active players are replaced by passive spectators in the reenactment. The spectacle and spectatorship have become so predominant that we seem to prefer reproduced reenactments of our own pasts, even our most immediate past. Compare the woman singing the altered poem or another woman wearing a historical costume on a stage with a woman enjoying an art exhibition through the viewfinder of a digital camera. Oral society puts a prime on experience; the reenactment puts a prime on the past; the society of the spectacle values only reproductions.

SS PAGE FROM NOUVELLE ICONOGRAPHIE PHOTOGRAPHIQUE DE LA SALPÉTRIÈRE, 1883. FROM: GEORGES DIDI-HUBERMAN, INVENTION DE L'HYSTÉRIE, PARIS, 1982, P. 21).

# VIII

When the reenactment is recorded to be eproduced, there is a double alienation. First, the body is no longer the main nedium for making the past; the biological reproduction is replaced by a mechancal one, the eye with a lens, the presence of the actor with a glowing monitor, a silver screen or a set of gelatin prints. As the actor's presence becomes superfluous, the audience becomes the missing body that is endlessly reproduced and interchangeable, across time and space. The audience – better, the spectator – plays its part by watching Hamlet, Godot or early morning psychosis. The audience as spectator has nothing to do with the witness, who recognizes, identifies, admits, endorses and honors the past, but is a part to be played by anyone, anywhere, anytime. As the script shifts from actors to spectators, interpretation is no longer about authenticity but reception: the question is not "Is this reenactment true to the past?" but "Is this reenactment true to our present?" While spectators appear to wield a new power over the past - as the ultimate "actors" in the reenactment - they are alienated. This second alienation arises since the reproduction, however ephemeral and ethereal, remains material property and, above all, private property, no matter how many times it circulates in public. A mechanical reproduction always Original from UNIVERSITY OF MI 67 MIKE KELLEY AND PAUL MCCARTHY, FRESH ACCONCI PORTFOLIO,



implies a division, specialization and alienation of labor in both the production and the reception of the reenactment. Someone somewhere owns the camera, the rights to the story, the seats in the theater, the stills from the movie. Budget, not birth, imparts the right to make history, whether hiring the actors or buying the movie ticket. A reproduced reenactment – especially as a film – offers the illusion of ownership, a virtual experience of property which spectators can never hold in their hands, let alone act for themselves. The visibility of actors, who always play someone else, only serves to hide the owners behind the spectacle. Its genius lies in making the ephemeron into a commodity that can never be entirely possessed by the consumer but must be consumed again and again. A film, even when purchased, cannot be owned and dispensed with like finite commodities such as cars or clothing, as it remains restricted to private use. The rise in piracy is, first, a refusal to pay what amounts to a tax on the repeated consumption of the same product and, second, a recognition that looking is indeed a type of labor.

60 STILL FROM: POLLOCK, ED HARRIS, 2000. COPYRIGHT SONY





Performance art arose with the society of the spectacle. Artists initially believed that they could resist the market by working with the one artistic medium that had not yet been commodified, namely, the human body. By using their bodies, artists could communicate directly with an audience and avoid the whole question of property, whether upheld by the gallery or the museum. In retrospect, performance art from expanded cinema to happenings – seems to have anticipated an economy beyond the traditional material commodity, where spectacles, adventures, experiences and services could be packages and sold. While the performance artist was a pioneer - especially in expanding the body's possibilities – art's role was already shifting from a political avant-garde to an economic avant-garde. Art could be a harbinger of, not just lives to be realized at a moment's notice, but also lifestyles that could realize long-term profits. Andy Warhol, whose cynicism was indistinguishable from optimism, was one of the few to understand the double edge of this era – an era when wearing jeans constituted a major social statement (and tipped off the market to the endless commodities that could be sold in the name of style). Little remains of the original performances, beyond scattered props, black-andwhite photographs and super-eight films, Digitized by Google UNIVERSITY OF MIN

VERSITY OF MICHIGAN

70 BARBARA VISSER, PROPOSAL FOR LECTURE ON LECTURE WITH ACTRESS, 2004/2005 IMAG HOTTENROT.

Something be fel.

which are generally blurry or poorly lit. The dearth of artifacts and documents attest to the artists' desire to resist the market while leaving their mark in history. Indeed, performances were recorded with a sensibility that lies somewhere between journalism and the snapshot, as history and as happenstance, both singular and moving moments in time. The aesthetics of the documents ultimately served to confirm the belief that the artist's performance, like the body itself, could never be reproduced.

Digitized by Google

71 ANDRÉ BROUILLET, CHARCOT LECTURING AT THE SALPÊTRIÈRE



In light of this history, the reenactment of performances - whether Andrea Fraser's take on Martin Kippenberger's drunken tirade or Mike Kelley and Paul McCarthy's spin on Vito Acconci's auto-erotic acts appear to break a taboo. While artists' aesthetic styles have long been quoted, appropriated and reworked, the artist's body has remained inviolable in what appears as an unspoken professional pact: artists are not actors, art is not theater, artworks are not plays. Reenacting a performance by another artist is not so much a reproduction as a critique of the autonomy of art and the artist in a field that includes many arts, from theater to music, which tend to thrive through interpretation. Consider the pianist who makes a reputation with a certain repertoire or the actor who gains prominence by playing a role that countless other actors have played before. The fact that Fraser and Kelley & McCarthy effect a shift in gender – from man to woman – also diminishes the male artist's claim to creativity in genius, which is assumed to be absolutely singular even if its products recall efforts by other artists. The legendary status of Kippenberger's and Acconci's original performances in recent art history puts Fraser's and Kelley & McCarthy's reenactments closer to orality, especially since the memory of the originals has circulated, not through artifacts, but pri72 ROY VILLEVOYE, AMSTERDAM, 1997. JUDEN VIERTEL JOODSCHE WIJK

marily through testimony and hearsay. The audience can "read" the "news" in the new version since they have heard about the old one. By contrast, Barbara Visser and Omer Fast work in the world of spectacles where originals – performances or people - exist only by being reproduced. Thus, Visser happily invites an actress to perform her artist's talk and yet another actress to reenact this initial performance. Fast, instead of looking at the original story behind Steven Spielberg's film Schindler's List, travels to the movie's location in Poland and discovers extras whose memories of the Nazi past are mixed with memories of making the film. By treating the reproduced reenactment as a constitutive part of reality, Visser and Fast articulate the new program: not "everyone is an artist" but everyone is an actor.



Beyond these individual acts, there has been an increase in reenactments of performance art. In 2001 at Berlin's Kunst-Werke, A Little Bit of History Repeated prought together a group of contemporary artists who reinterpreted performances originally done in the sixties and seventies, from Laura Lima's remake of Yoko Ono's Cut Piece, 1964, to Tino Sehgal's take on John Baldessari's I Am Making Art, 1971. In September 2003 at Paris's Ranelagh theater, Yoko Ono reenacted her own Cut Piece as an expression of her hope for world peace. In November 2003, London's Whitechapel Art Gallery hosted the second part of A Short History of Performance, which offered reenactments of original performances by the original artists, including Carolee Schneeman and Hermann Nitsch. By showing several works together, the exhibition objectified performance as history while confirming the transformation of performance, if not the human body, into a reproducible commodity. Both have lost their singularity to the spectacle – and, perhaps, to genetics. One could argue that the original performances of the sixties and seventies needed to be reenacted in order to catch up with the spectacle, in order to be reproduced, in order to exist. Ono's intervention seems to differ since she decided to reenact Cut Piece, not for an exhibition, but for the mass media, and not

74 BARBARA VISSER, A DAY IN HOLLAND/HOLLAND IN A DAY, 2001. COURTESY ANNET GELINK GALLERY, AMSTERDAM.



nerely to ensure the continued existence of her work, but in order to make a difference in the present. In France, the organzers placed a full page newspaper advert for the event with a statement by Ono who described her intervention as a response to the political changes in the wake of 9/11. Her statement appeared around the world for a little bit longer than fifteen minutes. It seems that Ono hoped that her performance would reenact the peace movement of the sixties on a global scale. In this case, the reenactment searched for a lost totality, not in the performance, but in an entire generation.

THIS PUBLICATION APPEARS ON THE OCCASION OF THE EXHIBITION UFE, ONCE MORE: FORMS OF REENACTMENT IN CONTEMPORARY ART AT WITTE DE WITH, ROTTERDAM, JANUARY 27 - MARCH 27, 2005, CURATED BY SVEN LÜTTICKEN

EDITOR Sven Lütticken

COPY EDITOR SOLANGE DE BOER

english proof-reading Victor Joseph Donald Gardner: Text sven Lütticken

TRANSLATION TEXT ANDREA FRASER
CATHERINE SCHELBERT AND ANDREA FRASER

DESIGN MARIE PROYART AND FELIX WEIGAND, WERKPLAATS TYPOGRAFIE, ARNHEM

PRINTED BY CALFF & MEISCHKE, AMSTERDAM

PUBLISHER
WITTE DE WITH, CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ART, ROTTERDAM

© THE AUTHORS AND WITTE DE WITH, ROTTERDAM, 2005
ISBN: 90-79362-64-4
PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE NETHERLANDS
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE PRIOR WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THE PUBLISHER

IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO FIND ALL THE COPYRIGHT HOLDERS OF THE ILLUSTRATIONS USED. INTERESTED PARTIES ARE REQUESTED TO CONTACT WITTE DE WITH, ROTTERDAM

## SPECIAL THANKS TO

JENNIFER ALLEN, PROLO ARAO, ANKE BANGMA, MIKE BIDLO, LIESBETH BIK,
PETRA BROUWER, ROD DICKINSON, TANJA ELSTGEEST, OMER FAST, ANDREA FRASER,
HELEN HARRISON, LAURA HOFFMANN, TOM HOLERT, MAXINE KOPSA, SANDRA KISTERS,
ROBERT LONGO, GALERIE CHRISTIAN NAGEL, PEGGY PHELAN, JOS VAN DER POL, ERAN
SCHAERF, CATHERINE SULLIVAN, BARBARA VISSER, WERKPLAATS TYPOGRAFIE (ANNIEK
BRATTINGA, ARMAND MEVIS), ETIENNE WYNANTS, NICOLINE WIJNJA,
AND EVERYBODY AT WITTE DE WITH

THIS PUBLICATION WAS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE MONDRIAAN FOUNDATION, AMSTERDAM







WITTE DE LU
WITTE DE LU
9012 BR ROTTERDIA.
TEL:+91CO 10 Y1101YY
FAX:+91CO 10 Y11792Y
INFO@WDW.NL
WWW.NL

a medi

#### STAFF

DIRECTOR: HAIRS MARATEN YAN DEN BRINK ADJUNCT DIRECTOR: PAUL YAN GENNIP ASSISTANT CURATORS: BART YAN DER HEIDE, RENSKE JANSSEN EDUCATION: BELINDA HAIK INTERNET: ARIBONE URLUS PUBLICATIONS: SOLANGE DE BOER SECRETARINI. O'FFICE: HELMI LUESTSTRATE, KARIN PETTERSSON, SASKIA BULJK (O'FFICE).

erwin nederhoff, erik visser, marièlle wichards (reception) Technical Staff, gé beckman, line kramer

WITTE DE WITH IS AN INITIATIVE OF THE ROTTERDAM ARTS COUNCIL AND IS SUPPORTED BY THE CITY OF ROTTERDAM AND THE DUTCH MINISTRY OF CILLTURE.

INTERNATIONAL DISTRIBUTION: IDEA BOOKS
NIEUWE HERENGRACHT 11, 1011 RK AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
TEL:+91(0) 20 6226151; FAX:+91(0) 20 6209293; IDEA@IDEABDOKS.NL

DISTRIBUTION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM: CORNERHOUSE
70 OXPORD STREET, MANCHESTER MI SON, ENGLAND
TEL: • YY 161 2001509: PAX. • YY 161 200150Y: PUBLICATIONS@CORNERHOUSE.ORG

DISTRIBUTION IN NORTH, SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA: D.A.P./DISTRIBUTED ART PUBLISHERS INC., 195 SIXTH AVENUE, 2ND FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10019-1507, USA TEL: +1 212 627 1999: FAX: +1 212 627 9491; DAR@DAPINC.COM





### LIFE, ONCE MORE FORMS OF REENACTMENT IN CONTEMPORARY ART

THE EXHIBITION "LIFE, ONCE MORE" COMBINES REGISTRATIONS OF REENACTMENTS OF ARTISTIC PERFORMANCES WITH ARTISTIC REFLECTION ON HISTORICAL REENACTMENTS OUTSIDE THE ART U.

THIS BOOK COMPLEMENTS THE EXHIBITION WITH ESSAYS BY CRITICS AND THEORISTS AS WELL AS SCRIPTS AND OTHER WRITINGS BY ARTISTS, AND WITH AN EXTENSIVE VISUAL ARCHIVE.

ARTISTS IN THE EXHIBITION: MIKE BIDLO, BIK VAN DER POL, ROD DICKINSON, OMER PAST, ANDREA FRASER, ROBERT LONGO, ERAN SCHAREF, CATHERINE SULLIVAN, BARBARA VISSER.

TEXTS 89: JENNIFER ALLEN, BIK VAN DER POL, ANDREA FRASER, SVEN LÜTTICKEN, PEGGY PHELAN, ERAN SCHAERF, BARBARA VISSER.



Google

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAI