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INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART
University of Pennsylvania

Bennett Simpson, Exhibition Curator

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Claudia Gould, Daniel W. Dietrich, II Director
Foreword

During the years 1984–1987, I had the opportunity to travel in and out of Germany, specifically Cologne, Dusseldorf and Kassel. At that time, the East Village art and music scene in New York was in gear and we in the art world were already familiar with German artists Joseph Beuys, Jörg Immendorff, Georg Baselitz, Sigmar Polke, Gerhard Richter and Anselm Keifer. But there was a whole generation that I was just beginning to learn about, and they lived in Cologne and Dusseldorf. It was here that I began to see the work of Gunther Förg, Martin Kippenberger and Reinhard Mucha. My visits to Cologne were always in the dead of winter and my memories are of walking the damp, cold streets, of dodging the rain and moving in and out of the galleries that all seemed to be near each other. To an outsider there was a sense of community, but you could also feel the competitive nature of the galleries. There was definitely money to be made and money to be spent. A center to all of this activity for me was the Walther König bookstore. It was an artistic milieu in its own right, one that promoted and marketed artists by way of books. Indeed, it was astonishing to me that every young European artist seemed to have available there a major, full-color publication and numerous smaller artists' books. What better way to get a glimpse of what was happening than to spend a day at König's bookshop in Cologne?

Now in Philadelphia, the story continues to unfurl at ICA with "Make Your Own Life: Artists In & Out of Cologne." Curated by Bennett Simpson, this exhibition presents a contemporary art history of Cologne and its impact on the art world today. Bennett is the Associate Curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. However, he first conceptualized this show while he was Associate Curator here at the ICA in Philadelphia, where he arrived in 2001 as a Whitney Lauder Curatorial Fellow. During his tenure, he organized "Shoot the Singer," an exhibition that looked at artists, music and video, and he co-curated "The Big Nothing." He was also, as I recall, struck by the posters Martin Kippenberger created for his 1989 exhibition, kept in ICA's archive. I like to see all of this as formative to "Make Your Own Life," an exhibition that includes a number of artists Simpson represented in his curatorial projects, who are brought together around a scene in which Kippenberger was a key figure. In any case, I am proud of Bennett's accomplishments and pleased to present this insightful survey by him. He has done an amazing job—based on extensive travel, talking with artists, collectors, curators and critics. In September 2005, he organized a roundtable discussion at ICA to raise some of the questions this show addresses. (Excerpts from the proceedings are recorded in this publication.) And in every way, Bennett has worked hard and well to make an exhibition in which making conversation and involving artists are integral to the curatorial process.

Also integral has been the input-output of ICA's current Associate Curator Jenelle Porter, who has worked closely with Bennett to realize this exhibition and publication. Jenelle's skills at corralling and cajoling, being supportive and drawing the line, are skills we all benefit from. In this regard I am also indebted to Exhibition Coordinator and Registrar Robert Chaney, who faced many challenges—right up until weeks before the show—bringing together works by such an international group of artists, many of whom created new works especially for the show. I am grateful to Senior Curator Ingrid Schaffner for her guidance, and to the entire curatorial department for their help in every aspect: Curator of Education Johanna Plummer, Assistant Curator Elyse Gonzales, Whitney Lauder Curatorial Fellow Naomi Beckwith, Customer Service/Education Assistant Brett Dolin, and Head Preparator Shannon Bowser, who installs each show without a hitch. Jill Katz, Manager of Marketing and Communications, does a brilliant job getting the word out there. And Chris Wieman is my able and willing assistant. On the funding side, I am endlessly indebted to our Director of Development Marilyn Pollick and her staff: Barbara Allen, Denise Berry and Elysa Voshell. And finally, my thanks to Cassandra Green, who keeps it all together by administering to the business of ICA at Penn.

This publication was designed by Conny Purtill, whose creativity always results in something extraordinary—no matter the constraints of time or money. I want to thank him and Jenelle Porter for working so closely on the design and contents of this catalog.

"Make Your Own Life" has an impressive tour. I would like to thank the Directors and acknowledge the participation of Gregory Burke at The Power Plant in Toronto; Richard Andrews, and Elizabeth A. Brown, Chief Curator, at the Henry Art Gallery at the University of Washington in Seattle; and Bonnie Clearwater at the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami, Florida.

Funding for all of the projects we do is a continual challenge. For "Make Your Own Life" I am very thankful for the generous support of Barbara B. & Theodore R. Aronson for the exhibition catalog. We are grateful to the Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative (PEI), funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts and administered by the University of the Arts, for research and planning funds, and to Patsy and Karl Rugart and the Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany New York for their support. Additional funding has been provided by The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, The Dietrich Foundation Inc., the Overseers Board for the Institute of Contemporary Art under the remarkable direction of Katherine Stein Sachs, friends and members of ICA, and the University of Pennsylvania. ICA is also grateful for in-kind support from Loews Philadelphia Hotel.

In the end all of our shows would not be possible without the generosity of the lenders and the participating artists—for them I am eternally thankful. []

Bennett Simpson
Make Your Own Life

"Observations are the basis for being noticed, things about an artist that can make people cry. And that's the point: to once achieve this! Install criteria. Then, somewhere, one sees a gray suit in the street and remembers the story. Install parameters of observation. Krebber can do that. Meuser too. To see the things one sees in the street in another way. And! Very important! It can't be didactic. That's the special trick about it: it must not try to mediate anything "yo-ho." To achieve this you must make your own life the basis! And you have to get yourself there for once. There is no relation to the art market in that any longer."
—Martin Kippenberger, 1991[1]

"Subjectivity will, of course, be deemed as insufficient work, etcetera, by the ruling class."
—The Red Crayola and Art and Language, 1975

Someone recently told me, when I explained I was making an exhibition about "Cologne," that it sounded like a "perfect market show." Needless to say, I winced, even as I understood exactly what was meant. Cologne, that volatile epicenter of the European art world in the 1980s and early 1990s, is a test case for problems of artistic identification. It appears to me that many of the artists associated with this place—Martin Kippenberger and Kai Althoff, to name only two—have been embraced by today's voracious market partly because the agents of this market (collectors, galleries, museums and magazines) perceive something about their complicated persons and positions to be desirable, and partly because this complexity can be rather facilely projected back onto their art works. One should view with enormous suspicion Charles Saatchi's "Triumph of Painting" rhetoric applied to these artists—to celebrate them on formal or mediumistic grounds too often masks a more animalistic desire to possess or entertain the "freedom" or difficulty of their subjectivities. And yet, here is this exhibition entitled "Make Your Own Life," pre-occupied with similar freedoms. I too am attracted to these "Cologne" artists, and to the many other artists that have intersected with this place, because of their perceived autonomy. But if Cologne is a place that says no, I wonder if we are equipped to listen. I wonder too if we understand what we hear.

It is not only outsiders, like me, who project onto and fantasize about "what happened in Cologne." This city's art world, at least during a certain period of the eighties and nineties, was one of the most contested, self-conscious, exaggerated, idealized and loathed hothouses in contemporary art. There were factions, extending across decades and art-historical purviews, each with their own rules and exclusions. There were fan clubs, cults of personalities around certain figures. There were fistfights and collective meltdowns. To some people Cologne meant the big paintings of neo-expressionism. To others it meant the critical "bad paintings" and go-for-broke provocations of Kippenberger and crew. To others still, of a later generation, Cologne signified a politicized, theoretically inclined stance that could be found in the conceptualist approaches of artists like Fareed Armaly, Christian Philipp Müller and Andrea Fraser, in the alternative, artist-run space Friesenwall 120, or again, in the critical journal Texte zur Kunst. In almost every instance, to speak of Cologne is to speak of performance: not just artists performing their art works, though of course this happened, but artists performing themselves within the social networks and communities of their peers. Whatever the differences between modes of practice in Cologne—and there are many differences—one constantly returns to this question of the artist as a "Selbstdarsteller," or self-performer, as the critic Diedrich Diederichsen has named it, and to Kippenberger's insistence that "you must make your own life the basis" for art.[2] It is not coincidental or merely romantic how often bars and drinking factor into stories about the Cologne art world. Or, by extension, how frequently art works from this time and place rely on anecdotes and the appearance of inside references. Any consideration of Cologne must start, if not end, with a surplus of negative social value.

The moment of Cologne that this exhibition centers on—essentially from the mid-1980s to mid-1990s—is very near us. Indeed, its participants, with the exception of Kippenberger, who died in 1997, are still more or less present, many of them having moved past their collective investment with this place to occupy more individuated, and often more successful positions within the broader art field. Furthermore, Cologne itself has ceased to function as the hub or art capital it once was. Other cities—Berlin, London, Los Angeles, even New York—have absorbed this role, while in a general sense the very idea of local geographical prominence has atrophied in the wake of globalization. Nevertheless, exploring the awkwardness of this just-past moment, which contemporary art has only barely escaped, suggests a kind of potential, not just for an exercise in historical stock-taking, but for drawing parallels with the situation, conditions and problems of today.

To locate this potential, it has felt necessary to expand what I mean when I refer to Cologne. While the core of this exhibition is comprised of artists who were directly active within the city's art world—many of them living there, others only exhibiting there—I have also included artists whose relation to Cologne is more a matter of sympathy or common cause. This will strike some viewers as curatorially dubious, since Cologne was a place that always induced strong feelings about belonging or membership. Certain artists in this exhibition "were not there" in a strict sense—either they were living elsewhere and identified with other genealogies (such as Los Angeles artists Mike Kelley, Stephen Prina and Christopher Williams) or they are too young (such as Lucy McKenzie or Gareth James). Other artists who "were there" have not, for various reasons, been included. (The most conspicuous omissions, as I see it, would have to be Werner Büttner, Georg Herold, Fareed Armaly and Thomas Eggerer.) I accept that processes of inclusion and exclusion, especially in large group exhibitions such as this, should be carefully considered and second guessed, but for now I must register their importance simply by acknowledging them.

This exhibition has been predicated on a belief that historical reception is ongoing and contradictory, a product of desires that are political and intellectual as well as libidinal and economic. By specifically selecting works that stage their own historical space, I want to make the case that our histories have power precisely for their capacity to sustain fiction, projection and revision—even, if this is not too strong a word, "hallucination." Cologne is an important subject—I would even risk saying a necessary subject—because it suggests itself as an untenable, incomplete and contested idea, a place where artists, in different ways and for different reasons, confronted and transformed the forms of identification and instrumentalization that make so much contemporary art a smooth operation of consumable goods. In his essay for this catalog, the artist Josef Strau writes about the "non-productive attitude" that, for him as for many other artists in this show, made Cologne the best and the worst place an artist could be in its time. On the positive side, one's participation was not valued for a skill with objects or art works alone. One could "be" an artist and make almost nothing. Indeed, in making nothing one's position could be measured as an "art of living," which Foucault once defined as "intentional and voluntary practices by which men not only fix rules of conduct for themselves, but seek to transform themselves, to modify themselves in their singular being, and to make of their life a work that bears certain aesthetic values and responds to certain criteria of style."[3] On the negative side, this attitude implied a level of extreme self-objectification and communal self-consciousness, and often affirmed rather reactionary and hierarchical behaviors from participants who had nothing, and therefore everything, to lose.

Without romanticizing the psychological binds created there, this exhibition proposes Cologne as a site where artists submitted themselves to a process of critical self-construction. To say that these artists are concerned with questions of "life" and context is not simply to imply they make autobiographical art; rather, it is to underscore their engagement, equally political and poetic, with what sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has named the habitus, the symbolic "world" of social, aesthetic and commercial distinctions in which all individuals live and work. Whether explicitly or implicitly, each of these artists carve out space for exploring the decisions and assumptions entailed by the words "artist" and "art work." Because the market and professional conditions of art are more than capable of making such decisions for artists, often at their expense, it is crucial to think through the ways artists inhabit or internalize the terms of their participation in the field. Or, as Andrea Fraser has recently written, "It's a question of what kind of institution we are, what kind of values we institutionalize, what forms of practice we reward, and what kinds of rewards we aspire to."[4] Cologne, in this sense, provides us with a model context for reflecting on the possibilities of artistic agency. It is a context created by artists creating themselves.

To some this will sound like a hopelessly outmoded idea—so 1991! But today, even as art's lingua franca is thick with talk of community, collectivity and do-it-yourself authenticity, even to acknowledge the failure of a reflexive participation, or that it might have been transformative, strikes me as incredibly rare. Perhaps all this talk is a symptom of a real loss of community within an art world that is ever more professionalized, spectacularized and deracinated from local specificity. If this is the case, contemporary contexts like Reena Spaulings Fine Art, Orchard gallery, and LTTR in New York and Meerrettich gallery in Berlin, stand out for their direct, if sometimes delirious, engagement with the terms and fictions of artistic and historical subjectivation. I mention such examples not to say that they are like, or have anything to do with Cologne (although in many instances, they do), but to set the stage for this exhibition's interpenetration of past and present.

"Simply to hang a painting on the wall and say that it's art is dreadful. The whole network is important! ... When you say art, then everything possible belongs to it. In a gallery that is also the floor, the architecture, the color of the walls. Everything is as important as the painting on the wall. Take that Ungers floor in Hetzler's gallery, the dark one; that is in fact impossible. How can I cope with that room as an artist?"
—Martin Kippenberger, 1991[5]

Artistic reflections on the different contexts of Cologne are prevalent in "Make Your Own Life." The desire to make sense of one's field—and one's participation in this field—can be seen in works by Stephen Prina, Stephan Dillemuth and Nils Norman, Cosima von Bonin, Christian Philipp Müller, Andrea Fraser and Martin Kippenberger, and in less direct ways in many other works in the exhibition. Each of these works approaches context as a kind of archive to be mobilized or performed. Prina's Galerie Max Hetzler, 1991, made for the artist's first exhibition in Cologne, is perhaps the most systematic of the group. Comprising 163 black-and-white mounted and framed photographs, each bearing meticulous vinyl labels describing their contents, nine architectural models and a painted wall text announcing "WE REPRESENT OURSELVES TO THE WORLD," the work represents the history of the Galerie Max Hetzler as an index. The photographs, taken from the gallery's own archive of installation photography, depict every exhibition presented at Hetzler between the years 1974 and 1991, when Prina's own work was first realized. The architectural models correspond to the different locations occupied by the gallery: first in Stuttgart, then Cologne, then simultaneously in Cologne and Santa Monica, California, where Hetzler co-operated the Luhring Augustine Hetzler gallery for a brief period. (He subsequently abandoned both Cologne and Santa Monica for Berlin, where he now oversees two spaces.)

For the work's presentation in "Make Your Own Life," Prina has opted to show only a three-year window of the massive archive, the period between 1988 and 1990 when the Hetzler enterprise was at its most expansive. In this selection, comprising 42 photographs, one sees images of exhibitions by many of the artists the gallery is most associated with—Büttner, Herold, Kippenberger, Oehlen, and Gunther Förg—but it is also possible to gauge the influx of American artists that made Cologne in the late eighties one of the most commercially and socially fertile art cities in the world. Christopher Wool, Christopher Williams, Cady Noland, Mike Kelley, Jon Kessler, Jeff Koons, Liz Larner, Ross Bleckner, Jorge Pardo, Terry Winters and Rober Gober all exhibited at Hetzler at this time. For many of these artists, Hetzler was the first European gallery to show their work, often well before their receptions were established in the United States. The archive's reliance on installation photographs suggests something further about the way artistic reception is secured. Without direct experience of an exhibition (and sometimes even with this experience), art's audience must consider art works in reproduction, at a remove, in photographs in magazines and catalogs. One aspect of a gallery's "representation" of artists thus becomes its ability to circulate secondary information: an announcement of identity always already separated from itself.

Cosima von Bonin's video Die Fröliche Wallfahrt (The Merry Pigrimage), 1991, also constitutes an auspicious "opening" gambit in a young artist's Cologne career. But it confronts issues of group representation in a rather different manner. Scripted as a low, or provincial, morality tale, and played with a range of hilarious Bavarian mannerisms, the fourteen-minute work depicts a melodramatic parsing of social hierarchy in a small, tight community. If one takes von Bonin's casting literally, the video fictionalizes the scene around the Galerie Christian Nagel in its early period, that is, a scene full of interpersonal politics, family drama and, perhaps, self-isolating exclusions. Among the actors is Christian Nagel himself (as a gruff and mitigating pater familias), as well as Christian Philipp Müller, Fareed Armaly, Michael Krebber, Michael Clegg, Bruno Brunnet, Josef Strau, Karin Barth and Joseph Zehrer, each of whom enacts an over-determined role in relation to Nagel's position of authority. Charline von Heyl and Mayo Thompson put in cameo appearances in front of an Yves Saint Laurent Rive Gauche boutique. As with Prina's archive, one has the sense of a context, a "we," representing itself to the world. However, if that former work's conceptual, indexical distance mirrors Prina's own "outsider" relation as a Los Angeles artist in Cologne, von Bonin's far more "insider" portrait is freighted with mythological and psychological surplus.

These two works stage a distinction that has always been recognized in histories of the Cologne scene: a rupture between the eighties and the nineties and between the modes of practice, social groups and political articulations that define the two periods.[6] Kippenberger, Oehlen, Büttner and Herold (the "Hetzler artists") had all moved to Cologne from elsewhere, but quickly leant the city what now appear as its "classical" eighties characteristics: excessive production, excessive behavior, a brilliant, self-lacerating sense of humor and a critical, often-biting engagement with both art history and prevailing artistic trends. Despite these latter qualities, the Hetzler artists have typically been perceived as "anti-political" or "anti-discursive" by subsequent generations that (rightly) view their art works and personas against a backdrop of repressive social hierarchies, sexism and self-congratulatory cults of personality. The scene around the Nagel gallery, on the other hand, cohering in the early nineties, represented a theoretically engaged, politically de-hierarchicized approach informed, in part, by feminism, institutional critique and conceptual art. It was no less socially exaggerated, but it provided a stark contrast to the preceding phase both on the level of production (less prolific) and attitude (less parodically "bohemian"). One of the desires of this exhibition is to reconsider the prejudices implied by this supposed rupture, for in many cases the two moments are united in more ways than not. To do this, however, requires partially stepping out of or displacing history to find its moments of exception expressed in individual art works.

Christian Philipp Müller's work for this exhibition is a selection of elements from the larger installation A Sense of Friendliness, Mellowness, Permanence, 1991, the German artist's first exhibition in the United States at the American Fine Arts (AFA) gallery in New York. The connection between Galerie Nagel and AFA at this time was substantial. Many artists—Philipp Müller, Andrea Fraser, Renée Green, Clegg and Guttmann, and Cosima von Bonin—showed in both places over the course of the nineties and the galleries each came to be identified with a reassessment of conceptual art, institutional critique and practices which centered in the social and political field. Phillip Müller's work, here, comprises a large, gray-brown felt curtain and a maître 'd stand holding specially-printed "menus"—items one might find at the entrance to a bistro. At the time the work was made, New York was beginning its infatuation with European-style cafés, most visible in neighborhoods like SoHo where a post-eighties Euro-trash and cappuccino scene thrived in close proximity to AFA's location on Wooster Street. But beyond referencing the site of the gallery, Philipp Müller also acknowledges the essentially social character of art production that defined this moment in Cologne and New York.[7] Other elements of his original installation included brown-wood wainscoting and wall sconces that lent a warm glow to the art space. Menus designed by the artist in collaboration with AFA director Colin de Land outlined the gallery's artists and art works like so many exotic foods or wines—a fiction of real commerce under the sign of "taste," self-indulgence and conviviality.

One of the most significant contexts of the Cologne scene at the turn of the nineties, at least for the artists represented in this exhibition, was the artist-run, "alternative space" Friesenwall 120. Taking its name from its street address (and consciously acknowledging the history of artist-run spaces like 112 Greene Street in New York), Friesenwall was operated by a group of artists including Stephan Dillemuth, Josef Strau, Nils Norman and Merlin Carpenter. In its brief lifespan between 1990 and 1994, the space hosted a variety of exhibitions, performances and lectures, but was perhaps most recognizable as a zone of "non-productive" social activity that defied traditional art-world identification. If Hetzler and Nagel suggested conventional gallery structures (however idiosyncratic), Friesenwall deliberately declined to produce artists and art objects in any way that could be separate from their social and critical experience. Today, with historical remove, one might ask how it would be possible to represent the independence or spontaneity of such a place. Rather than capitulating to a desire to recreate or simulate the past, Dillemuth and Norman, for this exhibition, have chosen to build a "ruin" of Friesenwall that clearly suggests the foreclosure of its original moment. Behind a rough, fractured architectural façade, the artists have installed a range of small works—drawings, texts, paintings, audio pieces—from many of the gallery's original participants. These do not signify in any naturalized sense, but form a constellation of uncanny artistic rifts in the work's present institutional location at the ICA.

If the above works indicate the function of gallery spaces in creating a sense of "groups" in Cologne, two other works, by Andrea Fraser and Martin Kippenberger, suggest the position of individual artist—her or his "life"—as an archival field to be mined. Fraser's Presentation Book, 1990 (discussed at more length in her contribution to this catalog), maps her entrance into the Cologne scene in a partly documentary, partly fictionalized account of her career up to the moment of her first gallery show at Nagel in 1990. Why, Fraser seems to ask, was she as a 24-year-old American artist, having her first exposure in Germany? What were the conditions that produced and supported this exposure? How did they intersect with the existing histories and ideologies of the ongoing relationship between American and German art, politics and economics? Kippenberger's Input-Output drawings, 1991, while not analytical like Fraser's work, also present an image of the artist informed or "made" by its encounter with social life. Drawn on restaurant receipts from a Brazilian hotel Kippenberger frequented in the late eighties, these 67 small works on paper depict hastily scrawled apartment floorplans—as if the artist, traveling far from home, was systematically remembering every building he had ever lived in. There is something barely there about these furtive scraps of paper. And yet, their juxtaposition of commercial grid and spontaneous expressive mark speaks volumes. For one, they provide a kind of quiet diary or biography (many bear legible addresses under their floor plans) that joins with the many other examples of self-portraiture or self-assessment in Kippenberger's work, seen elsewhere in numerous paintings, photographs, sculptures and the more well-known Hotel drawings. But perhaps more profoundly, they offer a clear instance of how thoroughly Kippenberger viewed his life within and against the predetermined (given) commercial frame of art.

A moment should be taken to consider the case of Martin Kippenberger today, for his work and person currently invite a level of fetishization unsurpassed in contemporary art. One thinks this must be so at least partly because a public exists which perceives him to have led an exemplary kind of life—a life that people do not have to lead themselves to appreciate. It is not that people want to be like Kippenberger, but that they do not want to be like him, that makes his subject or person one for projection, fantasy and economic circulation. We adhere to romantic ideologies because they are romantic—that is, storied and not "real." The tacit acknowledgment of distance from social norms makes them safe, tradeable and unthreatening. By conventional accounts, Kippenberger led a "Byronic" life that was fast, full and recklessly close to the edge, even when it was at the center of its time. We also say that Kippenberger's life was his own—that he made his own life—and we are not wrong in this, even when we say that he did so in the classical way, as a Bohemian, self-made, hard-drinking, bon vivant. It is not irrelevant that classical models of independence are the most powerful and lasting. What is wrong is to allow Kippenberger's excesses of independence to overshadow or diminish the distance from reality that makes them palpable in the first place, or to ignore an analysis of this distance, which he in a sense practiced everyday. Artists are different, so Kippenberger made "different," unconventionally "bad" paintings in a moment of renewed painterly genius. Artists are isolated, in touch with their souls and craft, and so Kippenberger threw himself into the market—the receipts of Input-Output—producing six shows a year around the world, until he was nearly metonymic with his name on an invitation card, a perfect disappearing act in plain sight. The distance between perceptions of artists and their realities was Kippenberger's true object, a critique of the freedom accorded artists by the conventions of bourgeois society. By flaunting this freedom, by exaggerating the power it is accorded, even by an art world steeped in generations of avant-gardism, Kippenberger gave his public what they wanted until they could not recognize it any longer, and then he gave them some more.

Kippenberger has always been the limit-case of Cologne, the figure against whom a generation of artists was measured and against whom another generation rebelled. To understand him one must first understand his willingness to objectify himself, to make himself the clown, the drunk, the provocateur, the exception. Kippenberger always stated that he never wanted to be "the best" artist, for in bourgeois culture such a position is a farce, an heroic isolation of the artist from reality. One recalls the perhaps apocryphal anecdote about a response he once made to Joseph Beuys. Beuys, a natural product of the 1960s liberal break from tradition, was full of aphorisms and prophetic utterances. Among them was "Every person is an artist." At some point Kippenberger volunteered a corollary, both mocking and deeply serious: "Yes, but every artist is a person." Kippenberger always strove to be a "person," even while he succeeded most at being a persona. Perhaps the two were inseparable for him anyway—a degree-zero of accepting the identity "artist" in a culture where artists are both outside and immanent with truth.

"Kippenberger" is the undisputed problem separating the earlier, classical or romantic period of the eighties with later, more-theorized and possibly less-repressive articulations of artistic subjectivity. If, however, one accepts his attitudes and strategies as the truly critical instruments they are, his position becomes dialectical—a self-staging contradiction that better equips us to deal with, and in, reality.

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"Humor should be rejected. Well presented humor should not be rejected."
—Michael Krebber[8]

Performing oneself within art, as an artist, is a difficult game. One has to do it very well, or else it becomes kitsch or painful for everyone involved. Like Kippenberger, Fraser has a special skill for limning the social and psychological space that culture reserves for artists. In her 2001 performance video Kunst muss hängen (Art Must Hang), she takes Kippenberger himself as a subject, "playing" the notorious artist giving a drunken speech at a post-opening dinner. (Fraser describes this work elsewhere in this book.) In her dark man's suit, holding a glass of beer, Fraser enacts "Kippenberger" the myth—a pitch-perfect mess of crude macho jokes, rambling anecdotes and well-placed honorifics—until one becomes aware of a separation between Kippenberger the artist and Kippenberger the person, and by extension, a similar separation between "Fraser" and herself. The question of who performs artists is central to this work. Fraser's objectifications both heighten and unveil Kippenberger's mystique, demanding that her viewers become self-conscious of their own participation in such constructions. In a sense, the video parallels Fraser's Presentation Book: a quasi-documentary narration of "life" circulating as artistic belief.

Numerous works in "Make Your Own Life" concern representations and strategies of artistic displacement. Christopher Williams's photographic installation Bouquet, for Bas Jan Ader and Christopher D'Arcangelo, 1992, allegorizes the memory of two artists who died tragically—Ader by drowning or disappearance at sea, D'Arcangelo by suicide. In their shortened careers, both artists made disappearance (of self and of art object) a constant theme of their work. Ader's performances frequently involved his wandering through desolate landscapes or enacting routine pathetic gestures such as falling or crying. D'Arcangelo's work, on the other hand, often took the form of construction, carpentry and wall building, services he provided for "clients" in their homes. He was also known for performances in which he photographed himself removing paintings from museum walls. Bouquet comprised Williams's first exhibition in Cologne, at the Hetzler gallery. Installed on the second floor of the space (the first floor was left empty), the work consisted of a sole photograph—of a flower arrangement laid on its side—mounted on a large, free-standing wall made according to specifications from one of D'Arcangelo's own installations. As a presentation of multiple lost or submerged art histories, Bouquet was perfectly pitched to a Cologne context Williams understood to be artist-driven and historically-minded.

Like Williams, the British artist Josephine Pryde intersects with Cologne from the outside. Based throughout the nineties in Berlin and London, where she was an organizer of the alternative space Poster Studio (along with Merlin Carpenter, Nils Norman and Dan Walsh), she has nonetheless been quite involved with Cologne's social networks and artistic developments. Her sculpture Chains, 2004, invokes the displacement of artistic subjects and subjectivity within history. With its drooping, formless composition of tangled strands, the work makes explicit reference to Eva Hesse's latex-and-rope "hanging net" sculpture Untitled of 1970. Hesse's process works from this period are a flashpoint for feminist art historians (and, here, for a feminist artist like Pryde) for the gendered reception they have received. The mythology of the artist's life has frequently merged with readings of her work as pliable, organic and thus fated, "messy" and essentially feminine. Hesse's tantalizing absence of self—she died in her mid-thirties from cancer caused by constant exposure to the toxic materials of her art—has produced an abundance of self within art history. Pryde's sculpture restages this Hesse complex, but stops the rampant and hysterical projections of life onto work in their tracks. Made from greasy black chains taken from bicycles and chainsaws, the work insists that an artist's "life"—that metaphoric substance of Hesse's net—may be tougher and less compliant than we wish.

With much of this work one has the impression that meaning is fugitive, or at least that it is to be found elsewhere, beyond the object or image as such. This, of course, has been a hallmark of conceptual and site-specific practice since the 1960s, but here the allegorical impulse is complexly wound up with social dynamics, artistic persona and the close, "private" communities that define Cologne. What and how, for instance, does Michael Krebber's Untitled vitrine installation communicate? To outsiders, the work will be simple enough to parse: a large case filled with books, postcards, prints and posters, all apparently having to do with "dandies," a subject with a long twilight significance in the history of avant-garde art. For those more familiar with Krebber's practice, at least on a surface level, the vitrine may come as a surprise. Krebber is "known," if this is the right word, for experiments in painting, which he commenced in the late eighties after an intense period of apprenticeship as one of Kippenberger's assistants (although he and Kippenberger are roughly contemporaries). Even before this, as a young man, he had "studied" under other father or teacher figures such as Markus Lüpertz, Georg Baselitz (in whose castle he even lived for a time), and the gallerist Michael Werner. Though to many observers Krebber's paintings can seem barely rendered, left-off, or as the writer and musician David Grubbs once wrote, "unfinished too soon," they should more rightly be viewed as terrifyingly complete in their emptiness.[9] Krebber has always approached painting as an idea that is already exhausted (or fulfilled, depending). And so, confronting it, he confronts personal and historical superfluousness, a crisis of self that can sustain only the most necessary decisions.

If Kippenberger came to Cologne and made it his, Krebber, who was born and raised there, is the truer and more complex native son. It is hard to overestimate the meaning of his position within this context, for it bleeds among different groups and historical moments that often seem opposed to one another (Werner, Hetzler, Nagel). Here I will quote at length the New York artist and critic John Kelsey:

"...Krebber is first of all something overheard, a rumor—maybe too good to be true. He's a story told by others (Germans, mostly) to each other. The story has no point and no end. It might begin with Krebber eating a beer glass at another painter's opening in order not to say something about it, or with him suddenly instructing his students never to paint again. Krebber is one of those artists they call an "artist's artist," and when you ask around, his story becomes impossible to extricate from those of the close contemporaries who are somehow or other implicated in his myth (Cosima von Bonin, Josephine Pryde, Albert Oehlen, Jutta Koether, Merlin Carpenter, Charline von Heyl, etc.). When pressed, friends and insiders begrudgingly supply half-answers ("it's a Cologne thing"), as if unwilling or unable to flesh him out in a decisive way. There are moments and contexts, certain jokes, things that are said to be "Krebberesque," the precise weight and thickness of a "legendary" opening night in somebody else's memory. Krebber is like a club you can't get into, until you realize the club was built for you and you only, and maybe you are in it now, trying to describe the view to somebody back in Cologne."[10]

I have the impression that Krebber's dandy vitrine is his own "club you can't get into," a private space perceived as a public, historical space that may in fact be a fantasy or projection—the product of a desire to imagine or to refuse imagination of oneself. This glass case filled with figures Baudelaire might have called "crispé comme un extravagant" is a framing device housing a sort of primal scene. Or, as Mayo Thompson writes in his essay "Vitrinization":

"It's a setting. It's a set-up. It's a place. It is, and is for, appearance; categorization; classification, exposition. It's at the disposal of, at the service of, in thrall to, say, admiration; illustration; constellation; imagination; show; poetics; reading; criticality; terror; horror; beauty; genius; concatenation."[11]

To look through Krebber's glass is to look upon a provisionally open zone where the artist's image is extended through deflection (perhaps even through defection). As artist surrogates, these dandy specimens recall the numerous other instances in this Cologne context where secondary, reliquary frameworks of information and narrative assume the role of cryptically "explaining" the artist and his or her work. One thinks of the Museum of Modern Art Kippenberger set up on the isolated Greek island of Syros, or of the film programs Christopher Williams and Albert Oehlen have frequently organized as satellites of their exhibitions. One could also point to the many personal stories, social exploits, adventures and material props—posters, invite cards, exhibition catalogs and artist books—that so visibly accumulate around these artists. Such meaning networks have a temporal dimension. They work for a while, putting off identification with their anti-productive foils, but they are rarely sustained long enough to become predictable. There is a certain irony here. In the midst of deferral, the value of such strategies is the pause.

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Painting, as both practice and idea, is a particularly contested site in the Cologne context of the eighties and nineties. In the preceding decades, with the rise of the "Werner generation" of Polke, Baselitz, Richter, Lüpertz, and Kiefer, it came to represent a kind of normative discourse—the heroic or paradigmatic medium that had to be confronted, subverted, or deliberately ignored. In the 1980s, artists like Kippenberger and Albert Oehlen, along with their frequent collaborators Werner Büttner and Georg Herold, commenced a bewildering internal assault on the medium, which had recently appreciated yet another validation in the form of Neue Wilde neo-expressionism, loathed by these artists for its romantic artistic subjects and disavowal of much post-war art history (the history of conceptualism, most significantly).

Diedrich Diederichsen, whose chronicling of these artists' work is one of the most powerful sustained engagements with any context in contemporary art, once labeled Oehlen's approach a "painting of distinctions." On a formal level, such a term applied to the artist's relentless experimentation with stylistic strategies—his juxtaposition of "incompatible" or wrong brushworks, his embrace of "bad" representational devices, his flaunting of abstract expressionism's allover philosophy, his use of text, collage and obscure personal references. But the painting of distinctions was also meant as a social or ideological register insofar as formal tropes signify not just within the structures and discourses of a medium, but within those of bourgeois culture and taste. The influence of "political painters" such as Asgar Jorn and Jörg Immendorf, on Oehlen's early development is not to be overlooked. From the former he gleaned Situationism's predilection for détournement and strategies of reading spectacle as abstraction; from the latter, a scientistic logic of political-historical forms. Although it is quite evident looking at his work, one should note that Oehlen's political operations are neither narrative nor thematically or metaphorically derived. They occur rather within a conflictual space of material representation where, as Diederichsen writes, "it's not a question of the number of elements, but the distinctions among them—these being as great as possible while still allowing interferences and relationships to develop."[12]

Oehlen's "attack" on painting in the 1980s (which nonetheless contains enormous sympathy) parallels to some degree the strategies of an American artist like Christopher Wool, who exhibited frequently in Cologne from the late eighties onward, first at Hetzler and then with Gisela Capitain. Like that of his German contemporaries, Wool's approach to the medium is essentially semiotic, mobilizing painting as a screen for a range of social and cultural disjunctions. Of course, this is literally the case in his well-known "word paintings," where starkly stenciled blocks of text, often derived from the colloquialism of Hollywood cinema, sit atop a gessoed white ground. The "tough guy" imposture of this work, deriving from the hard-boiled and theatrically blunt language it employs—"If you can't take a joke, get the fuck out of my house"—recalls a moment in the eighties when appropriationist strategies and punk performativity flowed freely between New York and Cologne.

The question of gender in relation to these seemingly "aggressive" approaches is a tricky one. On the one hand, many critics have noted the masculinist disposition of the "boys in the bande" (as critic Stephen Ellis once named Kippenberger, Oehlen and Herold), whose artistic strategies coincide all too neatly with the carousing, macho antics of the Cologne social world.[13] On the other hand, one does not want to essentialize the spirit of confrontation that is elsewhere so integral to the practices of many female artists working in this context. An artist like Jutta Koether, for example, is no less aggressive or responsive vis-à-vis painting than her male counterparts. As a woman artist who chose to work in painting during a mid-eighties moment when to paint was deemed suspect—one had to malign it like Oehlen or Kippenberger, or nothing at all—Koether made her double disadvantage work for her by consciously embracing "feminine" styles of lyrical, subjective expressionism and a diaristic, interiorized affect. Like Oehlen, in a sense, she turned to what was deemed "bad" or "wrong" within a culturally conditioned (gendered) moment and sought to open up freedoms where none were perceived to exist. The painting Antibody V (Semi-Popular Painting), made just after her relocation from her native Cologne to New York in 1992, acknowledges, even in its title, the therapeutic possibilities of working against taste, in this case with a sprawl of washy color and expressive gestures supporting a defiantly embarrassing smiley face.

One of Koether's mentors in such reversals of the male-dominated Cologne scene was undoubtedly Rosemarie Trockel. Since the early eighties, Trockel has performed a kind of cultural excavation into aesthetic forms deemed "women's work," from knitting and clothing design to sensitive video portraiture of her immediate community. Her Buchentwürfe (Drafts for Books)—replicas or simulations of artist monographs—show her working in a terrain that is both secondary to and immanent with artistic legitimacy. An artist has made it when he or she has a book, but it is rare for artists to make it with books. It is interesting to compare Trockel's vitrine of "drafts" with Krebber's vitrine of dandies—each sends artistic identity elsewhere, though in a normative sense, female identity is already elsewhere.

In 1991, the artists Cosima von Bonin, Michaela Eichwald and Charline von Heyl, along with Koether and Texte zur Kunst editor Isabelle Graw, posed as gun-toting militants in a photograph by Hans-Jörg Mayer. Comical perhaps, when viewed within the tight social politics of Cologne, the photograph nonetheless announces the strong arrival of a new female presence that would increasingly demand visibility within the scene's eighties male networks. In quite different ways, each of these artists found subjective space within the over-coded social and sexual registers of aesthetic form. Von Heyl's paintings and drawings suggest a lexicon of gestural distinction, and in this a willingness to no longer fear either representation or abstraction. Von Bonin's large fabric "paintings without paint," recall the gendered techniques of sewing and stitching, though in the case of Tom, 2003, these are overlaid with a collage of cultural imagery (Tom of Finland silhouettes, Victorian ladies, dog pelts) which submit "women's work" to a calculated affect of toughness, gayness and high camp. Eichwald's work in many mediums, from photography, painting and collage to text, constructs a female identity shot through with "low," provincial and destitute modes of representation. Positioning the artist as a peripheral, almost hysterical figure, Eichwald's installation casts Cologne's semi-glamorous social world into stark relief.

Few mediums carry as much weight in Cologne as painting. And yet, after a certain moment in the mid-eighties, few mediums were as debased, implicitly critiqued or turned on their heads. In the wake of Oehlen, Kippenberger and others, it became possible—perhaps even necessary—to think about painting in nonrepresentational, even non-visual terms. In contrast to neo-expressionism, painting here had absorbed the lessons of conceptual art, the semiotic or linguistic turn, with the political connotations implied. The painter's subjectivity could no longer be witnessed as a unified or unproblematic conduit between artist and art work, but as a constructed image of displacement, performance and extra-object significance. If the earlier eighties moment of Cologne finds its paradigmatic medium in painting, and in questions of resistant subjectivity often expressed through painting and painting discourse, one should not think it incompatible with later "theoretical" moments when painting was considered a heretical idea. Cologne's two moments, perhaps overly simplified in the labels "Hetzler" and "Nagel," are much closer than is usually allowed, connected not, of course, by questions of medium or questions found in modes of object production, but precisely in a critical spirit of self-performance and subjective ambivalence that should be understood independent from more normative concerns. If it is important to stage the split between these moments, it is equally important to see them as dialectic. In doing so, one risks the judgment of ignoring historical specificity and local contradiction, but one gains a more synthetic understanding of a problem that extends below and beyond one moment or the next. All of these artists and each of these moments, whether implicitly or explicitly, effected a critique of artistic identity as the artists found it, whether by overwhelming it (like Kippenberger) or refusing it with non-productive strategies (like Krebber or Strau).

The British artist Merlin Carpenter has, in a sense, sought a way out of these two competing options—through a "sand in the Vaseline" negativity. As a Kippenberger assistant in the early nineties and a participant in that era's social-group-work projects like Friesenwall 120 in Cologne and Poster Studio in London, he self-critically pursued painting as a failed or pathetic gesture. In recent work—such as performances that invoke the abhorrence of Abu Ghraib or a frieze made for the Frieze Art Fair in which the fair's logo was rendered with Monopoly money—Carpenter turns an eye towards the left or liberal pieties that have driven so-called critical or social art throughout the nineties. This "crap political work," as he has called it, is rife with heavy-handed destructive jokes and seemingly stakeless ironies. New York audiences may recall his 2005 exhibition "A Roaring RAMPAGE of Revenge" at Reena Spaulings Fine Art. There, Carpenter produced, with the assistance of the gallery's directors, a series of paintings depicting all the press clippings this new, "cutting-edge" venue had accrued over the past year. Breathless reviews and celebratory "hot pick" blurbs overlaid expressionistic washes of paint (made "in the style of Josh Smith," one of RSFA's artists), which were also meant, or at least "said" to reference the 9/11 wreckage of the World Trade Center. The critic Isabelle Graw has described these irritations as a kind of "soiling the nest."[14]

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Jutta Koether once remarked to me that Cologne, historically, was distinguished among German cities for three factors: its Catholicism, its Carnival and its role as a media and entertainment capital. In ancient times, Cologne was called "Colonia" by the Romans, a northern walled outpost on the Rhine. Still to this day, the city retains a certain Latin feel with its labyrinthine streets, relaxed social attitudes and multitudinous bars and clubs. Cologne, it could be said, has always been a city where qualities of the self are at a premium—whether this means "losing oneself" in drink or spectacle or "caring for oneself" in religion. It is not surprising then how fundamentally the dreams and desires of social life have played a role in the city's art world. Even going back to his pre-Cologne days in Berlin, Kippenberger molded his artistic persona in the fashion of an impresario, overseeing the Factory-like "Buro Kippenberger" with Gisela Capitain, and co-owning the nightclub S.O. 36, a hotbed for Berlin's no-wave and new-wave music scenes. "In all these activities," Diederichsen writes, "it is as though there is a coextensive unfolding of Kippenberger's simultaneous striving for intensity, drastic measures and social density on the one hand and the ability to situate artistic praxis in more distanced circumstances, strategies, projects, offices, in keeping with the then taste for relishing and pursuing one's own alienation and turning it into a strength."[15]

Later, Kippenberger would play in bands such as Luxus and Alma Band and record numerous singles with his cohort of Oehlen, Büttner and others. Cologne was a hub for experimental musical activities of all kinds, from avant-garde noise and improvisation, to alternative rock, disco, techno and house. The music magazine Spex, which was edited by Diederichsen and Koether, among others, during the eighties was an important clearing-house and sounding board in this regard, and was also among the first journalistic venues in Europe to cover "cross-over" visual artists from America like Mike Kelley. It is important to remember that from the late eighties onward, a term like "lifestyle" was increasingly prominent in the cultural lingua franca. In Cologne's art field, however, artists' bands and musical projects were not merely lifestyle but a source of group experiment where social energies, personal auratics and non-visual energies could be channeled and vetted within a small community of one's peers. Music, in this regard, was one method of social distinction among others. Kai Althoff's band Workshop; the art-techno producer Justus Köhncke; Cosima von Bonin's collaborations with Köhncke, Althoff, and David Grubbs; Albert Oehlen's label Leiterwagon (which has released numerous artist and artist-band recordings); and Jutta Koether's "Cologne-ish" projects in New York like Club in the Shadows, which she co-operated with Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon, are all important examples of the close network of music-art phenomena.

And yet, one should be careful not to overstate the case. The art world today is glutted with band-like subjectivities, quasi-musical collectives and pop-culture tribes. In fact, these are among the current market's preferred artistic modes, segueing effortlessly into "old-fashioned" ideologies of romantic freedom, authentic expression and outsider (usually male) rebel mystique. What is relevant about music in this Cologne context is the critical consciousness with which it has been employed. The Los Angeles artist Mike Kelley, who was embraced by Cologne in the late eighties and has shown there frequently, provides a useful analogy. In his performance video Runway for Interactive DJ Event, 2000, Kelley affects a hilariously precise critique of recent attempts to refashion artistic subjectivity in the cultish vein of the DJ. Set on a makeshift catwalk in the basement of the Kunstverein Braunschweig—where, in the galleries upstairs, an after-opening party for a Kelley survey exhibition is in full swing—the video shows the artist and an accomplice vamping with an assortment of doll clothes left over from one of the "official" art works on display. As they strut up and down the stage, Kelley attempts to translate the cultural "meaning" of the doll outfits they pick up, calling out directions to an assistant who, in turn, relays this information, via intercom, to the party DJ upstairs. The DJ's set thus becomes a haphazard game of "Chinese Whispers," not just a translation between multiple parties and languages (English to German), but between aesthetic and cultural forms (in one memorable scene, a miniature set of cowboy chaps results in the Village People). Needless to say, this is an absurd operation and chaos rapidly ensues. The video ends with abandonment, an extended freakout dance session choreographed to a backwards version of the Beastie Boys' classic "You Gotta Fight."

Kelley's staging of the artist-DJ as a malfunctioning, traumatized figure has certain parallels with Aus lauter Haut (Made of Skin), 2001, a video produced and acted by the short-lived Cologne collective Filmgruppe West (Kai Althoff, Michaela Eichwald, Ralf Schauff and Jens Wagner). A kind of allegorical backwards look at the Cologne scene of the nineties, the video portrays the aspirations of four not-so-young people to form a rock band. Though the band is doomed from the start by interpersonal politics and ego games, its final performance sequence is truly ecstatic. One is left not with any concrete hope for collective experience but with an appreciation for the transforming negativities of noise, feedback and cathartic repetition.

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Any act of telling history is also an act of telling the present. If Cologne's attitudes were irresolvable in their moment, perhaps the pause and contradiction they suggest has value for the contemporary situation. Included in this exhibition is a group of younger artists who did not intersect with the history under discussion, but have come to it after the fact, often only through personal-social networks and art historical appetites. In their work, one can find similar problems of identity, subjectivity, artistic self-representation and construction, as well as similar energy, humor and pathos. Gareth James and Lucy McKenzie each deal with issues of historical translatability, seeking to re-present "past" aesthetic forms and moments in a contemporary context overdetermined by spectacle. McKenzie's installation Kulaks, 2004, for instance, centers on a group of drawings by the expressionist and Cologne native Käthe Kollwitz. Some years after their creation, the images had been captioned and turned into illustration by a German satirical magazine, an appropriation McKenzie herself satirizes by hanging a pink-neon "disco" light beneath the magazine layout pages. Gareth James, for his part, asks how past moments of art-as-sociability can be apprehended outside of their original fleeting circumstance. In a work made especially for this exhibition, the artist has melancholically photographed the packed-up remains of his 1997 installation New Work City, which explicitly sought to displace the artist and art work onto the social, convivial field by taking the form of an "artist's bar." What audience, what liberating possibilities, are available to this history now?

A refusal of identification (of oneself, of art practice) is at the heart of work by Blake Rayne, Bernadette Corporation and Reena Spaulings. Over the past decade, Rayne has pursued his own form of "problem painting," one in which distinctions of visual representation, historical position and material process are submitted to constant experimentation and deep-seated skepticism and doubt. Bernadette Corporation and Reena Spaulings, on the other hand, locate and resist identification as an effect of global-culture industry to produce "brands," lifestyle and collective persona. Starting in the mid-nineties, Bernadette Corporation worked in and around fashion, producing clothing lines, a short-lived fashion magazine, numerous videos, and a collaboratively written novel entitled Reena Spaulings. Their BC Corporate Story video, 1997, narrates the early history and mission of the group to produce ambiguous affects behind an anonymous logo or name. The related entity "Reena Spaulings" is now perhaps best known as a gallery on New York's Lower East Side, but "she" has also been the title character in B-Corp's novel, as well as a fictitious, collectively "made" artist with an exhibiting career in her own right. In reality comprising numerous individuals, like Bernadette Corporation, Reena Spaulings burst upon New York's art world in 2004 with a series of "flag paintings"—a symbolic assertion of identity performed under the banner of multitude.

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One of the dreams of "Cologne," as I take it, was that artists might stage a site of production—in their selves no less than in their exhibitions—rather than merely participating in mechanisms of display. This exhibition follows a similar dream, but must succeed or fail in the space of an installation, where viewers confront art works, often for the first time and with little mitigating experience. Such confrontations cannot be explained away or justified by art-historical or curatorial exegesis, but must mirror the complex navigations of the art itself. With little pressure, terms like "viewer" and audience become problematic. Perhaps, as Gareth James argues elsewhere in this book, there are no viewers or audiences, only receivers and producers—participatory figures in an ongoing struggle over significance and value. Such would seem the case in two final art works, by Louise Lawler and Josef Strau, which directly position the artists as "viewer-producers" of the Cologne scene. Lawler's Untitled (Martin and Mike), 1992, pictures art's continued fascination with Martin Kippenberger and Mike Kelley (not to mention their historical proximity) in an installation photograph of their work magnified under the crystal dome of a paperweight. Strau's The Cologne-In-Review-Reading-Lamp, 2006, takes a more complex, totemic form. Made as a type of reading-and-writing lamp, the object suggests those modes of cultural reflection—memory, reviewing the past, writing it and reading it—that are invisible or not to be viewed, but which nonetheless may occur in the warm glow of its light. ▯

Notes

1. Jutta Koether, "Martin Kippenberger Interview" in Martin Kippenberger: I Had a Vision (San Francisco: Museum of Modern Art, 1991), 21.
2. Diedrich Diederichsen, "'Selbstdarsteller': Martin Kippenberger between 1977 and 1983" in Nach Kippenberger, Eva Meyer-Herman and Susanne Neuburger, eds. (Vienna and Eindhoven: Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig and VanAbbeMuseum, 2003), 43.
3. Michel Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Vol. 2: The Uses of Pleasure (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), 18.
4. Andrea Fraser, "From the Critique of Institutions to an Institution of Critique," Artforum vol. 44, no.1 (September 2005), 282.
5. Koether, 21.
6. For an extended consideration of this rupture see Tom Holert, "Blood of the Poets: The Tribal '80s," Artforum, vol. 41, no. 7 (March 2003), 233.
7. This was also the time of Rirkrit Tiravanija's first "cooking performances," for instance.
8. Michael Krebber, "Angeldust" in Cosima von Bonin: Rabbit at Rest (Kraichtal: Ursula Blickle Stiftung, 2000), 42.
9. David Grubbs, "Bestellt und Nicht Abgeholt: Michael Krebber in der Greene Naftali Gallery, New York," Texte zur Kunst, no. 52 (December 2003), 123.
10. John Kelsey, "Stop Painting Painting," Artforum, vol. 44, no. 2 (October 2005), 222–225.
11. Mayo Thompson, "Vitrinization" in Michael Krebber (Kunstverein Braunschweig/Stadtische Galerie Wolfsburg, 2000), 17.
12. Diedrich Diederichsen, "Triumphs, Setbacks, Rear Exits, and Cease Fires: Some Aesthetic Issues Concerning Albert Oehlen, and Some Architectural and Musical Comparisons" in Oehlen Williams 95 (Columbus, Ohio: Wexner Center for the Arts, 1995), 103.
13. See Stephen Ellis, "The Boys in the Bande," Art in America (December 1988), 110.
14. Isabelle Graw, "Merlin Carpenter" (review), Artforum, vol. 44, no. 3 (November 2005), 265.
15. Diederichsen, Nach Kippenberger, 57.

Josef Strau
The Non-productive Attitude

It was maybe a kind of transformed fetishism attitude to live the social life of an artist without actually producing any art, or at least without presenting any art. On the one hand, the motives of this attitude could have been simple fear of representation; but on the other, they could have announced a desire to practice in a radical consequence what many theories suggested by the death an author- or producer-subjectivity. Certainly this pose of anti-production in the period of the late eighties, which for sure was already inspiring nineties art fashion, was a self-transforming attitude—even as its strong background of theoretical and radicalist conceptual art considerations were criticized by some as a bourgeois attitude of well-fed men. The substitution of the artist-as-producer with the sheer behavior of the artist-bohemian was a reaction to the work values of the eighties and necessitated a very dense social field in which to act out its partly theatrical impulse. Otherwise it would be no fun to insist that every opportunity to just not do nothing somehow threatened the professional environment with a promise of a future real production. It is very difficult to explain the strength of this attitude, so obsolete and boring it may seem today.

For sure Cologne was the best place to be, if some considerations were granted. When I moved there in the mid- to late eighties, I was very quickly assured by my first impressions that at least some parts of Cologne would allow me some time to survive and to become an artist who did not actually produce anything, did not have much to show and did not even feel the need to fulfill social life in any exciting way. There was a new necessity to practice a separation between the meaning of the artist's social participation and the representation of his production, in order to dissolve its old organic unity by creating another kind of social recognition—and in the best case to unnerve the repressive demands for legitimation.

And anyway, it was easy to gain social recognition without work in Cologne because the city had developed a wonderful audience that allowed—with the greatest of interest—this rather scary lack. Instead of pressuring the non-productive artist, it inundated his or her suffering with loving honors and affection. For some time, it even became the place where such attitudes were not only observed but were bred and expressed and discussed. But behind this magnificent charlatanry was a subjective void of fear, the narcissistic cultivation of insignificance and meaninglessness. In other words, this was a process of gaining recognition through a production of negative surplus value.

In short, the popularity of anti-productive attitudes in Cologne was maybe a result of some iconoclastic tendency, the sympathy for an attitude which substitutes image qualities with narrative impulse. In the best years the non-productive artist got great recognition if he substituted his work for a good personal narrative. He could be a kind of island in the main art world, while securing continuity with the tradition of anti-visual heresies. The practice of including autobiographical personal references gave artists in Cologne the reputation for mere Referenzkunst. In that sense the anti-productive attitude was a kind of iconoclast discipline.

But later the destructive effects of time were particularly strong on this frail and theoretically quite exciting attitude, creating a certain darkness in the art community. As usual, a liberating movement turned into a repressive force, exemplifying the mechanism in which forms stray from their aims to develop a system of values that results in ugly and ridiculous political behavior. Qualities of embarrassment and subjectivity were replaced by demands for legitimation as individuals were forced to impose permanent judgments on others to create a position.

Since I haven't lived in Cologne for ten years and my social and artistic milieu in Berlin is quite different, Cologne became for me a metaphor of a certain kind of art attitude. Sometimes I miss it, but often I am quite glad it has lost its realness and influence and given way to a bizarre mode of memory. If I had to make an encyclopedia entry of these years in Cologne from the perspective of my present situation, I would characterize the prevailing attitude as a lack of interest in the procedures of production, with more emphasis on positioning oneself as an artist within the social fabric. I guess that, if I may be allowed to include myself as a former member of that territory, I might then have been a champion of that non-productive attitude. But my initial interest turned into an obsession with the social fabric of the art world and this became an attitude far removed from the earlier pleasure of heresy.

Friesenwall was a perfect example of how early-nineties audiences were so interested in perceptions of social influence and public representation rather than "work" or its values. The strong attention we received allowed us to play with non-productive oral statements and fragments of work. Most of the time we pretended to show "models" for a space instead of actual work within the space. This created a mythology consisting of divergent theoretical, personal and critical narratives. I don't think we would have been able to create such public attention with this kind of "empty" space in any other time or place. Sometimes I think the theoretical shift of the main perception of art away from its product towards its social conditions was taken too personally, leading to the typical obsession of ex-Cologners with critique and judgment of others. I am very happy to have moved to an environment that is more relaxed in this way.

It should perhaps be mentioned here that when I moved to Berlin after these sometimes really wonderful, wild Cologne years, I experienced a very different culture of art and politics. Everything appeared as a faraway country to me, although maybe it is interesting to remember how the Cologne art scene was perceived there, how it was really hated so much by the members of the art-political bohemia in Berlin, mentioned always with unbelievable dislike and described as the hostile place per se, standing for all evil, perceived as the place of old-fashioned hierarchical structures, artist-authorship power-attitude, commercialism, anti-political art, anti-PC, male brotherhoods displaying open anti-feminism—altogether the place of the most reactionary art system. Berlin had a general fashion of Cologne bashing, but of course this has nearly disappeared over the years. Anyway, this Cologne perception seemed quite strange to me, since some parts of its art scene shared Berlin's desire for a return of political engagement, an interest in the interpretation of art production as political practice—including the interpretation of its power structures, stemming from the theories of Foucault and Deleuze—deconstructive ideology critique, feminism, the understanding of artistic work as text and the critique of authorship. Not so different from the prevailing preferences in Berlin. If one is honest, in each city there was a hope for a transformation of art practice through a more theoretical approach to cultural production and a desire to shed the stronger focus on the social construction of the artist's personality. It is just that the latter, more artistic aesthetic focus left more traces in the public memory, while the more theoretical, political discourse did not leave much behind. Many of us used these dialectics of the political and the aesthetic as the diagnosis of nearly everything. Its synthesis was the great final aim, the claimed last accomplishment of any cultural production. In a maybe too-heroic, narcissistic interpretation of my "non-production" of that time, I could now say that I unfortunately loved both opposing strategies for the evasion of production: the delay of production caused by theoretical engagement, the commitment to theoretical studies which "allowed" for the production of an art object only as deferral, such that theory would itself become the production; but also the opposite—the non-theoretical, non-political artistic maneuver of constructing the artist as a personality who could gain social recognition without having made any work. Perhaps not unsurprisingly, this double affection led to a kind of creative death.

To speak about anti-production attitudes quickly becomes something really very vague. A general description of non-productive attitudes even more so. Yet the term "non-productive" describes a bit more strongly than "anti-productive" the implied individual psychology involved—the possible laziness, indecisiveness, inability or refusal of production as a result of talking too much before doing. I guess this was all part of it, not just intentionality but its causes and effects. I think, in fact, from a vantage of so many years later, one shouldn't seek to formulate something retarded or obsolete only, but try to consider an image that helps understanding by deconstructing the extreme production-oriented values so common in art today. The non-productive attitude should be seen as a refusal of production values, but not as a refusal of expression as such.

I am attempting the difficult task of describing the change of an attitude and its consequences. There is much psychology involved, a lot of fear of representing expression, a dream to use all the appearances of being an artist to avoid the involvement of production. Over time, practices of expression were substituted by those of organization, especially in the more alternative project-making activities of the nineties. In the beginning these organizational activities were designed to fulfill more theoretical desires for independence from production structures, which were fremdbestimmt, or, let's say, perceived as "alienating." This was perhaps a wrong perception since the alienating powers of organization became even stronger than those of the "real" art world. For me, Friesenwall was a perfect example. In my capacity there I turned from being an artist to being an art-organizer. It is great to be an art-organizer, but it should not substitute for practices of expression. Giving organizational values so much space was a general social development of the nineties. Chaos, vagueness, indifference—what were actually the driving qualities of a space like Friesenwall in the beginning—became impossible, substituted by monothematic meanings. With this turn in alternative art practice, all power concentrated in the organizer's values of influence-making and envy of expression instead of turning to independence of expression or to an art that could support narrative qualities.

I am trying to explain a very personal phenomenon. I felt my first years in Cologne to be the best time of my life. But remembering the same time now, immediately I have the feeling they were one of the worst. When I told a friend about this Cologne period, about how I am trying to formulate this Cologne memory problem, she replied by asking me if not everyone participating in this special time was suffering from a similar situation?

Maybe I feel this change of heart because so many psychological tendencies behind Cologne's semi-glamorous attitude, which I enjoyed so much, remained latent and hidden—or, as I said, because fear of real expression, fears of all kinds which I could never express, were denied by collective self-censorship.

The non-productive attitudes of self-constructing artist personalities were absolutely in the wrong place from the beginning—a farce—if considered against the content-oriented art practices of politically aware alternative art structures. Nevertheless, in a weird maneuver, they could have supplied this whole alternative art context some missing glamorous appeal, a necessary stylistic contradiction to itself. The big dream, which so many minds were obsessed with for many years, was the fusion of glam and politics. This was the mega-representation. I completely forgot about it, since no one has sought it for so long, as if it were a passing fashion, which, if truly gone, becomes uncanny for the next twenty years, so embarrassing would be its return. []

The following texts are transcriptions of presentations delivered at a two-day roundtable discussion at the ICA, September 23–24, 2005. Participants included Diedrich Diederichsen, Andrea Fraser, Ann Goldstein, Gareth James, Jutta Koether, Jenelle Porter, Ingrid Schaffner, Bennett Simpson, Christopher Williams and Gregory Williams.

Diedrich Diederichsen

Bennett made an interesting observation earlier today about Cologne being very classical on the one hand—with very classical ideas of what artists and art objects are—while at the same time, having all kinds of irregular, unclassical activities. I think this classical versus non-classical opposition leads us to one of the centers of what's at stake in this Cologne idea that we're talking about. What do these very disparate activities by so many different people have to do with each other? The traditions they refer to are different, the materials they use are different. Bennett wants to relate some of this Cologne history to an idea of resistance towards certain effects of the art market and institutions, to see it as a model for distinguishing the contemporary situation today. But how much resistance can be observed and, then, what effect can it have? Terms like commodification, alienation, canonization, all these classics of political theory of the arts, describing effects of capitalism, state institutions, and so on—I think they are not really in the center of the forms one can describe in Cologne.

What I'm now going to say is maybe an exaggeration, but I think one of the main things about Cologne is that people try to resist, without really knowing it, without being conscious of it, the idea of objecthood. Or they have an intellectual critique of the object, while still having an often quite unreflective and classical, traditional practice of making art. A classical thing like a painting is nothing that you can isolate. Later on, when terms like "contextualization" or "context art" arrived on the scene, they were quite welcome in Cologne. They were even understood well by people who had no idea of the intellectual and art critical tradition of "contextualism," merely because somehow they resonated in people's own experience. Mayo Thompson's aphorism "practice crunches categories" can be understood as a reference to an underlying experience that he had with this. Of course, with Kippenberger, as the Philadelphia Inquirer critic wrote, you can't have the art work without the artist molesting you at the opening, without him as a person, present, to animate the object. But the interesting thing is that now that Kippenberger is no longer alive, institutions really like him. The necessity of his behavior is no longer valid. You can now have the object without the artist. You no longer have to be molested or laughed at. Of course, it's not just "molestation" I'm referring to, but all these other social things—drinking, jokes, stories about travels, adventure....

Kippenberger's was not a critique of objecthood coming from an alternative idea of what art was supposed to be. It came more from a feeling that, if you're an artist, you have to contend with the fact of producing objects and having them somewhere. But it was never about commodification or commodities, per se. In the tradition of bourgeois art, the object has always reflected the nature of objects in general, of reification as such. In order to deal with things in the world at all, art has had to cut out the producer or to forget that everything is produced. Art has had to proceed as if there were such a thing as objects separated from producers. Especially in the contemporary period this has become a problem, for we can see an uncanny reappearance of producers and production in art objects. This reflection of objecthood is visible in several Cologne artists, but you have to think about the historical situation. Why were artists trying to keep their object in process? Was this an effect of a psychological condition? What would this mean for Cologne artists in the 1980s and 1990s? I think that people were looking for the new medium, the zero-medium: some medium that had no materiality of its own, no roots of its own, which would be transparent and "not there." This would be something very traditional, something that is unquestioned but also totally unimportant. I think this is why we have all these very traditional genres and categories in the eighties and early-nineties Cologne art world. There was supposed to be no media at all. Of course, that was one of the larger mistakes. It was one of the things that backfired enormously. You had a similar thing in punk rock, for example. In punk rock you have a very simple song, a song that you can like, that everyone can sing along to in a bar. It is the song that is like no song at all, that can be 100% content because it has no form. In this idea you always forget that this non-form, this very unstructured form, is a form and a very specific one—one that at least has certain effects.

I think an important model for addressing or thinking about Cologne in these years comes from pop music. In pop music you have this unmarked aspect of the performance. You are not supposed to decide for certain whether the singer is talking about him or herself, or a fictitious person. You should never be able to decide this question. Whenever you are able to decide it, it's something else. It's either documentary or art. But this question of identity is never something that you focus on. It's not supposed to be the central element of the performance—it's just some rule the performance follows. I think this was a very attractive influence for art. It led, after a fashion, to the constant reappearance of the question, "What person is this?" as the major criterion for judging the value of art. Not, "Is this well thought out, is it something I haven't seen before, or is it interesting?" but to the question of, "What does this person want and what person do you have to be to want this?" And then, perhaps, you decided yes, I like this person.

One also has to think of the way this was framed socially, the way cultural institutions worked in Germany at this time, and especially the way the city of Cologne worked as a cultural sphere. German cultural institutions were still very much shaped by a competition between city governments. There was no national capital. There was no cultural center. There was no Berlin. On the other hand, the cities were still rich; they still had a lot of money to spend. There were several fields that were in permanent competition over what was the capital of art in Germany, and this led to an endless funding of new institutions, but more important, to the idea that institutions could grow out of this funding, that whoever was working with city governments and conspiring with them in the project of producing a milieu that made a city the capital in a certain field would somehow profit. Add to this the specific geography of Cologne, with its village-like structure, and the sense of everyone simultaneously producing something, objects that could be taken away, that some alienating market force or commodity structure could usurp, even if one was basically producing and performing for a group of people that were like your family. This was a paradox, because you're not in danger of objectification or reification if everything stays in the family. This made all the performances, all the production, rather without risk when you knew that, "Oh yes, there goes that crazy Kippenberger again. If he's humiliating me, oh, I know the guy!" Kippenberger, himself, was not content with this; he went further. He went to other countries to try out their situations.

...

During the nineties, due to the influence of contextualist practice and, still, the constant reappearance of the classical traditions, all the elements of this Cologne model were visible in a social way. Cosima von Bonin stresses this very much. Her film The Merry Pilgrimage describes the Cologne world as a village, which it was, and it describes people there as having functions that one has in villages. There was the priest, the mayor, the owner of the bar, the guest house, and so on. They all spoke with this heavy provincial accent, an artificial provincial accent. At this time there was a bar in Cologne, Zur Grünen Eck, which was basically a real working-class neighborhood bar. It had been taken over by the art world but it still existed as a neighborhood bar as well. Somehow this produced a kind of mirroring effect: the art world crowd met there every night and got heavily drunk, while this other group of "regulars" did the same thing. In a way this whole distinction between the artists and the regulars disappeared, but not in an "aren't we all alike" way. What allowed this disappearance was a double recognition of provinciality.

...

I want to return to the discussion of production and to what attitudes about production came out of this period in Cologne. If there was a critique of production in Cologne, it came from a very small group of artists—Kippenberger, Oehlen, and others—who were both the orchestrators and the beneficiaries of it. They were the ones who had success with objects by refusing objecthood, by producing all these other types of art values which came from the social, from the heavy atmosphere of self-invention and life-style. Again, the pop-music paradigm is apt: selling out versus not selling out. "The misery of being exploited is nothing compared with the misery of not being exploited at all." The production of non-production gives forth a surplus of material that is critical without knowing it, without being aware of it, without having a theory about it, without being affected by it. It was not until the late eighties that conscious criticality and reflection finally arrived in Cologne. Friesenwall 120 grew out of this arrival, and it was, for some reason, a mystery to many people of how it functioned. Friesenwall was welcomed by practitioners, like Kippenberger, who had gone through the other place before—which suggests the fact that, of course, there was some critical agenda in the "pre-critical" Cologne, even if it wasn't known in the new terms.

But this is the normal history that Cologne itself always has told. I think in general it's a good idea to make an exhibition on Cologne before and after the dividing line—and even to ignore the dividing line to a certain extent. But of course we have to establish that the dividing line exists. My last point is that although there is this distinction between a pre-critical and a critical moment in Cologne—with today being post-critical—we have to establish that the critique of production that was natural to the earlier moment somehow corresponded to the discursive theories of contextualism later on. This is precisely why someone like Kippenberger always felt very good in the days of Nagel, even though he came from another time. []

Jutta Koether

As an artist, I relate to the programmatic title of this show, "Make Your Own Life." I followed that dream or to a certain degree, learned it from Kippenberger, not in an apprentice-master way, but in learning about procedures and practices and, yes, ways of behaving or not behaving or figuring out how to make utterances in public and so on. My relationship to Kippenberger involved, let's say, a certain amount of tolerance; maybe more than other people had at a certain time. I understand Cologne as a place, as a very specific climate that had already produced and had been favorable to these kinds of personas, to these fictional or semi-fictional identities, to people who just showed up and tried to do something, and to other people who just laugh about it, or find it relevant.

In Cologne the term "laissez-faire" was always used a lot because the city has this somewhat liberal attitude. It is known for three things which are closely related: Catholicism, carnival and the entertainment industry. It is close geographically and psychologically to other European cities; but it is not Prussian, not Protestant, not conceptual. Cologne is about defying hierarchies; not having an art school, not having an academy it produced people who were always a little off. Even going back to the twenties, Cologne was never the "official" art city; there were always better places. But it did have groups: it was very conglomerate in the 1920s, later destroyed, but there were people like Max Ernst, coming out of these circles and then later, post-war, there was Beuys. Even before that there was the photographer Chargesheimer. He's actually Krebber's biological father. These Cologne histories are generated by artists who were not really recognized or not coming out of an academy of fixed systems, but out of the undirected social fabric. Cologne has always has been called an ambitionless city—sloppy, visionless and lazy. It has a certain openness or willingness that is very provincial, but which also gives people who don't fit a permission to continue.

I think Kippenberger sensed that Cologne would be the right place at the right time. When he started out he was actually in Berlin, which was then this island of countercultures, very intense and very excessive. But in order to expand and not stay a freak in a tiny place, he moved. He came to Cologne because it favored all these other types. So there was a tolerance that forms people. I could claim that for myself. I can also detect it in an artist like Krebber: the sense that one's art already contains these histories, these social formations, whatever they are—clownerie, carnival, family-like structures.

As for Kippenberger's persona, I think he had a very particular trajectory; he was definitely informed by Beuys, even in an oppositional way, but it was clear. Dieter Roth was also important; he wasn't from Cologne, he but had that kind of inclusivity. Anything that came along could somehow be used, talked about and integrated. Of course, this means that you expose yourself, but you also produce critiques of your surroundings. Kippenberger was the most proactive of people, always embracing controversy, but not like "I show you up, I bang you over the head, and then I leave, and this is the theater." He fed everything back into the next production or back into the next group of assistants—it was an ongoing process, a kind of liebensform or "form of life." I don't mean "life style." There is a distinction. Liebensform is the way you conduct your life, how you wake up and what you discuss in the morning; whether you sit in the Café Federale and start drinking and talking about art; or whether you teach in a school and do things that way. Every aspect is lived as a piece of what you do and what your art is about. This is a tricky proposition for an artist's model, because you become extremely exposed, either as a romantic vision or as a pure product of self-objectification.

Some of the figures who pursued this route, in different but related ways from Kippenberger and Krebber, were Michel Buthe and Jürgen Klauke. Buthe built his house and transformed it into this kind of pleasure dome, refining it and refining it. Everything was highly stylized, exotic, a place for fantasies. There were drugs but it was ritualized, staged, not just "let's have a party," but very codified. He was active in the early seventies, even until 1976 or 1977. As for Klauke, he was known for his self-portraits, sequences of photographs in which he would pose as these different personas. He was a kind of transgender artist without being so. He posed as all kinds of artificial gender identities. It was the seventies, the years of glam rock. Klauke was feared when I was 13 or 14. He was like the god. He reigned over these two bars in Cologne and he would insult every newcomer, every girl. But at the same time it was this obviously staged, crazy routine, which after you'd been there twice, you knew and could enjoy. There was a whole scene around him that never got connected to the international art world in the way later generations would.

So where do I find myself in this whole environment? It has certainly informed who I am—I mean, you are what you grow up with. I'm more emotionally involved and am deeply invested in the first part of this Cologne story we are talking about—the early or pre-critical part, to use Diedrich's terms—and yet I've also always been opposed to it, or sought to reject it because it was macho, because as a woman I was outside of it. This does not mean that I identified with the second "political" moment in Cologne, however, because its own rejections felt wrong to me. When you don't belong anywhere, you figure out ways to navigate. In this sense, Kippenberger was an interesting model because he adapted; he navigated without being stupid or corny or expected.

Diedrich Diederichsen [Response]

Cologne is the permanent German twenties—but this means two things. The twenties mean anarchy, laissez-faire, a kind of openly politicized debate, struggle, artistic creativity, and so on. But they also denote a time when Cologne was unable to defend itself against Fascism. Cologne did not develop anything to prevent fascism. So, on the one hand they were the opposite of it, and on the other, they produced it.

But I have another completely different thing to say, which may connect our two presentations. Kippenberger is one artist; the other one is Krebber. For a time before they came to Cologne they were together in Berlin. And in that time, they were both interested in acting. Kippenberger played in three different films and wanted to become an actor for a long time. The part he most wanted was from The Man Without Qualities, which was offered to him but the film was never made. Krebber took acting lessons; he took dancing lessons and he played the flute. Krebber is originally from Cologne, but Kippenberger is not. But they both went there when it was somehow possible to act there, to make their work from their lives, which Bennett's title refers to. But Kippenberger also said that he considered himself to be a "representative," an example, which is potentially very different from the classical romantic position entailed by "make your own life." What is important is that in all these Cologne constellations, all these extra activities were not really defined as art, nor were they defined as non-art. This is a crucial thing, because it constructs the site of observation from which one can look at art as ridiculous. []

Gregory Williams

The in-joke featured heavily in the work that was produced by Martin Kippenberger and his colleagues starting in the late 1970s. It is notoriously difficult to "get" many of their jokes. In thinking about their structure, it's helpful to refer to Merlin Carpenter's compelling designation of Kippenberger's studio assistants and friends as his "secret explainers." During the 1980s Kippenberger relied increasingly on assistants, friends, colleagues and other artists to participate in an ongoing comedic dialog that helped to generate his jokes, non-jokes and anti-jokes. For Carpenter, the secret of explaining Kippenberger's work is discovered in the fact that the jokes were always already motivated and conceived in a group setting. In other words, it was a semi-public situation when the ideas were first spawned, so, theoretically at least, later viewers of the work should have some kind of access to it by retracing the original conversation.

This idea led me to think more about the presence of the anecdote and its importance for Kippenberger's work and reception. People tend to be in agreement that the anecdote is essentially the key route toward truly comprehending Kippenberger's work—without the narrative of origin, one must question to what extent we can go back today and rediscover the source of the anecdote. What is inherently difficult about trying to find a way back to the joke or the anecdote is that both are traditionally spoken forms of discourse and don't lend themselves to being recorded or written down. Various writers on jokes have argued that, since roughly the 1960s, mass communication and entertainment have rendered the classic joke obsolete. Everything has shifted from the two-part, verbally conveyed joke to the quick wisecrack.

For these artists, jokes were beneficial in working through problems related to postmodernism: late arrival, the lack of authenticity, the question of failure—all of which they consciously confronted. That's why so many of Kippenberger's jokes are three or four jokes awkwardly collaged together. Or the punch line is never delivered. There are countless works by Kippenberger that indicate some kind of comedic set-up, but it's never really clear when or if you're supposed to laugh. Still, one can also perceive moments of optimism or hope, where an unambiguous and perhaps unself-conscious explosion of laughter is unleashed.

By the late 1980s, Kippenberger was traveling constantly, and Albert Oehlen lived and worked in different cities. I suggest that there was a moment in the mid- to late 1980s when they were trying to retain some sense of intimacy just prior to the art world going resolutely and irreversibly global in the 1990s. Whether they consciously saw it coming or not, there was a built-in acknowledgement of their conversation becoming dispersed and this was the last moment of attempting to hold it together. Once they had successfully established international visibility by the late eighties, the members of this group began to drift toward more individual projects and ultimately landed back in the realm of the monologue. ▯

Andrea Fraser

My initial contact with Cologne came through a constellation of people connected to Joseph Kosuth including Gregg Bordowitz, Fareed Armaly and the collaborative artists Michael Clegg and Martin Guttmann. I went to the School of Visual Arts with Gregg and Fareed. In 1984 or so, Gregg took over Martin's job as Kosuth's assistant. That's how I met Martin and Michael as well as Kosuth. A few years later, Gregg passed the job along to Fareed, who began traveling in Europe with Kosuth, as Martin and Gregg had, on what we used to call "Joseph's junket." At some point, Fareed met Christian Nagel and started telling Nagel about his friends in New York. At around the same time, or a bit later, Michael Clegg got involved with Isabelle Graw and began his relocation to Cologne. I remember meeting Nagel at the Cupping Room Café in Soho, probably around 1988, when he was still based in Munich. I remember thinking to myself, "Okay, I don't want to work with galleries, but here's this guy offering me a show in Europe...".

In 1989, I began developing a relationship with American Fine Arts gallery. In the fall of 1989, Colin de Land was invited to participate in the Cologne Art Fair. I guess Colin didn't have any money to spend on shipping art over to Germany, so at the last minute he jumped on a plane with a roll of posters and some videos, including, I believe, a video fireplace, a Jane Fonda workout tape, and my Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk. Of course, his booth was the hit of the fair and suddenly I started getting invitations from all over Europe.

I made my first "art trip" to Europe in the summer of 1990 and did a sort of tour of what was emerging as a network of artists, galleries and institutions to which Nagel was loosely connected, making stops in Paris for the opening of a Mark Dion show at Galerie Sylvana Lorenz; Vienna, where I met Heimo Zobernig and Martin Prinzhorn; Graz where I met Alexander Bleich-Rossi of Galerie Bleich Rossi and Elizabeth Printzchitz. Printzchitz was the director of the Kunstverein in Graz, which published the magazine Durch, and she had arranged for the script of my Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk in German translation before it appeared in the journal October in English. I also went to Stuttgart, where I was in a group show of American artists at Galerie Ralph Wernike that included Mark Dion, Peter Fend and John Miller, among others. I produced my first "European" piece for that show. It was a set of wall texts to be installed next to the other work in the show. The texts were made up of breathless quotations full of nationalist stereotypes from a 1958 German review of "The New American Painting Show," organized by The Museum of Modern Art in New York. And I also, of course, visited Cologne.

In Cologne I started meeting the group of artists that Nagel was going to be working with, like Cosima von Bonin and Michael Krebber. I hung out with Michael Clegg and Isabelle Graw, who I had met in New York a couple of years before, and heard about Texte zur Kunst, the magazine she was starting. I also met Christian Philipp Müller around that time, and I'm sure I also met Martin Kippenberger, although I can't remember exactly where. Nagel hadn't opened his gallery yet. I went back to do my show in November 1990. It was my first one-person gallery show anywhere. I had been in museum shows previously and I had done performances at the New Museum, and Artists Space, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, but I had never had a gallery show.

I think mine was the second show at Nagel Gallery. It was scheduled during the Cologne Art Fair, one year after Colin had made his big splash. So I took that as a context and decided to install the gallery as an art-fair booth, with the same textured wall covering, rubber floor mats and furniture that they used in the fair building. Unlike an art-fair booth, however, the gallery was almost empty. I installed a little "retrospective" of my work, which was kind of a joke because I was twenty-four and had produced very little at that point. I believe it included one videotape, four posters, two sets of wall texts, including the one produced for the Ralph Wernicke show, and six little aluminum disks with smiley and frowney faces on them that I had produced for the "Desire of the Museum" show at the Whitney's downtown branch museum.

However, the installation was just a kind of stage set for a book I made. It was a black binder and looked like the kind of presentation book a gallery might bring to an art fair with information on each of its artists. It was sitting on the art fair desk I installed in the gallery. The book starts out, as might be expected, with the invitation to the show, and what looks like an artist's biography. But instead of starting with my first show, it starts in 1945. Instead of being a C.V., it's actually a chronology of American art in post-war Germany. The book itself is a kind of portable archive of photographs and "clippings" from newspapers and catalogs documenting this chronology. It goes back in time, juxtaposing German-American Neo-Expressionism love-fest exhibitions with clippings on protests against Reagan in Germany; the establishment of the market for Pop Art with the Cologne Art Fair; and a few big collectors like Ludwig, in the context of the RAF bombings of US Army bases and anti-Vietnam demonstrations; Kennedy in Berlin and Cologne and the emergence of Documenta; Eisenhower and the exhibitions of American art circulated by The Museum of Modern Art with CIA funding; the establishment of Amerika Hauses all over Germany; and finally the cultural programs of the Marshall plan. The idea was to contextualize my reception in Germany and the peculiar fact that I was having my first gallery show—anywhere—in Germany, and at the tender age of twenty-four. Why Germany? It smelled fishy to me, and if I was the beneficiary of a CIA plot, I wanted to get to the bottom of it.

That was my first show in Cologne. The following year, Nagel participated in the Cologne Art Fair for the first time and I went back to perform May I Help You in his booth. That was a difficult time. After the brief period of only a year or two, the hot house atmosphere of the group associated with Nagel started producing a kind of collective meltdown. People stopped talking to each other. There were fistfights. I spent very little time in Cologne after that, until my second show at Nagel, ten years later, in 2001.

Part of the process that led to my second show in Cologne was a reconsideration, not of Cologne perhaps, but certainly of the artistic positions associated with Cologne represented by Martin Kippenberger. My second show was called Kunst muss hängen (Art Must Hang) and it was… well, it was a painting show! Or at least that's what it looked like the first day. The paintings I produced for the show were actually a set for a performance I did at the opening in which I performed, in German, a thirty-minute transcript of a drunken dinner speech by Martin Kippenberger. The original speech took place at a venue called Club an der Grenze, or Club on the Border, in Burgenland on the outskirts of Austria, in the mid-1990s. The occasion was the first art exhibition by Michel Würthle, one of Kippenberger's best friends, who was best known as the owner of the Paris Bar in Berlin. Kippenberger installed art from his collection at the Paris Bar, including, at one point, the smiley and frowney faces that he bought out of my first show at Galerie Nagel. You know, I wasn't really an object maker, so I didn't really think about how to hang those little aluminum disks. I just put them up with double-stick tape. He tried the same thing at the Paris Bar, but apparently they kept falling off the walls—I always imagine, into someone's soup. At some point in the early 1990s I ran into Kippenberger and he told me about the problem he'd been having with them, and kind of shook his finger at me and said "Art must hang!" So that's where the title of my second show at Nagel came from. The show also included those little aluminum disks, which we borrowed from Kippenberger's estate.

Kunst muss hängen was the first of a group of works that I did in the early 2000s that focused on the position of the artist. After having done work for years about collectors, curators, museum volunteers and trustees, dealers, etc., I began to realize the most problematic position in the field of art may be that of the artist. My interest in Kippenberger was also part of a reconsideration of the ambition that drove a lot of my work in the 1990s: the ambition to move beyond the ambivalence that I believe most art in the avant-garde tradition has been trapped in, and to resolve some of those contradictions rather than just reflect on them. For me, that ambition was invested in my Services project and in my efforts to come up with forms of support that did not involve commodity exchange. By the late 1990s, however, it became clear that in my own work as well as that of other artists who were operating within a "service" model, that this ambition had fallen victim to a kind of bureaucratization. Artists were becoming glorified curators, consultants and public programmers; politically motivated, community-based practices where being pushed into the mold of community-development projects by funding agencies.

When I started to think about reflecting on the role of the artist, Kippenberger immediately came to mind. He was an artist who performed himself in what I always saw as a profoundly ambivalent acting out of artistic archetypes, right down to drinking himself to death. I was a guest at the luncheon following Kippenberger's show at the Kölnischer Kunstverein in 1991. Everyone sat down, all of his supporters, dealers, curators, critics and collectors, hungry I'm sure. Before we could eat, Kippenberger got up to make a speech, and he went on and on and on and on. I couldn't understand what he was saying, but from the response of the other guests I was certain that I was witnessing a highly ritualized sadomasochistic enactment in which he alternately charmed and insulted, titillated and abused his supporters, all the while denying them food.

When I met Kippenberger in the early 1990s, I thought he was a typical obnoxious, drunken, macho, sexist painter. I came of age in New York in the mid-eighties, and painting, particularly German painting, was indelibly associated in my mind with Neo-Expressionists, and Neo-Expressionists were the enemy, the "ciphers of regression" that we—the postmodern, feminist, neo-conceptualists I identified with—were fighting against. Kippenberger was always quite supportive of me, but I couldn't deal with him, wasn't interested. At some point I realized that it was a bit more complicated than that. My interpretation, as I developed Kunst muss hängen, is that, yes, he was the drunken, macho, sexist, racist, homophobic, and possibly anti-Semitic artist that he appears to be in the speech that I found. I think he knew that he was and I think he hated himself for all that and probably more. But instead of covering it all over, he performed it to an extreme, performing, as I've said elsewhere, the inseparability of that terribly seductive freedom represented by and enjoyed by artists and our enslavement by those very archetypes of freedom, which have often added up to the freedom to destroy ourselves, above all. []

Gareth James

I'm approaching this roundtable very much as an outsider to the Cologne art scene, with little immediate or direct personal investment, which is why Bennett asked me to be here. Let me begin by trying to condense some of the propositions that have emerged for a curatorial methodology that considers the idea of Cologne as a site of production for curation, rather than a site of display of artifacts. This distinction is important because in the present moment, spaces of production have increasingly been given over to spaces of display. I'm sure we could all give anecdotes from our various cities about this. Mine would include the recent termination of P.S.1's studio program, where for various reasons, studio space sharing the same institutional and physical location as exhibition space has been turned over to providing more gallery space.

I was shocked to learn that Cologne has no contemporary art school to speak of. This is probably a little provincial of me, but I tend to think that art schools are so important for the production and sustainability of art in urban centers—because of the fashion in which they thrust different generations into proximity—that I had a hard time believing that Cologne lacked one. Especially given the brutal reputation of German art schools for a nepotistic professorial system. But then it made sense—what if precisely because of the absence of an art school, the art scene in Cologne simulated the same complex relations of sometimes sado-masochistic, sometimes nurturing discussion and practice of the "art school" within the social relations we name as its scene? For example, that what structured the Cologne scene was not the market and celebrity or an emergent critical discourse, but the desire to replace the absent art school with similar bonds of association, hierarchies and personas?

Again as an outsider, I have to ask myself whether this current moment embodies the dreams of that past moment, nightmarish or not (i.e., whether something genuinely new emerged during that time which might now be legible in how it determined subsequent practices), or whether the value of a historical method would instead be constituted in viewing Cologne as a synthesis of earlier moments or tendencies, requiring us to look back past Cologne to find the necessary historical precedents for it (whether these be in Dada, Surrealism or Brecht, rather than Bauhaus). The Brechtian traffic accident seems most pertinent in this current discussion: to think of another way of telling history, whether it's in exhibition making or in the pedagogical scenario of the classroom or critical text. Brecht's model for a pedagogical practice was the aftermath of a traffic accident. A number of people are standing around in the street arguing over what happened. A stream of present contradictions relating to the past. Instead of a traffic accident, we might talk about art or painting as accidents that have already happened. Then we have the possibility of the artist understood as the bystander arguing over what actually did happen, what his or her relation to that moment is or was, arguing with other bystanders. This might constitute a sort of pedagogical/historiographic production.

It's interesting to me that a certain homology arises between the contested descriptions of Cologne and those of practices that have been associated with Bourriaud's notion of relational aesthetics. Let's condense it as follows: on the one side, there is a kind of neo-expressionism (albeit in a conceptual vein) of ambivalence, and on the other, a claim for critical analytical work. Or, in another fashion, a contest between the performative production or re-presentation of contradictions versus the explicit taking on or articulation of a position. I don't think that anyone in their right mind would want to argue unequivocally for one side of this description to the absolute exclusion of the other as an adequate account of "what went on in Cologne," or why it was important, but the apparent absence of a discourse that can articulate the centrality of both of these propositions within practice clearly hampers our intent to make a coherent description of what we mean when we say "Cologne," and as such could be taken as a criteria for a curatorial methodology which seeks to do so.

Our discussion of methods of practice in Cologne, both curatorial and artistic, seems to consistently break down over the relationship between, on the one hand, an expressive, and on the other a critical method. But then another kind of method of practice has been a consistent subterranean plotline through the presentations: the "torture method." The torture method is kind of a joke but in a funny dialectical way, we might talk of how it crosses over into a practice of heightened care and generosity, which after all, was also a persistent theme in the presentations. Whether it is in the artist torturing the dealer or an assistant with unreasonable, and on the face of it, apparently frivolous demands, the frequency with which these anecdotes take a central place within the oral history of Cologne asks that they be considered with some seriousness. Perhaps in the end, anecdotes of torture and interpersonal sabotage might not amount to anything, but they could also be a way in to discussing how the expressive and the critical permutated one another, in a refusal to perform to normative standards: a deinstrumentalization of artistic practice under the increasingly normative conditions in which the terms of display have trumped all others.

James

I think the question of torture segues into the final methodology. Greg's presentation made me think of Simon Critchley's writing on humor, beginning with his distinction between the now-archaic sense of humor as a general disposition of a subject, versus its modern sense as an intersubjective social relation constructed around the form of the joke. Critchley made a distinction some time ago between wit and irony which I found very informative: irony takes something presumed to be self-identical, and shows how in fact it's not self-identical, how it breaks up into difference, into fragments. Wit, on the other hand, being the reverse of irony, takes two things presumed to be unlike each other and shows how they share fundamental properties or attributes. I'm reminded of the problematic reception to Merlin Carpenter's "Children of the Projects" exhibition, from which visitors seemed to understand that "some joke" was central to the show even while they didn't know what the joke actually was. Further interrogation (to try and understand why the actual content of the joke was opaque) was deemed unnecessary. But the 800-pound gorilla in the room was clearly the possibility that the joke was a racist one: the joke, as I understand it, was that Carpenter rips into the liberal presumption that art is naturalized as a cultural good, making the mention of art and racism together literally unthinkable. A quick glance at the work produced in Cologne will expand the list to include fascism and sexism amongst a range of other bigotries that are invoked to refuse the automatic and instrumentalizing association of the role of art, the artist, and all its attendant institutions with liberal society.

So to try and come to a conclusion here, the title of this exhibition, "Make Your Own Life," reminds me of a scene from Jean-Luc Godard and Anne-Marie Mieville's Soft and Hard: A soft conversation on a hard subject. In it Godard relates to Mieville how he had been frustrated about the way in which an actress was reading a script during filmmaking on an earlier film. Some thirty years later in this conversation, Godard tells Mieville that he had belatedly realized that it wasn't the actress's fault, but the fault of the script. Even more, he then realized it wasn't really the fault of the script, but that it was directly his own problem; and consequent to this realization, that to write better scripts, for actors to deliver the lines better, to make better films, he would have to change something fundamentally about the terms of his own life and the way in which he went about it. For me this relates directly to Raymond Williams' base description of culture: that it is nothing more nor less than meaning as it is lived and organized. []

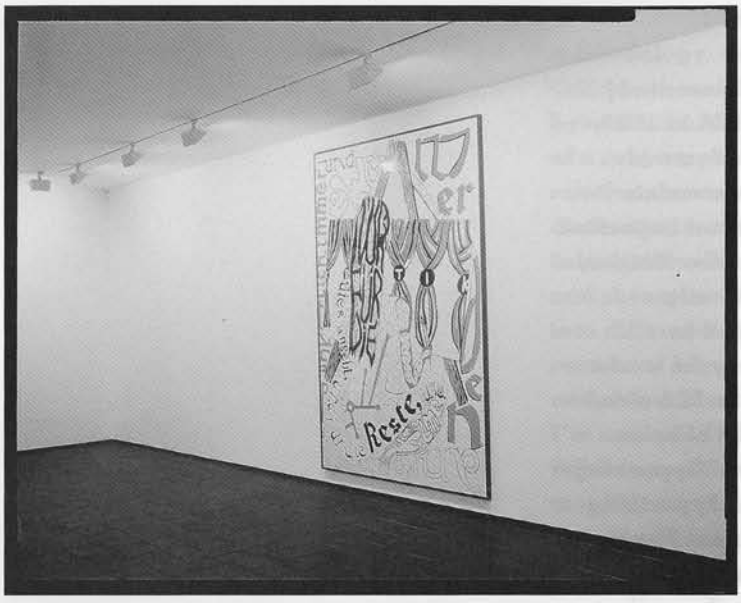
Ingrid Schaffner

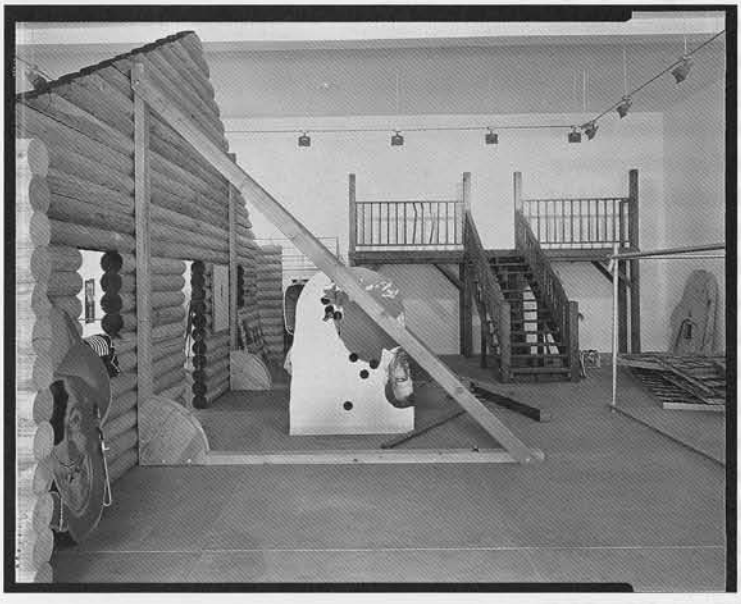
I want to present a very short "Make Your Own Life" case study in the form of "Not to be a Second Winner." Held at ICA in 1989, Martin Kippenberger's first American museum exhibition was organized by Melissa Feldman, then a relatively new associate curator. It fell on the heels of one of Kippenberger's most important installations "Peter, the Russian Position" at Galerie Max Hetzler, and included a number of works from Cologne. Apparently, as Feldman and Kippenberger were beginning to install in Philadelphia, the artist proposed the idea of exhibiting the works inside of the crates. There was some anxiety here at the ICA about having borrowed all this art work and not taking it out of boxes. That this might pose a problem for the lenders. And so Kippenberger agreed to show some works unwrapped, and others only partially wrapped. There is a photo of Kippenberger and Christian Nagel, who was here for the show, "mummifying" the art in packing tape and bubble-wrap. The tape was printed to Kippenberger's specifications: "I hold myself closed" in three different languages.

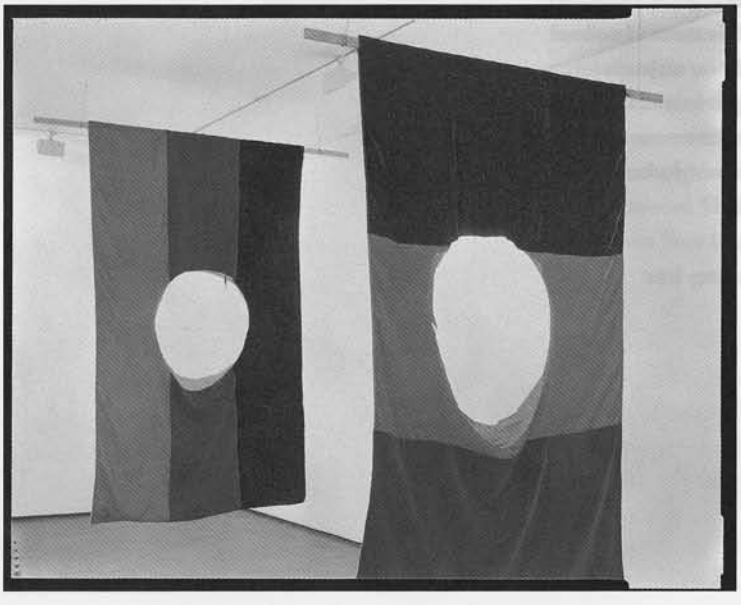
"Not to be a Second Winner" was part of ICA's "Investigations" series and appeared simultaneously with two other, separate shows. (This perhaps explains why it has always been listed as a group exhibition in Kippenberger's biography.) Kippenberger had one side of the gallery. In the center was Allan Wexler. On the other side was Hiroshi Sugimoto. The idea of the museum sectioned off into different nationalities—German, American, Japanese—inspired Kippenberger to dub it the "Philadelphia Documenta." He spent a week here. One night when he and Feldman were out at a bar, she says he advised, "Kid, you want to be a success in the art world, you've got to do a Piero Manzoni show." The night of the opening it rained and there was an after party at a Polish social club. I was there as the evening raged on, and will never forget the image of Julie Sylvester and Kippenberger dancing on a piano, lip-synching to "Have You Seen the Little Piggy?"

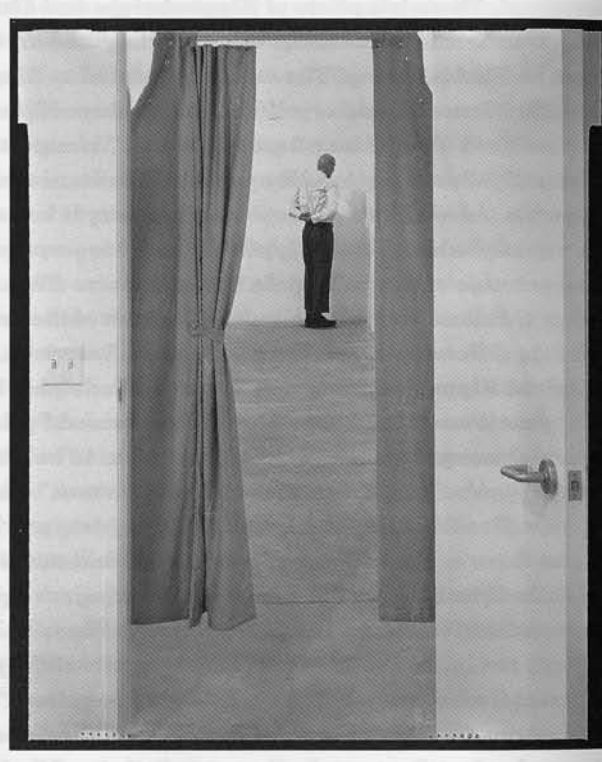
The exhibition was reviewed locally by Edward Sozanski, who wrote in the Philadelphia Inquirer: "[Kippenberger's "Investigation"]...is the least satisfying of the three because it seems to need animation to make it come together...All of these objects establish a setting for a performance. But absent the performer, the piece remains inanimate and mute. One can intuit the irreverence these elements posit, but one would like to see the ensemble brought to life." I would have to say that Ed got it just right.

Thanks to curator and critic Melissa Feldman for sharing her recollections for the roundtable. []







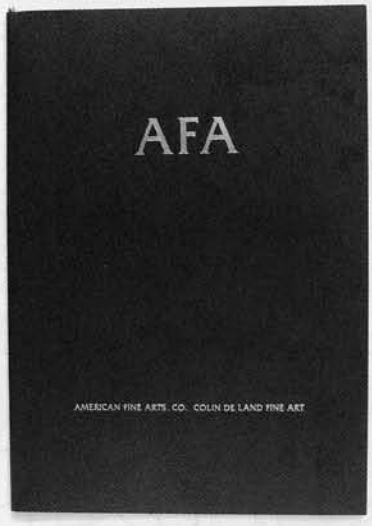


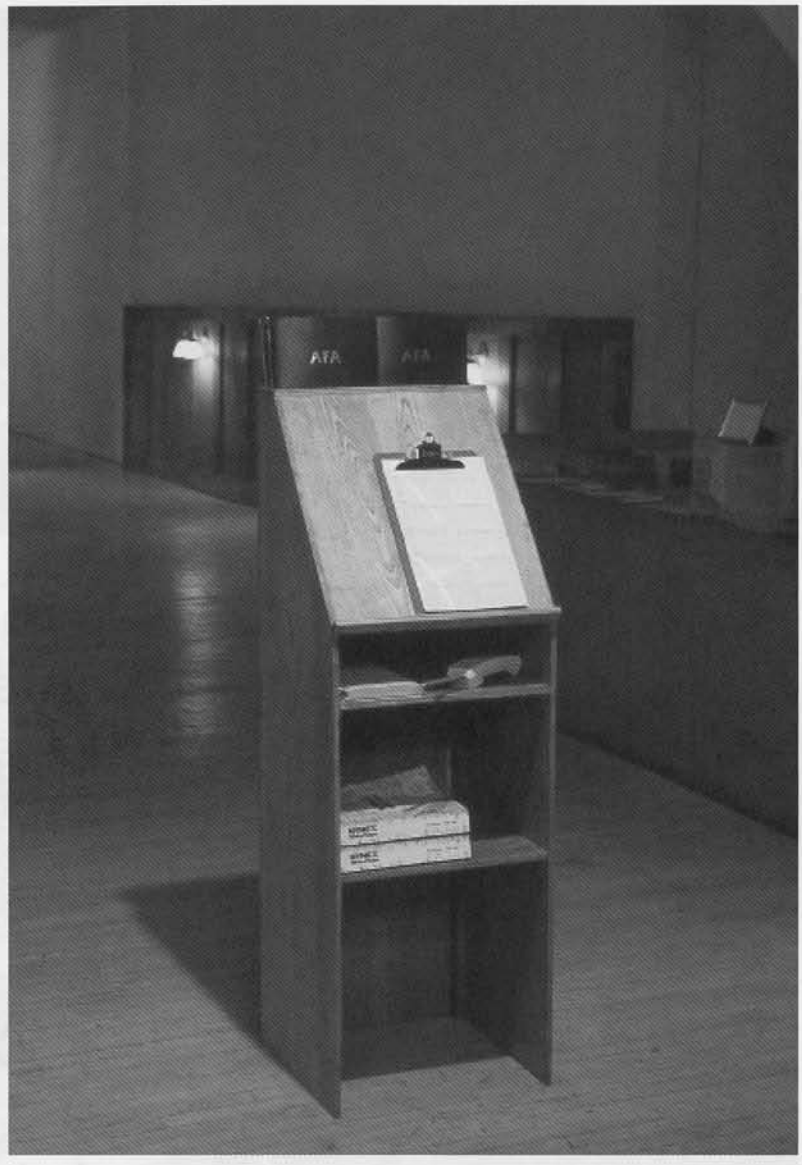
details from Stephen Prina, Galerie Max Hetzler, 1991
left, top: 143 of 163, Albert Oehlen, 31.8.–29.9.1990, Galerie Max Hetzler VII of IX
left, middle: 140 of 163, Cady Noland, 7.7.–25.8.1990, Luhring Augustine Hetzler VIII of IX
left, bottom: 132 of 163, Georg Herold, 2.1990, Galerie Max Hetzler VII of IX
right: 134 of 163, Martin Kippenberger, 2.3.–7.4.1990, Luhring Augustine Hetzler VIII of IX

Stephen Prina, Galerie Max Hetzler, 1991. Installation view at Friedrich Petzel Gallery, 2001

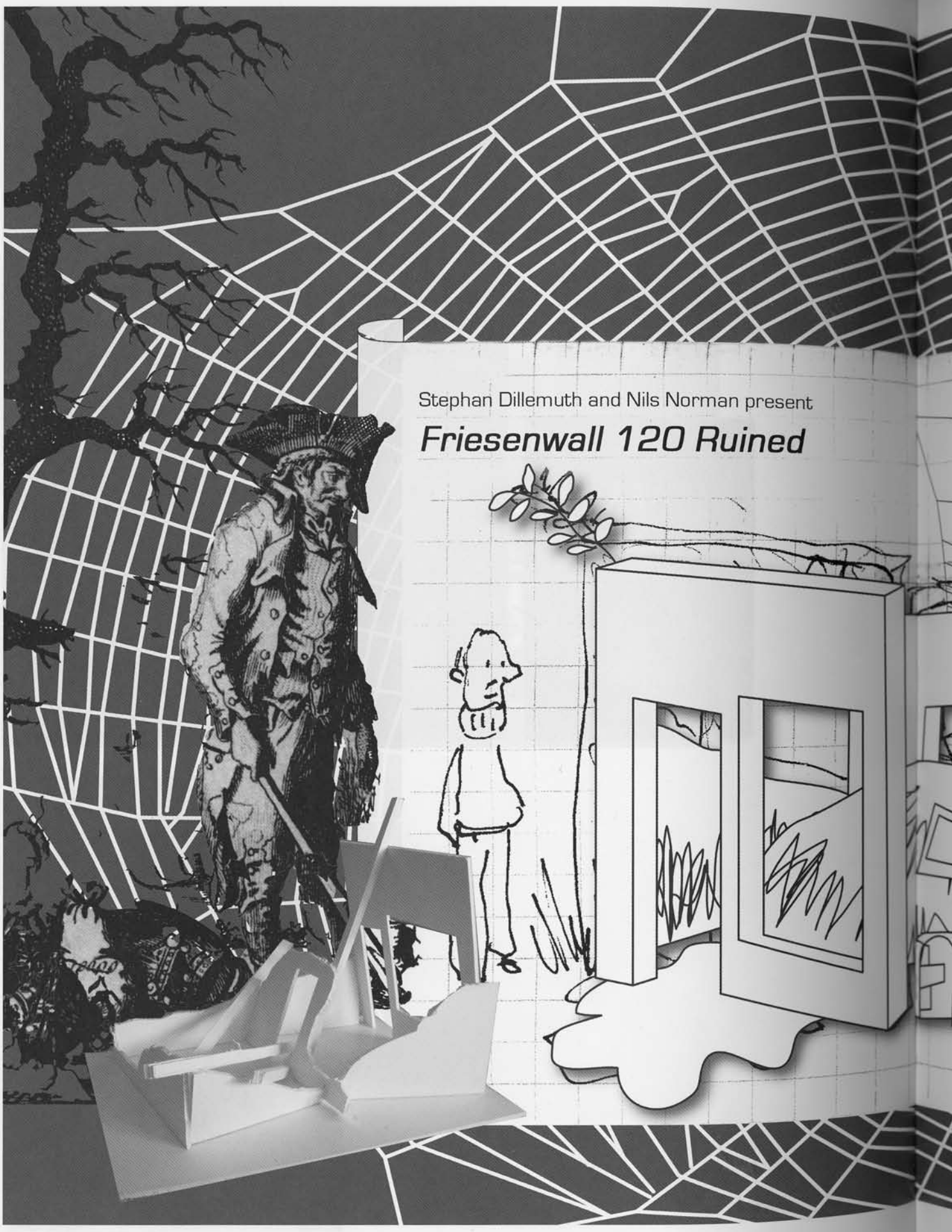
Cosima von Bonin, Die fröhliche Wallfahrt, 1991

Cosima von Bonin, stills from Die Fröliche Wallfahrt (The Merry Pilgrimage), 1991



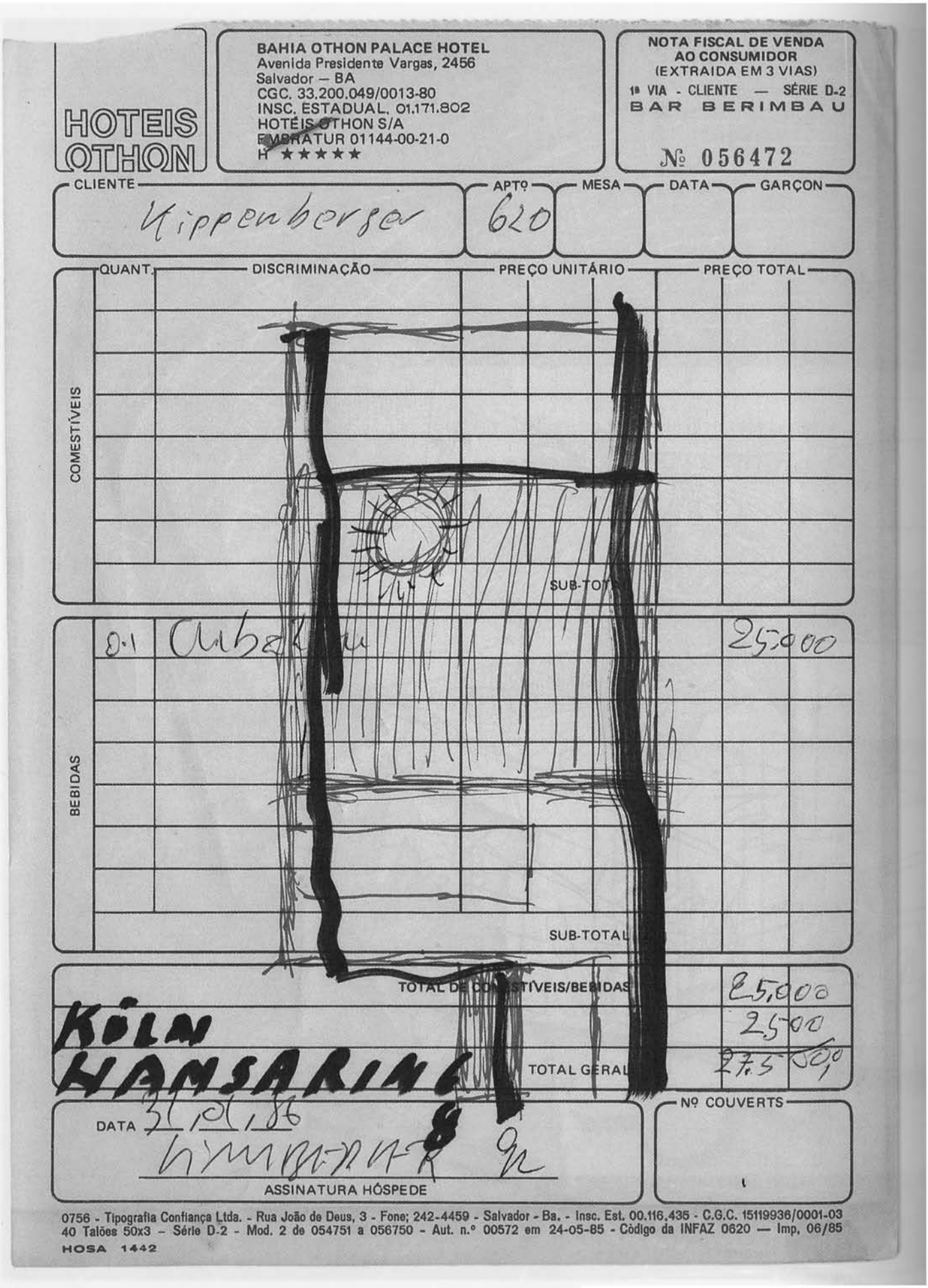


Christian Philipp Müller, A Sense of Friendliness, Mellowness, Permanence, 1991



Stephan Dillemuth and Nils Norman, Friesenwall 120 Ruined, 2006

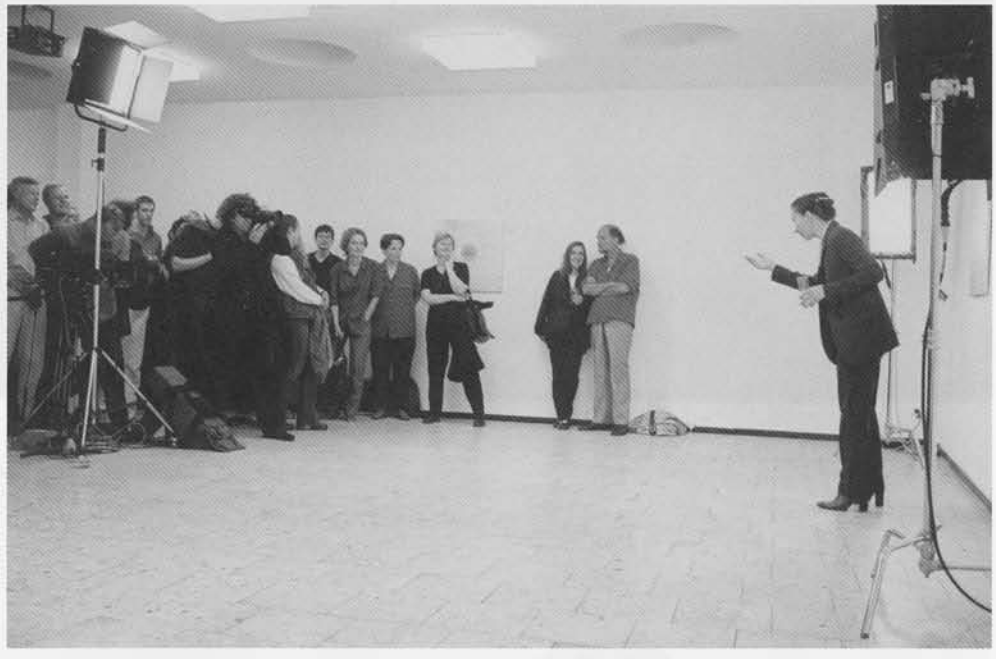

Merlin Carpenter, Uwe Gabriel,
Thomas Kalthoff, Kiron Khosla,
Hans-Jörg Mayer, Matthias Schaufler,
Barbara Schüttpelz, Vivian Slee,
Josef Strau, Uli Strothjohann,
Vincent Tavenne, Iskender Yediler



Martin Kippenberger, Input-Output, 1986–1992, detail

top: Martin Kippenberger and Achim Schächtele in the Café Einstein, Berlin, 1979. Courtesy Estate Martin Kippenberger, Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne
bottom: Martin Kippenberger, "Investigations," installation view, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, 1989

Louise Lawler, Untitled (Martin and Mike), 1992



Andrea Fraser, Kunst muss hängen (Art Must Hang), 2001

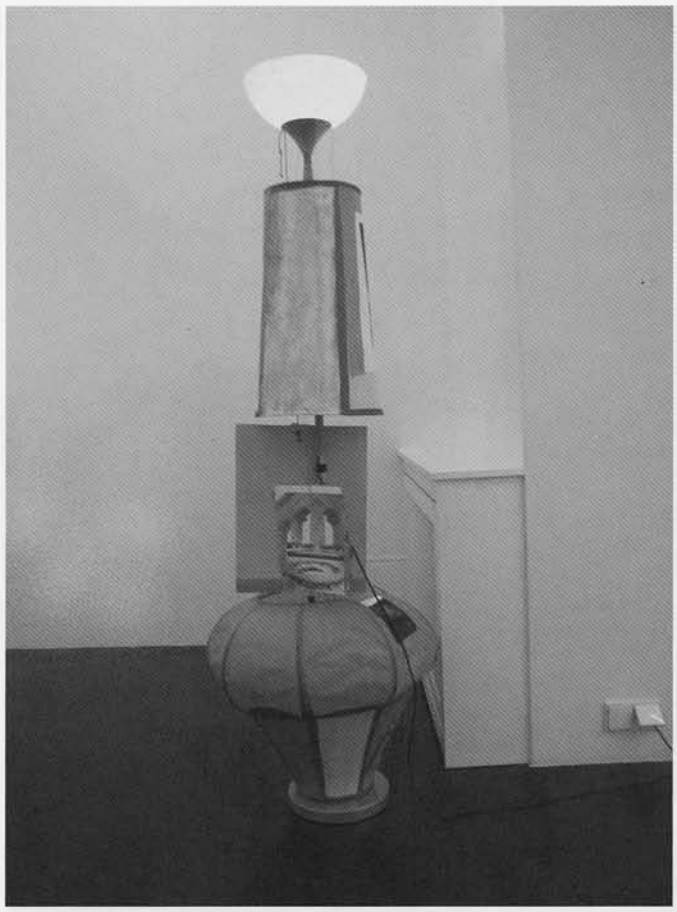
Christopher Williams, Bouquet, for Bas Jan Ader and Christopher D'Arcangelo, 1992. Installation view, Greene Naftali Gallery, New York, 2006

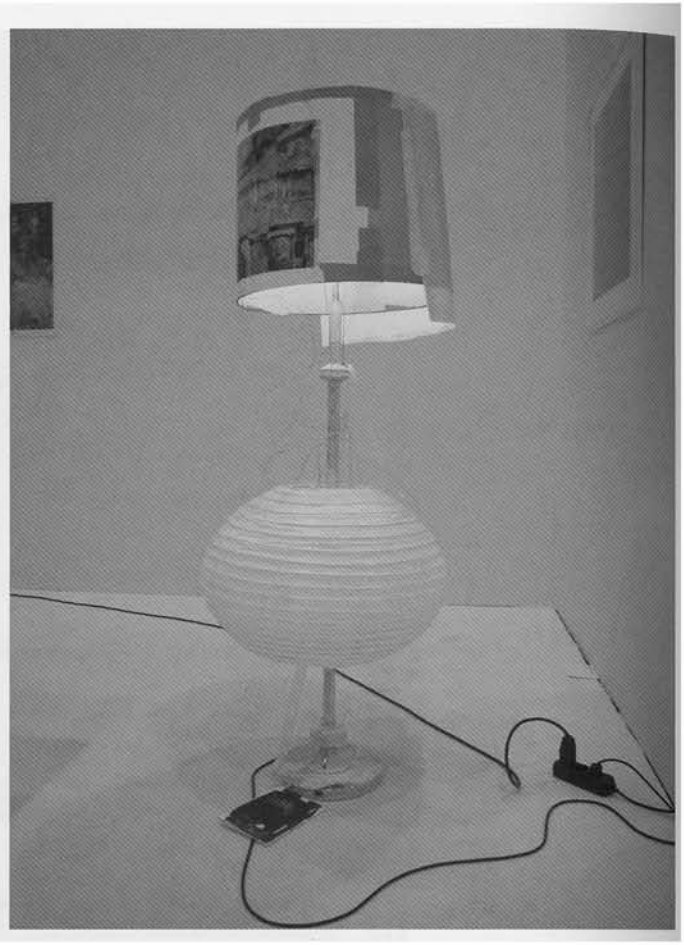
top: Christopher Williams, Cologne, November 1, 2004, 2004, chromogenic print, framed: 28 5/8 x 25 11/16 x 1 1/2 inches, photograph: 14 x 11 inches. Courtesy of David Zwirner, New York and Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne

bottom: Christopher Williams, Kiev MC Arsat (Zodiak-8) 30mm f3.5, 1:3.5, Product Aperature f/3.5, Serial Number 870701, Medium Format Camera Lens, Douglas M. Parker Studio, Glendale, California. August 4, 2005, 2005, gelatin silver print, framed: 29 3/4 x 33 1/2 x 1 1/2 inches, photograph: 16 x 20 inches. Courtesy of David Zwirner, New York and Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne

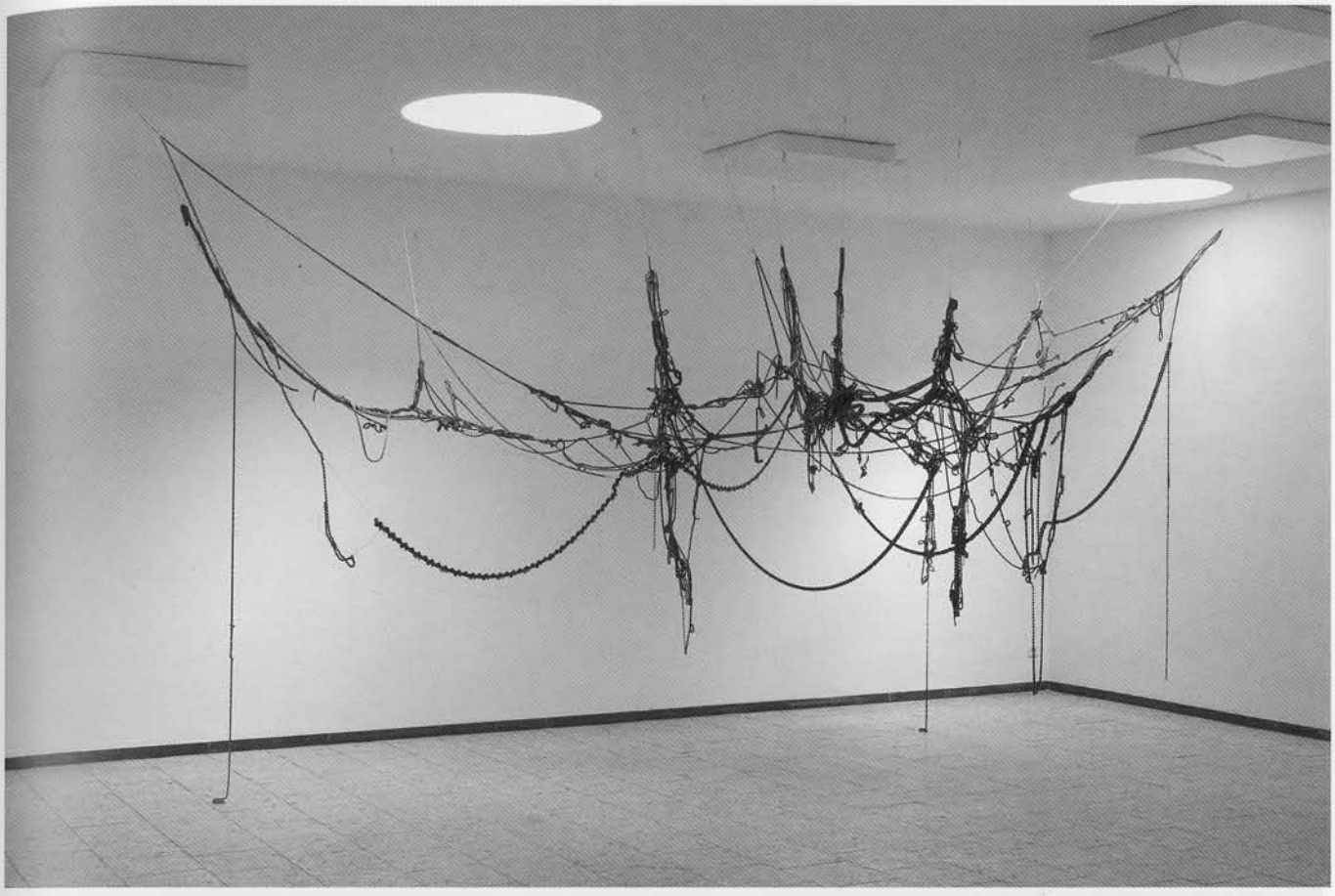
Michael Krebber, from Alien Hybrid Creatures (Köln: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2005)
top: Poster, Claus Richter, Coke und Pepsi zusammenschütten, 2002
middle: Book cover, Thomas Eggerer, Atrium, exh. cat. Kunstverein Braunschweig, Braunschweig 2003 (Lukas & Sternberg)
bottom: Book cover, Petra Hartmann/Stephan Schmitz/Matthias Heiner, Kölner Stämme, Menschen—Mythen—Maskenspiel, Köln 1991 (Vista Point Verlag)

Michael Krebber, installation view, Galerie Christian Nagel, 1990



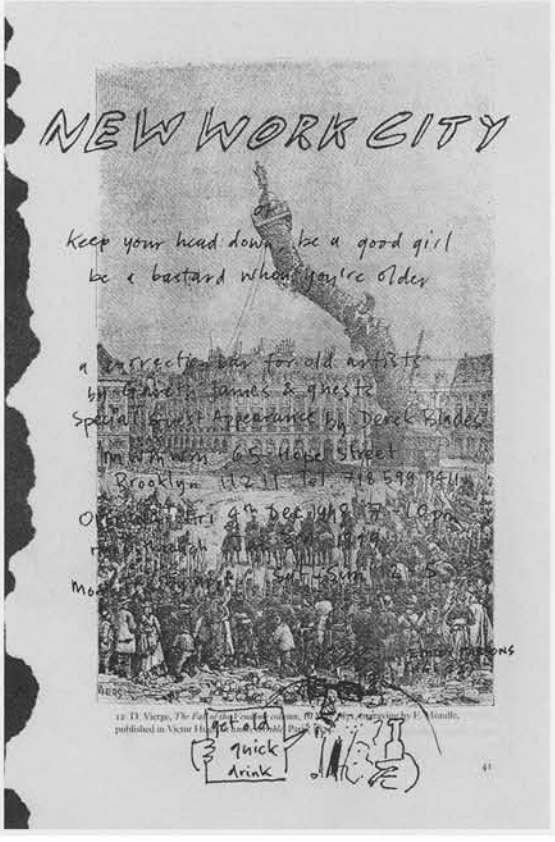


left: Josef Strau, Lamp for a Baudelaire Day in Berlin, 2003, lamp parts, mixed media and printed matter, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist
right: Josef Strau, Dear Little Tiger Lamp, 2003, lamp parts, mixed media and printed matter, dimensions variable. Courtesy of the artist



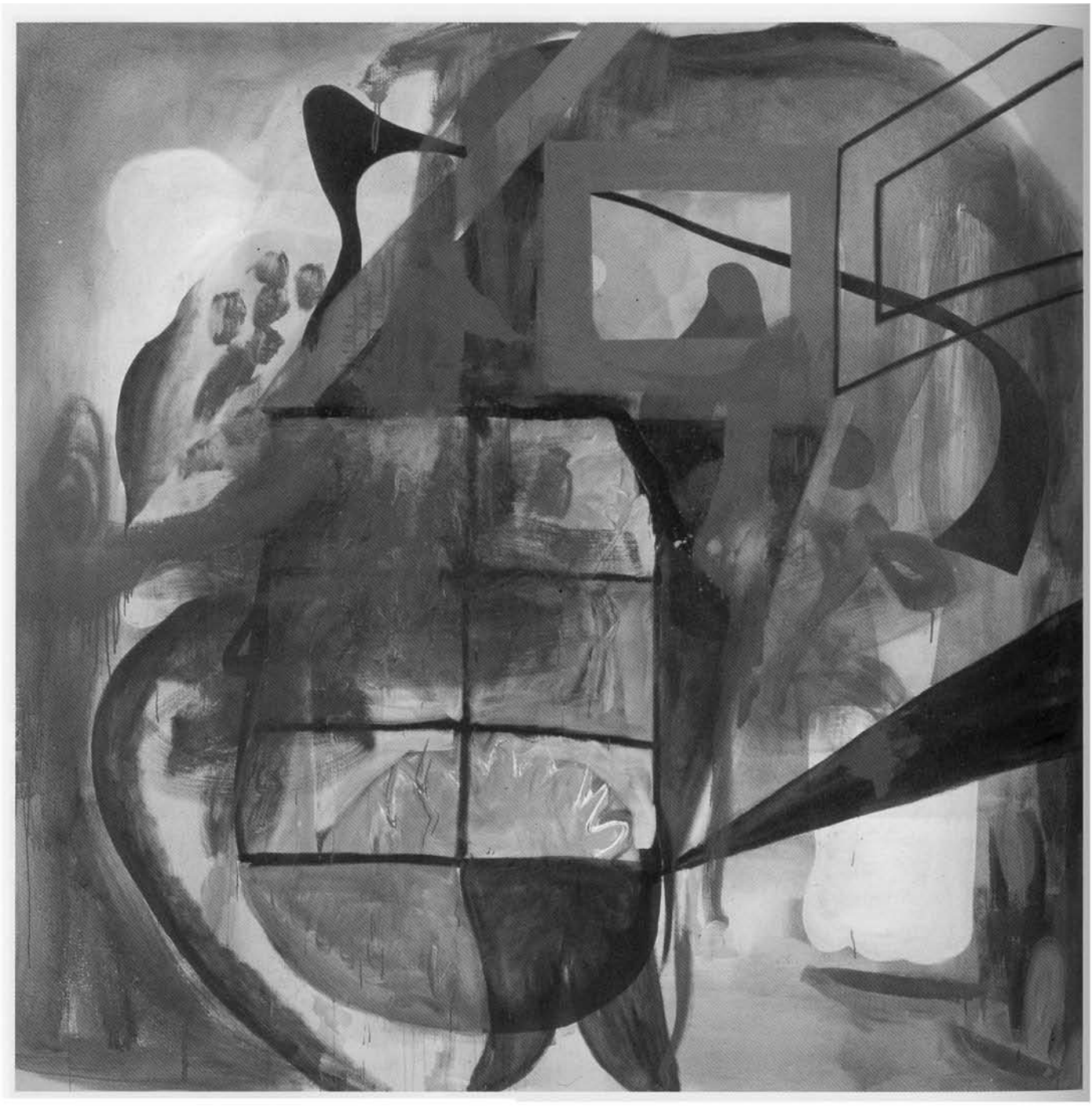
top: Josephine Pryde, Chains, 2004

bottom: Josephine Pryde, LM (1 and 2), 2004, installation view, silver gelatin print, 19 1/2 x 14 inches each. Courtesy Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne

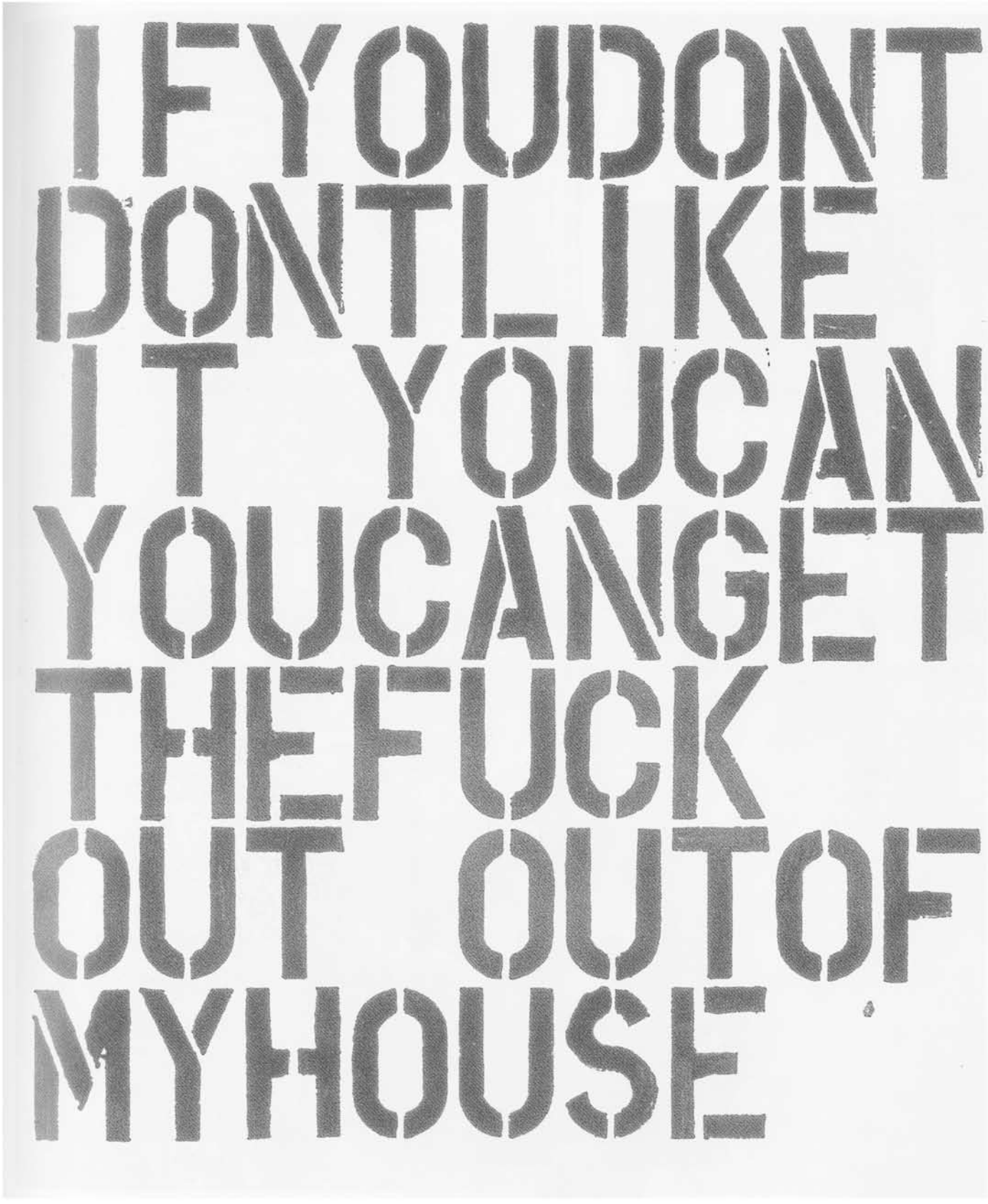


Gareth James, NEW WORK CITY, or, keep your head down, be a good girl, be a bastard when you're older, 1998, mixed media, dimensions variable.
Collection of Barbara and Howard Morse; courtesy of Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York

top: Merlin Carpenter, "Look What You Made Me Do," opening night performance, Bergen Kunsthall, Norway. Courtesy of the artist
left, bottom: Merlin Carpenter, The Frieze Art Fair Monopoly Frieze, 2004, Monopoly money and wallpaper paste stuck in the booth of Galerie Christian Nagel. Courtesy of the artist
right, bottom: Merlin Carpenter, "A Roaring RAMPAGE of Revenge," installation view, Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2005



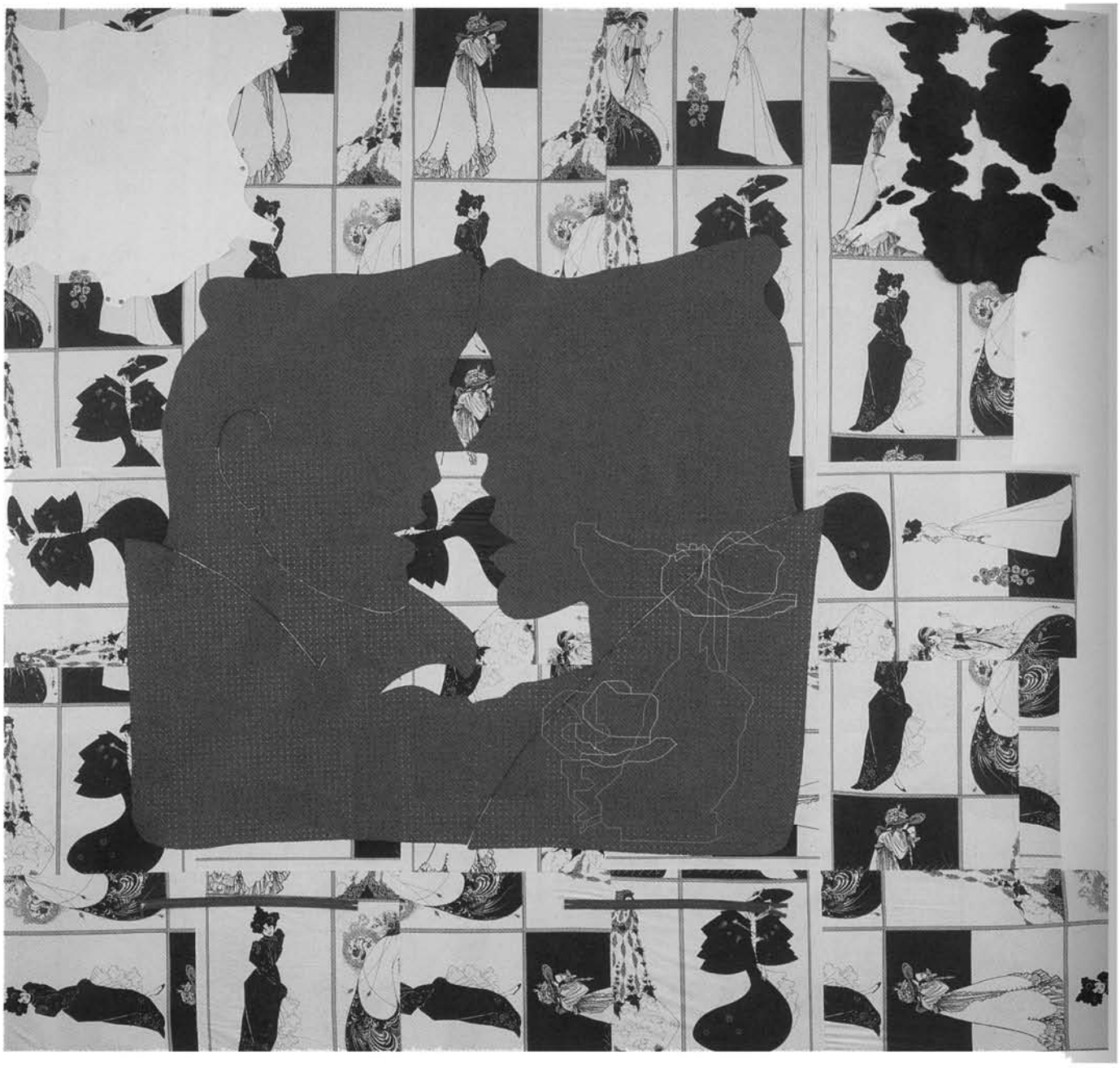
Albert Oehlen, Untitled, 1992



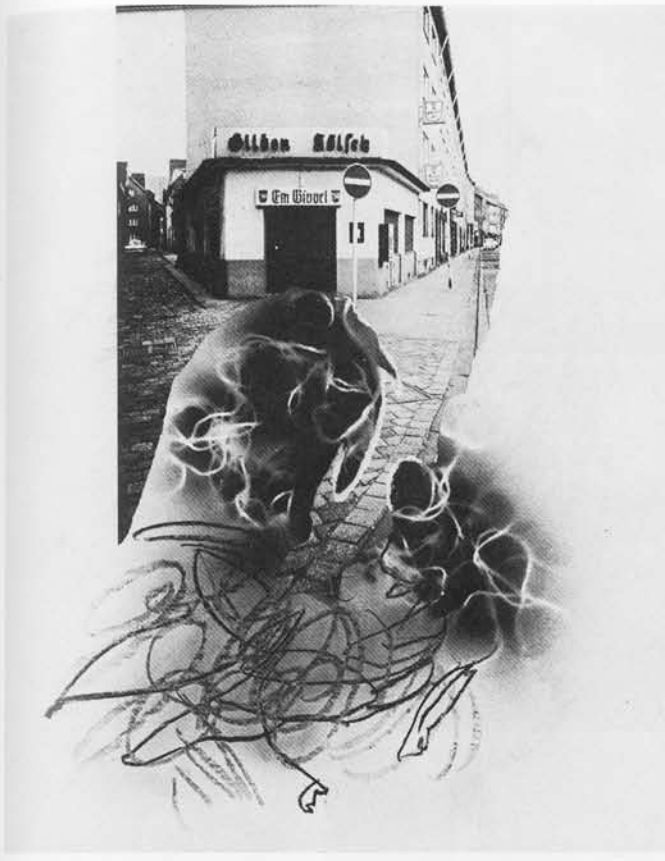
Christopher Wool, Untitled, 1992

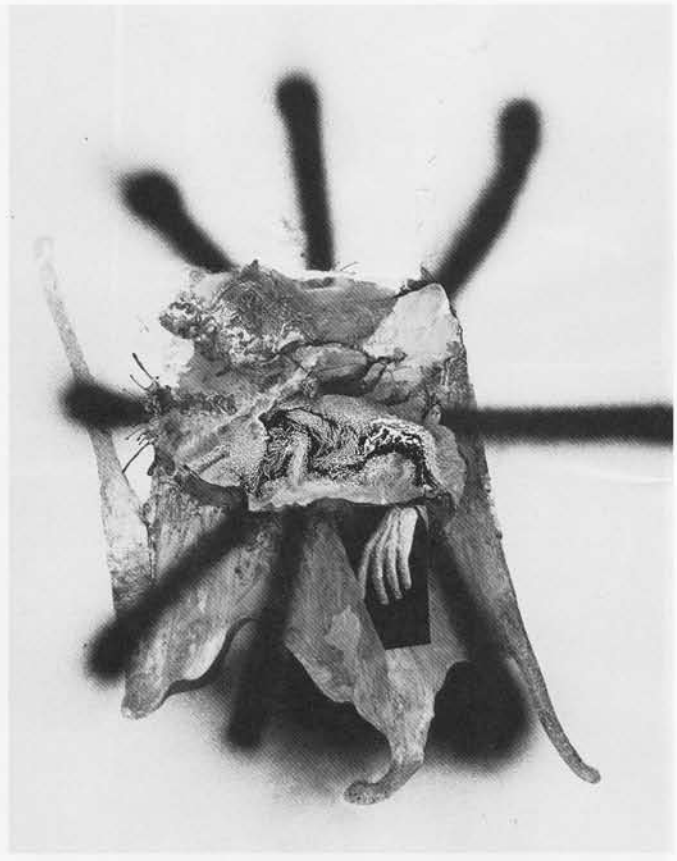
Rosemarie Trockel, Buchentwürfe (Drafts for Books), 1985–95/2002, clockwise from top left:
Aua Zukunft, 1983, mixed media on paper, 4 x 7 inches
Cold Observatorium, 1986, marker on paper, 7 3/4 x 8 1/2 inches
She became more and more, 1988, marker on paper, 7 3/4 x 10 3/4 inches
Toll dass du nicht kommst, 1982, mixed media on paper, 7 2/3 x 7 2/3 inches
Courtesy Monika Sprüth/Philomene Magers Gallery, Cologne/Munich, © Rosemarie Trockel, VG-Bild-Kunst, Bonn

Jutta Koether, Antibody V (Semi-Popular Painting), 1993

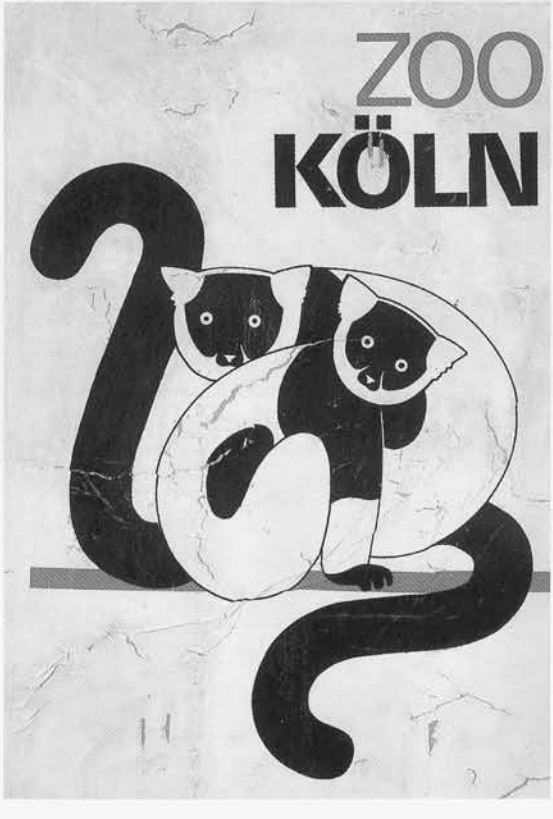


Cosima von Bonin, Tom, 2003



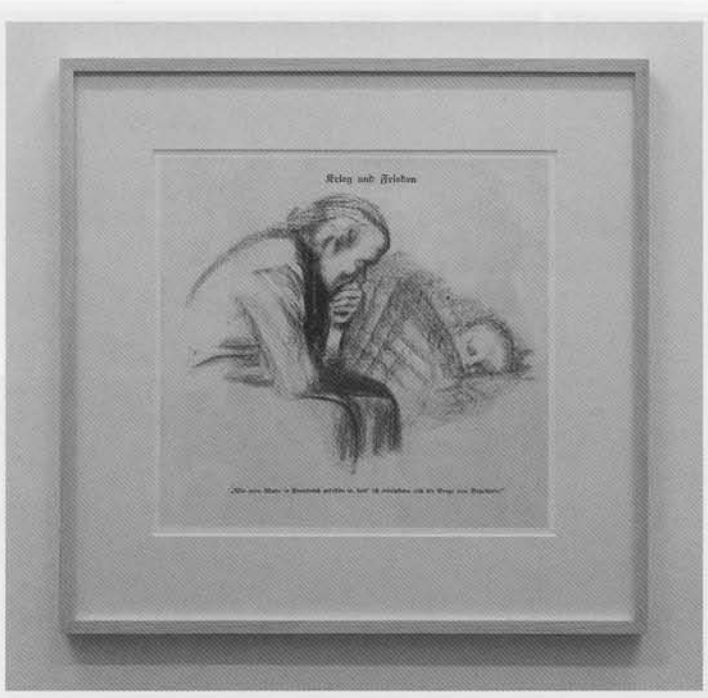


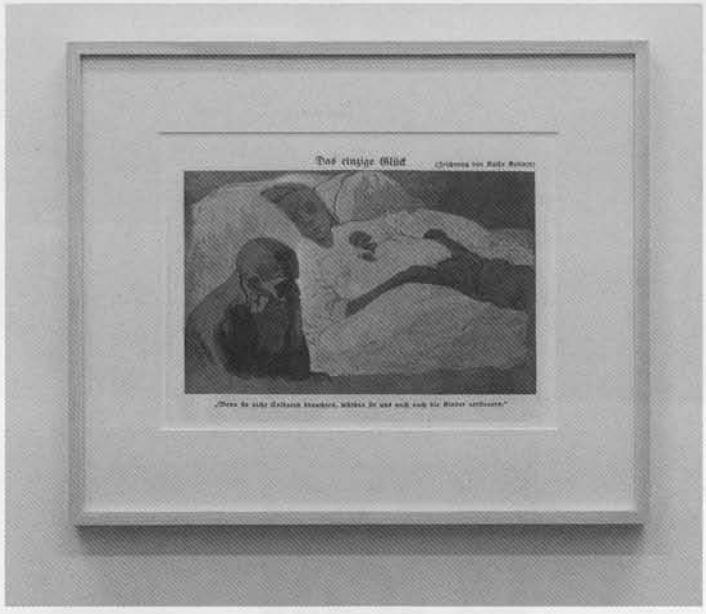
Charline von Heyl, all works: Untitled, 2005



top: Michaela Eichwald, Silvester 1991 at Friesenwall 120, 2006, inkjet print, 33 x 23 1/3 inches. Courtesy of the artist
bottom: Michaela Eichwald, Zoo Köln, 1998, poster, 39 2/3 x 26 3/4 inches. Courtesy of the artist

Hans-Jörg Mayer, Untitled, 1991

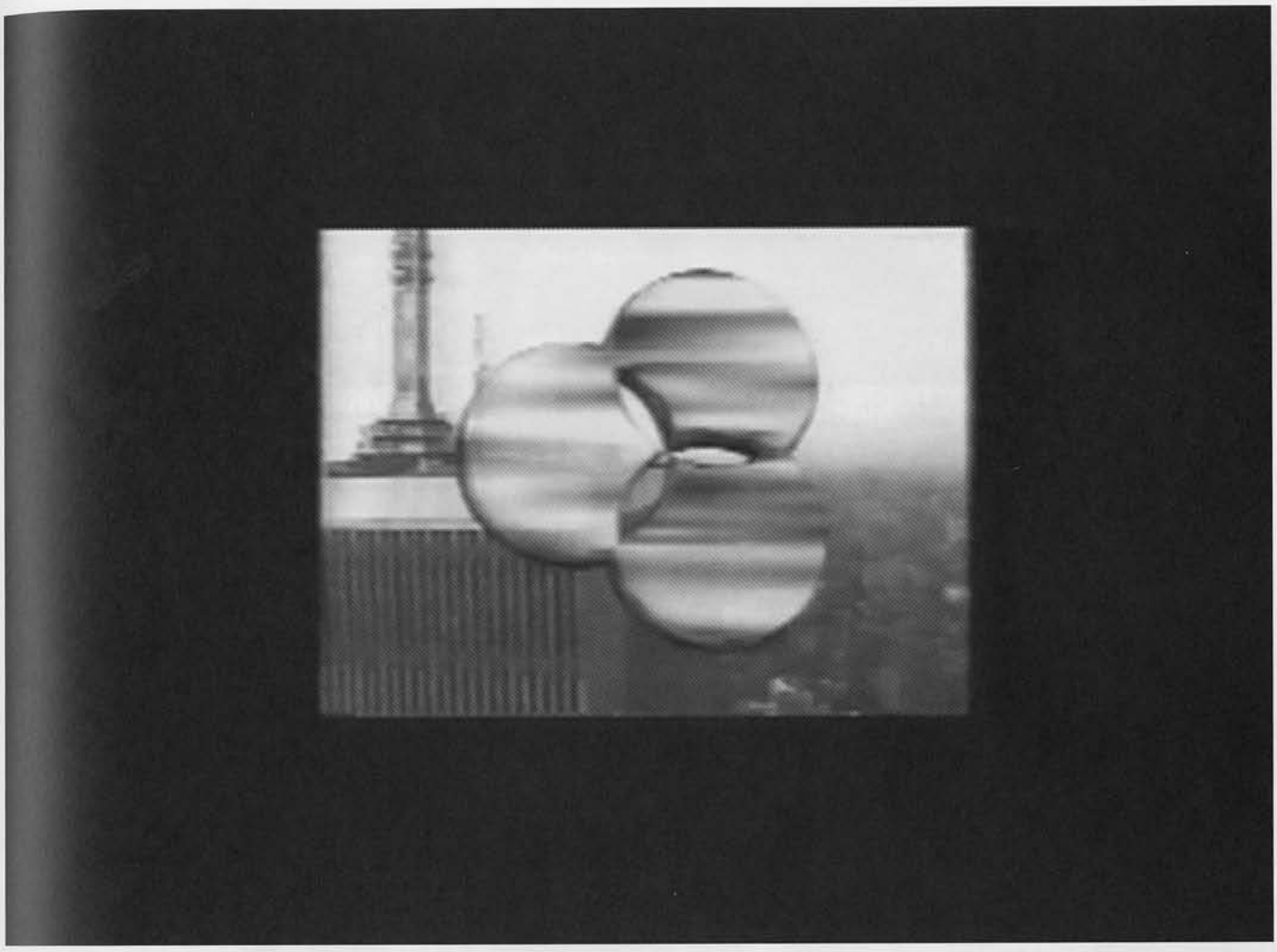




Lucy McKenzie, Kulaks, 2004

Kim Gordon and Jutta Koether, Club in the Shadows, 2003

Mike Kelley, Runway for Interactive DJ Event, 2000



top: Bernadette Corporation, The BC Corporate Story, 1996
bottom: Bernadette Corporation, still from Hell Frozen Over, 2000, video, color, sound. Courtesy of the artists

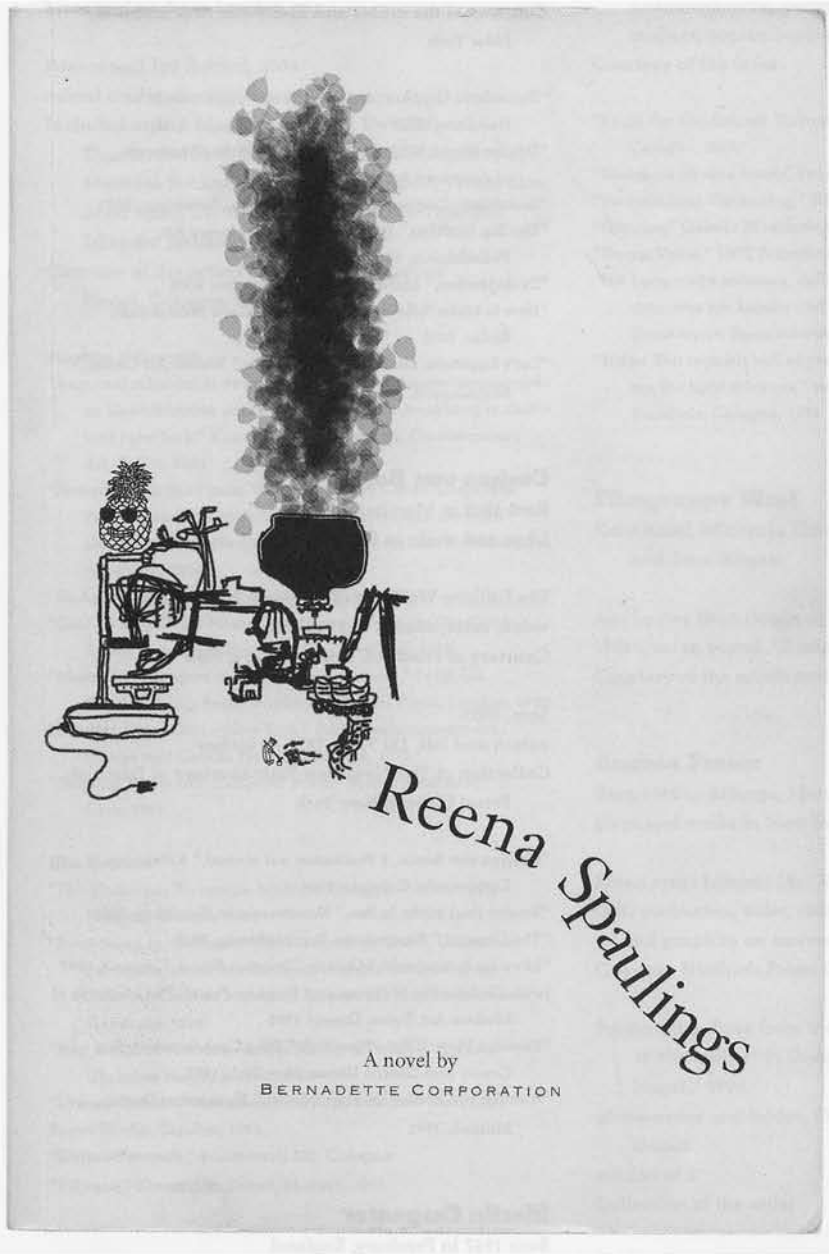
Filmgruppe West, Aus lauter Haut (Made of Skin), 2001

Workshop, Welcome Back the Workshop, LP, 1991

Reena Spaulings, Flag, 2006

top: Blake Rayne, installation view, Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York, 2006
bottom: Blake Rayne, Untitled, 2005, acrylic and ink on paper, 14 x 18 inches. Courtesy of the artist

Michael Krebber, with Cosimo and Massimo, Derneburg, 1980


Reena Spaulings
A novel by
BERNADETTE CORPORATION

Works in the Exhibition and Super Selected Exhibition Histories (as of April 1, 2006)

Bernadette Corporation

Founded in 1994
Based in New York, Paris and Berlin

The BC Corporate Story, 1996
video, color, sound, 7:03 minutes
Courtesy of the artists and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York

"Bernadette Corporation, King Kong," Kunstverein in Hamburg, 2006
"Day for Night, Whitney Biennial," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2006
"Bernadette Corporation," Witte de With, Rotterdam, 2005
"The Big Nothing," Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, 2004
"Ex-Argentina," Ludwig Museum, Cologne, 2004
"How to Make 'Life' Fashionable?," Galerie Meerrettich, Berlin, 2003
"Let's Entertain: Life's Guilty Pleasures," Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 2000

Cosima von Bonin

Born 1962 in Mombasa, Kenya
Lives and works in Cologne

Die Fröliche Wallfahrt (The Merry Pilgrimage), 1991
video, color, sound, 14:37 minutes
Courtesy of Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York

Tom, 2003
cotton and felt, 131 7/8 x 141 3/4 inches
Collection of Tim Nye, New York; courtesy of Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York

"Cosima von Bonin, 2 Positionen auf einmal," Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, 2004
"Bruder Poul sticht in See," Kunstverein in Hamburg, 2001
"The Cousins," Kunstverein Braunschweig, 2000
"Löwe im Bonsaiwald," Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 1997
(with Christopher Williams and Stephen Prina), The Museum of Modern Art, Syros, Greece 1995
"Parallax View: Köln—New York," P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center and Goethe House, New York, 1993
"Armaly, von Bonin, Krebber, Müller," Kunstraum Daxer, Munich, 1991

Merlin Carpenter

Born 1967 in Pembury, England
Lives and works in London

New work for exhibition
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne/Berlin

"A Roaring RAMPAGE of Revenge," Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2005
Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 2005
"Look What You Made Me Do," Bergen Kunsthall, Norway, 2005
"Children of the Projects," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 2003
"Militant," Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 2002
"As a Painter I Call Myself the Estate of," Secession, Vienna, 2000
"London Photo Race and Galerie Fettsack," Friesenwall 120, Cologne, 1992

Stephan Dillemuth

Born 1954 in Büdingen, Germany
Lives and works in Cologne

/

Nils Norman

Born 1966 in Kent, England
Lives and works in London

Friesenwall 120 Ruined, 2006
mixed media, dimensions variable
Included artists: Merlin Carpenter, Uwe Gabriel, Thomas Kalthoff, Kiron Khosla, Hans-Jörg Mayer, Matthias Schaufler, Barbara Schüttpelz, Vivian Slee, Josef Strau, Uli Strothjohann, Vincent Tavenne, Iskender Yediler
Courtesy of the artists and Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne/Berlin

Stephan Dillemuth

"Jetzt und zehn Jahre davor. Recherche-und Ausstellungsprojekt zu Gentrification und kultureller Stadtentwicklung in Berlin und New York," Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin, 2004
"Everything in the Future Will Necessarily Come. Corporate Fairy Tales and Other Sculptural Maneuvers. Stephan Dillemuth and Nils Norman," Galerie für Landschaftskunst, Hamburg, 2004
"Ex Argentina," Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2004
"Coal By Any Other Name: The Journey Towards The Good Taste," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 2000
"Methods of Support in Unoccupied Tunnels," (with Uli Strothjohann), Poster Studio at Brydges Place, London, 1995
"Parallax View: Köln—New York," P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center and Goethe House, New York, 1993
"Stephan Dillemuth und Josef Strau," Forum Stadtpark, Graz, 1992

Nils Norman

"The Homerton Playscape Multiple Struggle Niche," City Projects, London, 2005
"Everything in the Future Will Necessarily Come. Corporate Fairytales and Other Sculptural Maneuvers. Stephan Dillemuth & Nils Norman," Galerie für Landschaftskunst, Hamburg, 2004
"Hey Rudy!: A Phantom on the Streets of Schizz," Galerie Christian Nagel, Berlin, 2003
"Dismal Garden," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 2001
Poster Studio, London, 1994
"Galerie Fettsack," Friesenwall 120, Cologne
"F-Space," Kunstraum Daxer, Munich, 1991

Michaela Eichwald

Born 1967 in Gumersbach, Germany
Lives and works in Cologne

Regionalism, 2006
mixed media installation, including wooden Kasperletheatre, paintings, posters, drawing and stickers, approximately 118 x 158 inches
Courtesy of the artist

"Kritik der Urteilskraft. Dokumentation," Simultanhalle, Cologne, 2006
"Niemand ist eine Insel," Brunn Berlin, 2005
"Verdunklung/Darkening," Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, 2005
"Osmose," Galerie Meerrettich, Berlin, 2003
"Horror Vacui," INIT Foundation, Athens, 2001
"Ich kann nicht zulassen, daß eine Differenz auftritt zwischen dem, was ich bejahe und dem, was ich verneine," Kunstverein Braunschweig, 2000
"Helle! Thit roguish half of yvele. Can I have? Hie thee hither ere the light thickens," (with Ralf Schauff), Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne, 1998

Filmgruppe West

Kai Althoff, Michaela Eichwald, Ralf Schauff, and Jens Wagner

Aus Lauter Haut (Made of Skin), 2001
video, color, sound, 55 minutes
Courtesy of the artists and Lucy McKenzie

Andrea Fraser

Born 1965 in Billings, Montana
Lives and works in New York

Kunst muss hängen (Art Must Hang), 2001
DVD projection, color, sound, 33:00 loop
oil and graphite on canvas, 36 1/4 x 36 1/4 inches
Courtesy Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York

Presentation Book from the exhibition "Andrea Fraser, 15.November–15.Dezember 1990, Galerie Christian Nagel," 1990
photocopies and folder, 10 2/3 x 12 2/3 x 1 3/4 inches closed
edition of 3
Collection of the artist

"Andrea Fraser, Works: 1984 to 2003," Kunstverein in Hamburg, 2003
"Ökonomien der Zeit," Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2002
"Kunst muss hängen (Art Must Hang)," Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 2001
"What Happened to the Institutional Critique?" American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 1993
"Parallax View: Köln—New York," P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center and Goethe House, New York, 1993
"The Köln Show," Cologne, 1990
"Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk," Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1989

Kim Gordon

Born 1953 in Rochester, New York
Lives and works in New York and Northhampton, MA

Kim Gordon and Jutta Koether
Club in the Shadows, 2003
video documentation and installation
Courtesy of the artists

Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2005
"Her Noise," Barbican Center, London
"Club in the Shadows," (with Jutta Koether), Kenny Schachter's Contemporary, New York, 2003
"Stairway (Is It My Body?)," Participant, Inc., New York, 2003
"Godless Amerika," Alleged Gallery, New York, 2000
"I Love New York," (with Rita Ackerman and Jutta Koether), Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 1995
"Times Square Show," New York, 1980
White Columns, 1980

Charline von Heyl

Born 1960 in Mainz, Germany
Lives and works in New York

15 drawings, each:
Untitled, 2005
photocopy, collage and ink on paper, 24 x 19 inches
Collection of Susan and Michael Hort; courtesy Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York

Dallas Museum of Art, 2005
Secession, Vienna, 2004
Kunstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, 1997
Kunstraum Daxer, Munich, 1992
Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 1991
"Sammlung Kippenberger," Paris Bar, Berlin, 1991
"The Köln Show," Cologne, 1990

Gareth James

Born 1970 in London
Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York

Hold. Hold. Don't Go Home, 2006 (with Roe Ethridge)
c-print, 30 x 40 inches
Courtesy of Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York

"Blue Movie (one more time... this time with feeling)," Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York, 2005
"Make It Now: New Sculpture in New York," Sculpture Center, New York, 2005
"Get Real Estate," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 2004
"The Big Nothing," Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, 2004
"wRECONSTRUCTION," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 2000
"Greater New York, New Art in New York Now," P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York, 2000
"New Work City," MWMWM, New York, 1998

Mike Kelley

Born 1954 in Ann Arbor, Michigan
Lives and works in Los Angeles

Runway for Interactive DJ Event, 2000
video, color, sound, 48:23 minutes
Courtesy of the artist and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York

"Mike Kelley: Day Is Done," Gagosian Gallery, New York, 2005
"Mike Kelley: The Uncanny," Tate Liverpool, England, 2004
"Mike Kelley: Two Projects," Kunstverein Braunschweig, Germany, 1999
"Mike Kelley: Catholic Tastes," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1993
"Just Pathetic," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 1992
"The BiNational: American Art in the Late Eighties/German Art in the Late Eighties," Museum of Fine Arts and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, 1988
Jablonka Gallery, Cologne, 1989

Martin Kippenberger

Born 1953 in Dortmund, Germany
Died 1997 in Vienna, Austria

Input-Output, 1986–1992
oil crayon, pastel, watercolor and pencil on hotel bills,
67 sheets, each 8 1/4 x 5 3/4 inches
Collection of Thomas Borgmann, Cologne

"Martin Kippenberger," Tate Modern, London, 2006
"Nach Kippenberger," Museum Moderner Kunst, Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna , and van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, 2003
Documenta X, Kassel, 1997
"Kunstverein Kippenberger," Fredericianum, Kassel, 1993
"Put Your Eye in Your Mouth," Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, 1991
"Investigations," Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, 1989
"Miete Strom Gas," Hessisches Landesmuseum, Darmstadt, Germany, 1986

Jutta Koether

Born 1958 in Cologne
Lives and works in New York

Antibody V (Semi-Popular Painting), 1993
oil on canvas, 95 x 74 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne

Kim Gordon and Jutta Koether
Club in the Shadows, 2003
video documentation and installation
Courtesy of the artists

"Day for Night, Whitney Biennial," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2006
"I Is Had Gone," Thomas Erben Gallery, New York, 2005
"Fresh Aufhebung," Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004
"Desire Is War," Galerie Meerrettich, Berlin, 2003
"sun/ny," Pat Hearn Gallery, New York, 1999
"Parallax View: Köln—New York," P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center and Goethe House, New York, 1993
"100% Malerei," Galerie Sophia Unger, Cologne, 1992

Michael Krebber

Born 1954 in Cologne
Lives and works in Cologne

Untitled, 2006
vitrine with books and ephemera, installed dimensions vary
Courtesy of the artist

Secession, Vienna, 2005
"warm up (how I hit a snob)," Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles, 2004
"Flaggs (Against Nature)," Greene Naftali Gallery, New York, 2004
"Formalismus: Moderne Kunst, heute," Kunstverein in Hamburg, 2004
Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 1998
"M.K.—M.K.," (with Martin Kippenberger), Eleni Koroneou Gallery, Athens, 1992
Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 1990

Louise Lawler

Born 1947 in Bronxville, New York
Lives and works in New York

Untitled (Martin and Mike), 1992
cibachrome, crystal and felt, 2 1/2 high x 3 1/2 inches diameter
Private collection; courtesy of Metro Pictures, New York

"Louise Lawler: Looking Back," Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio, 2006
"In and Out of Place: Louise Lawler and Andy Warhol," Dia:Beacon, 2005
"Louise Lawler and Others," Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Kunstmuseum, Basel, 2004
"Whitney Biennial," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2000
Monika Sprüth Galerie, Cologne, 1999
"Kontext Kunst," Neue Galerie am Landesmuseum Joanneum, Graz, Germany, 1993
"Projects: Louise Lawler: Enough," The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1987

Hans-Jörg Mayer

Born 1955
Lives and works in Berlin

Untitled, 1991
photo, 37 x 55 inches
Courtesy of Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne/Berlin

"Gotik und Moderne im Dialog. 1500–2000," Ausstellung der Sammlung K-raum Daxer/Lorenz in der Fränkischen Galerie Kronach, Festung Rosenberg, Kronach, 2005
"Museum unserer Wünsche," Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2001
"Fußball WM/Karaoke," curated by Georg Herold, Portikus, Frankfurt, 1994
"Frauenkunst Männerkunst," Kippenberger Kunstverein, Museum Fridericianum, Kassel, 1993
Trans Avant-Garde Gallery, San Francisco (with Michael Krebber, Joseph Zehrer, Jack Hanley), 1991
Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 1991

Lucy McKenzie

Born 1977 in Glasgow, Scotland
Lives and works in Glasgow

Kulaks, 2004
three framed digital prints and pink neon light, dimensions variable
Courtesy of Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne

Metro Pictures, New York, 2005
Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne, 2004
Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, 2004
"Brian Eno," Neuer Aachener Kunstverein, Aachen, Germany, 2003
"If It Moves, Kiss It," Galerie Christian Nagel, Berlin, 2002
"The Best Book About Pessimism I Ever Read," Kunstverein Braunschweig, 2002
"Global Joy," Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne, 2001

Christian Philipp Müller

Born 1957 in Biel, Switzerland
Lives and works in New York

A Sense of Friendliness, Mellowness, Permanence, 1991
felt curtain, maître 'd stand and menus, dimensions variable
Collection of Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

Kunstmuseum Basel, 2006
"Berlin, Deutschland und die Welt," Galerie Christian Nagel, Berlin, 2005
"Election," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 2004
Ökonomien der Zeit," Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2002
"A Sense of Friendliness, Mellowness, Permanence," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 1992
"Köln-Düsseldorf," Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 1990
"The Köln Show," (with Fareed Armaly), Cologne, 1990

Albert Oehlen

Born 1954 in Krefeld, Germany
Lives and works in Cologne

Untitled, 1992
oil and lacquer on canvas, 78 3/4 x 78 3/4 inches
Collection of Charline von Heyl and Christopher Wool, New York

"Albert Oehlen. I Know Whom You Showed Last Summer," Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, 2005
Secession, Vienna, 2005
"Albert Oehlen. Peinture/Malerei 1980–2004," Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne, 2004
Gisela Capitain, Cologne, 2000
"Albert Oehlen and Christopher Williams," Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio, 1995
"Malerei," Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin, 1995
"Martin Kippenberger and Albert Oehlen," Galeria Juana de Aizpuru, Sevilla, 1988

Stephen Prina

Born 1954 in Galesburg, Illinois
Lives and works in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Los Angeles

Galerie Max Hetzler, 1991
detail, 109–150, VII of IX
toned gelatin silver prints, museum board, mahogany, screenprint on acrylic and latex enamel, dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist and Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York

"Galerie Max Hetzler, 1991 (Ten Years After)," Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2001
"To the People of Frankfurt am Main. At Least Three Types of Inaccessibility," Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt am Main, 2000
"Dom-Hotel, Room 101, Köln/Dom Hotel, Zimmer 101, Köln," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 1994
"It was the best he could do at the moment," Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 1992
Documenta IX, Kassel, 1992
"Monochrome Painting," The Renaissance Society, Chicago, 1989
"A Forest of Signs: Art in the Crisis of Representation," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1989

Josephine Pryde

Born 1967 in Northumberland, England
Lives and works in London

Chains, 2004
bicycle chains, motorcycle chains, chainsaw chain and wire, dimensions variable
Collection of Fonds national d'art contemporain, Bureau du mouvement des oeuvres et de la régie, France

"Valerie," Secession, Vienna, 2004
"Brute," Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2004
"Things Without Futurism," Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 2004
"Serena," Kunstverein Braunschweig, 2001
"Coal By Any Other Name: The Journey Towards The Good Taste," American Fine Arts Co., New York, 2000
"Vicinage," Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne, 1997
Galerie Neu, Berlin, 1996

Blake Rayne

Born 1969 in Lewes, Delaware
Lives and works in New York

Untitled 25 (California redwood), 2006
acrylic on canvas, 44 x 68 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Miguel Abreu Gallery, New York

Sutton Lane, London, 2006
Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York, 2005
"August Evening Walkout (from Three of the Four Seasons)," Greene Naftali Gallery, New York, 2003
"Winter Part II (from Three of the Four Seasons)," Johnen + Schottle, Cologne, 2001
"Autumn Drive, (from Three of the Four Seasons)," Greene Naftali Gallery, New York, 1998
"I LOVE NEW YORK—Crosscurrents in Contemporary Art," Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 1998
"100 Photographs," American Fine Arts, Co., New York, 1995

Reena Spaulings

Based in New York

Flag, 2006
acrylic on canvas, grommets, aluminum pole and plastic zip-ties
flag: 60 x 96 inches; pole: 144 inches long

Flag, 2006
polyester-cotton blend tablecloth, red wine, grommets, aluminum pole, bracket, plastic zip-ties and eagle
flag: 50 x 72 inches; pole: 108 inches long

Flag, 2006
polyester-cotton blend tablecloth, red wine, pencil, ink, grommets, aluminum pole, bracket, plastic zip-ties and eagle
flag: 36 x 72 inches; pole: 72 inches long
All works courtesy of the artists and Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York

"Day for Night, Whitney Biennial," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2006
"Painters without Paintings and Paintings without Painters," Orchard, New York, 2005
Chantal Crousel, Paris, 2004
Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York 2004
HaswellEdiger & Co., New York, 2004

Josef Strau

Born 1957 in Vienna, Austria
Lives and works in Berlin

The Cologne-In-Review-Reading-Lamp, 2006
Tipp-Ex glaze on floor lamp with lampshades and photocopied brochure, dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist

Open Space 2005, Cologne, 2005
"The Gone Wait," Gagosian Gallery, Berlin, 2005
"Jetzt und zehn Jahre davor (Now and Ten Years Ago)," Kunste-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin
"Teil 2 (Part 2) 'Quodlibet'," Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne, 2004
"Teil 1 (Part 1) 'Müllberg'," Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne, 2004
"Ökonomien der Zeit," Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2002
"Stephan Dillemuth und Josef Strau," Forum Stadtpark, Graz, 1992

Rosemarie Trockel

Born 1952 in Schwerte, Germany
Lives and works in Cologne

Buchentwürfe (Drafts for Books), 1985–95/2002
paper and mixed media, various sizes
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Monika Sprüth/
Philomene Magers Gallery, Cologne/Munich

"Rosemarie Trockel: Post-Menopause," Museum Ludwig, Cologne, 2005
"Opening Children Space," Museum Moderner Kunst, Frankfurt, 2003
"Rosemarie Trockel: Spleen," Dia:Chelsea, New York, 2002
"Metamorphoses and Mutations," The Drawing Center, New York, 2001
German Pavilion, Venice Biennale, (with Carsten Höller), 1999
"Rosemarie Trockel: Bodies of Work 1986–1998," Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, 1998
Documenta X, Kassel, 1997

Christopher Williams

Born 1956 in Los Angeles
Lives and works in Los Angeles

Bouquet, for Bas Jan Ader and Christopher D'Arcangelo, 1992
dye-transfer print: 29 x 32 5/8 inches,
wall: 120 x 180 x 4 3/4 inches
Collection of Christopher Williams and Ann Goldstein, Los Angeles; courtesy of David Zwirner, New York and Galerie Gisela Capitain, Cologne

"The Los Angeles Art Scene, 1955–1985," Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris
"Day for Night, Whitney Biennial," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 2006
"Christopher Williams: De Rijke/De Rooij," Secession, Vienna, 2005
Kunstverein Braunschweig, 2005
"For Example: Die Welt ist schön (The World is Beautiful) (Revision 24): Couleur Européene, Couleur Soviétique, Couleur Chinoise," Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, New Zealand, 2001
"Albert Oehlen and Christopher Williams," Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio, 1995
Galerie Max Hetzler, Cologne, 1991

Christopher Wool

Born 1955 in Chicago
Lives and works in New York

Untitled, 1992
alkyd on paper, 39 x 26 inches
Collection of the artist; courtesy of Luhring Augustine, New York

IVAM, Institute Valencia d'Art Moderne, Spain, 2006
Secession, Vienna, 2001
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 1998
Museum of Modern Art, Syros, Greece, 1993
Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 1991
"Christopher Wool: New Work," Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, 1989
"Whitney Biennial," Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, 1989

Contributors

Diedrich Diederichsen is a critic and art historian based in Berlin.
Andrea Fraser is an artist based in New York.
Gareth James is an artist based in New York.
Jutta Koether is an artist, writer and musician based in New York.
Ingrid Schaffner is Senior Curator at Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia.
Bennett Simpson is Associate Curator at Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston. He was formerly Associate Curator at Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia.
Josef Strau is an artist and director of Galerie Meerrettich, Berlin.
Christopher Williams is an artist based in Los Angeles.
Gregory Williams is an art historian who teaches at Boston University.

Lenders to the Exhibition

Thomas Borgmann, Cologne
Drag City Records
Electronic Arts Intermix, New York
Elizabeth Dee Gallery, New York
Fonds national d'art contemporain, Bureau du mouvement des oeuvres et de la régie, France
Galerie Christian Nagel, Cologne
Galerie Daniel Buchholz, Cologne
Galerie Monika Sprüth/Philomene Magers Gallery, Cologne/Munich
Ann Goldstein and Christopher Williams, Los Angeles
Charline von Heyl and Christopher Wool, New York
Susan and Michael Hort
Metro Pictures, New York
Barbara and Howard Morse
Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
Tim Nye, New York
Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York
Reena Spaulings Fine Art, New York
and the artists

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Bernadette Corporation
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Merlin Carpenter
Stephan Dillemuth
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Michael Krebber
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Christian Philipp Müller
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Josephine Pryde
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Christopher Wool

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INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART
University of Pennsylvania

Bennett Simpson, Exhibition Curator