CHAIN 11

public forms

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As long as art is the beauty parlor of civilization, neither art nor civilization is secure.
—John Dewey, *Art as Experience*

The creation of art in public places requires the eye of a poet, the ear of a journalist, and the hide of an armadillo.
By intention or consequence, this work illuminates the relationship between the institutions that shape and define American life and the people they serve.

Nobody knows who the public is or what it wants or needs.
—David Antin

For the eleventh issue of Chain (we still can’t quite believe we forgot to celebrate our 10th anniversary issue), we put out a call for work that addresses “public forms.” When we came up with the topic, we were thinking about what is commonly called “public art” (visual artworks that are publicly displayed and frequently supported by public funds), but also about various forms of art that happen outside of usual performance and publication contexts such as street art, political speeches, poster campaigns, architectural design, mail art, community theater, speaker’s corners, poetry written for specific public occasions, etc. In other words, we wanted an issue that would investigate art that is created by/for communities or “the public” in its broader definitions.

We received an amazing array of materials that ask us to re-evaluate the ambient substance of our lives—the forms and forums that surround us everyday. These for(u)ms include letters to the editor, web sites, eulogies, nodding hello, speech-making, occasional poems, anti-war signs, line marking on public streets, market research surveys, murals, text on truckbeds, protest marches, car alarms, surveillance cameras, aerial views,
classified ads, t-shirts, graffiti and graffiti-proofing, internet spam, stickers in phone booths, prophecies, billboards, eyewitness reports, architecture, internet discussion groups, call boxes, banisters, shadows, cemeteries, and train station flip signs.

These everyday forms were accompanied by seemingly simple actions which have extraordinary cultural resonance, such as planting subversive signs in corporate sign groves, planting papaya seeds on “public” land in Hawai’i, creating a giant footprint on a beach, or building a private office for a public telephone. And then there are the less simple actions, such as staging a city-wide play that enacts the dreams of the people of Lille, France; critiquing the politics behind the Capital of Culture competition in Europe; analyzing the debate over the World Trade Center memorial; or comparing the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan to the toppling of the Saddam Hussein sculpture in Firdos Square.

The pieces here reference sites all over the world, from the Prostitution Toleration Zone in Rotterdam, to the gutters of Valparaiso, to the Garden of Eden. But we have also included a number of “reports from the field”—a kind of survey of the local public art that some of our readers find themselves admiring/rejecting/questioning. These reports cover the “Dance Steps on Broadway” in Seattle, a bench in Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge, an Argentinean small press that makes books out of cardboard collected by the unemployed, signs on overpasses that cross I-495 in New England, the “It’s a Small World” ride in Walt Disney World, the movement of elk in Rocky Mountain National Park, the “empty” buildings of Detroit, a “surfer dude” sculpture in Santa Cruz, and a mechanical beet collector in Loveland, Colorado.

As always, we hope the readers of Chain will be as surprised and provoked by these works as we were upon first receiving them in the mail. We hope it will be a conversation that continues, as our eyes open to the possibilities of public site/sight.

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Constructed for the Witte de With in Rotterdam, *Afwerkplek for Small Cars* is an enclosed playroom for young children based on an existing drive-in facility for prostitution, located in an industrial zone at the edge of the city. Built in varying scales between 1 to 2 and 1 to 4, the project is a schematic miniature of the original that includes small cars. Its surrounding walls are appropriately scaled for both containing the children and visually monitoring them from the outside by adults. Officially named the Municipal Heroin Prostitution Toleration Zone, the original complex was designed by the city's Planning Department in 1993 with the intention of consolidating, monitoring and medically servicing prostitution on a site isolated from the city center. From the facility's entrance, traffic is directed alongside red illuminated stations where prostitutes hawk their wares. Directly behind these stations, are a series of numbered parking cubicles where the customers consume their purchases in the privacy of their vehicles.

The Dutch verb *afwerken* means to bring the work to completion, to finish off. Its coupling with *plek* (place) was coined in the early 1990s to distinguish these new city designed, drive-in facilities from traditional and unofficial prostitution areas, more commonly referred to as *tippel zones*. The connotation of *afwerkplek* is vulgar and expedient, stressing a quick climax, unencumbered by the slow flânerie associated with the more fluid pursuits of urban strolling or car cruising. Its drive-in program regulates acceleration and routing indifferent to the precarious stops and starts of human desire. The freedom and anonymity of the street are exchanged for control and visibility.

I would propose a more panoramic reading of *afwerkplek*, suggesting the climax of Dutch modernist architecture and urban planning: a perverse extension of its social democratic policies toward the complete control of social transgression. *Afwerkplek for Small Cars* is drawn into the ultimate center of Dutch morality. It transgresses even the limit of the social democratic policies that generated the perverse civic platform of the original, projecting onto its image an even more perverse naturalization process, one that permits it to be absorbed into the world of children's play. This playroom proposes to collapse the genealogy of Dutch modernism, from its earliest Enlightenment origins in the educational programs and instruments of Frobel, Monassori and others, through the utopian experiments of De Stijl and its post war advocates, to its final institutionalization in the proliferating state policies and programs of urban planning and social engineering that have shaped much of the contemporary urban landscape of The Netherlands. In this sense, it is a final and apocalyptic image, collapsing the irreconcilable beginning and end of Dutch modernism.

The radical methods of educational reform for children that were proposed in Rousseau's *Emile*, were first implemented in the early nineteenth century in the educational experiments of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, a reformist from the Helvetic society, an organization inspired by the literature of the French Enlightenment. Pestalozzi replaced the standard lecture/recitation practices of his day with "object lessons" based on concrete observation and hands-on intervention. But it was Pestalozzi's principle disciple, Friedrich Froebel, the son of a German Lutheran minister, who in the 1840's would transform his mentor's experiments into a total system of primary education that he named Kindergarten. At the philosophical center of Froebel's invention was a series of *Gifts and Occupations*. Performed on gridded table tops, these were exercises, presented sequentially, using primary geometric solids, sticks, thread, clay, cardboard, colored paper, mosaic tiles, and drawing equipment. By the turn of the 20th century, these programmed exercises had been all but eliminated from the standard kindergarten methods that we have come to know today. However, their direct influence in the later half of the 19th century on the childhood educations of Frank Lloyd Wright, Georges Braque, Johannes Itten, Vassily Kandinsky, Le Corbusier, and Mondrian, among others, would contribute to the very foundations of modernism.

The constructional toys that were inspired by Froebel that became popular in Europe at the turn of the century would directly influence the children's toys and furniture designed by Gerrit Rietveld between 1918 and 1923. Using elementary construction techniques and applied primary colors, these were first produced for his own six children and those
of his friends, casually evolving into the playful design spirit of his adult furnishings. His Child's High Chair, produced in 1918, was probably his first piece of furniture to employ color, and his Wheelbarrow and Child's Cart of a few years later, may represent his first experiments with the primary colors of De Stijl. This lineage came full circle when the artist's Gesamtkunstwerk of De Stijl principles, the Rietveld/Schroeder House was used as a Montessori nursery school between 1936 and 1938.

In the early 1950s, the formal language of De Stijl was excavated, mythologized and reinvented by Jaap Bakema, Aldo van Eyck and others for their humanistic practices of urban planning and social housing. Mondrian's prediction from 1917, that painting and sculpture will disappear as we know it "because we will be living in a fully realized art" was taken at its word. As Wouter Vanstiphout has noted the "The De Stijl style was literally filled with society." It is curiously consistent with Rietveld's development, that Aldo van Eyck would create his earliest design experiments for children. In 1947, for his first public project, he created a playground on the Bertelmanlein in Amsterdam. This work inaugurated a design process that appropriated small neglected urban fragments for the creation of children's parks. Using inexpensive and unconventional materials often found close to the site, Van Eyck would create 734 of these parks in Amsterdam during the next 30 years. He envisioned a city invaded by children in the wake of a snow storm, a site where the rationality of the adult world would be displaced by the ludic quality of everyday life. From these earliest playgrounds, childhood would become a reoccurring theme in Van Eyck's work, leading to the Nagele schools, the Amsterdam Orphanage and his unpublished manifesto of 1962, The Child, the City and the Artist. Childhood as a matrix of resistance to rationality and functionality, as well as a symbol of a fresh beginning, is essential to an understanding of the post war years, situating Van Eyck's work in a larger ground swell of cultural expressions that traversed both the arts and social sciences.

By putting forward the irreconcilable image of an afwerkeplek for children, a more deep seated continuity within Dutch culture is evoked. In analyzing 16th century Dutch painting, Simon Schama has demonstrated its uniqueness in creating earthbound representations of children, freed from the symbolic idealizations of the Christ Child, cherubs and putti that were the norm of Christian and Renaissance iconography. In Brueghel's Children's Games from 1560, we look down into a city square saturated by real children frenetically at play. This genre of kinderspelen, common to the period, situated children in the everyday world of public and civic spaces, where they acted out the anxieties and interconflicts of adult affairs through their games and mischief. The protective boundaries between childhood and adulthood, the home and the world, play and moralizing, diversion and instruction, freedom and obedience that were to later become the essence of enlightenment ideals were here still devilishly confused.
ANTONY ADOLF

pactum implicitum: favour ing illegal persons

No art is more stubbornly national than poetry.

We have no credible evidence that Iraq and al Qaeda cooperated on attacks against the United States.

“I am appalled by your recent series ‘Tossed out of America.’”

“il ny a pas damericain pure,
not even le ‘sauvage,’
comme disait Tocqueville,2

whose witch trials are still as vile today as they were in puritans anti-play;

while nos infiniero es plus bel que3 their most cherished hells,
il a lancé el mas malo4 spell

que nous avons encore5 to break.”

6 “in almost all latin languages”
7 the reference is to Derrida
8 “we can”
9 “you see”
10 “too short”
11 “we do not want to establish for/para”
"This is an item glossed over in your articles, but it is something with which you should have started each of your paragraphs."

"L'aristocratie songe à maintenir plus qu'à perfectionner;" you literrall bastard, whose last name is Rasmussen; de donde is your whore of a form other, who arrived at your americas imparfait shores with probably pas plus que her cunt et, con el tiempo, her vote."

"It is about time that the government is doing what it should have been doing for decades—keeping America's borders secure."

"When, au contraire," puissance publique is in the people's hands, the sovereign seeks le mieux because no sensibla the worst. décadas of decadence have passed, and still we have not learned from the (im)pacts that fail us all."

12 "Aristocracy seeks to maintain more than to perfect"
13 "where"
14 "imperfect americas"
15 "not more than"
16 "with time"
17 "on the contrary"
18 "the best"
19 "does not feel"
20 "decades"
"Every person here illegally is taking an immigration visa away from someone who is following the rules and waiting legally to immigrate to the United States."

"'L'esprit d'amélioration' then extends to mille object divers, it descends into infinite détails, et surtout il s'applique to species of improvement qu'on ne saurait obtenir en payant; zero sum mentality is the root of all your problemass; life, like language in

my America, is as Abundant as the One selon Plotin."

"It doesn't matter if the illegal person is from Pakistan, Mexico or Germany, he or she is a criminal."

"illegal is not an adjective that should apply to a personne; your pseudo-Poundian persona makes me sick, you who lives in Winfield, Illinois, land of Lincoln, that great haphazard leader that brought nos Americas into existence; the token Aryan in your sentence sentences all Others to death camps of your own creation."

21 "the spirit of improvement"
22 "a thousand different objects"
23 "details"
24 "it especially applies"
25 "according to Plotinus"
26 "someone or no one"
27 "person or persona"
28 "our"
“My hope is that it doesn’t stop with the Middle Eastern countries but will continue until all illegal person immigrants are identified and returned to their countries of origin.”

"for whom does not identify mean deny? who is not an im migrant today? and if we all returned to our countries of origin?

my father is from the Middle East and with out purse ons like him this count ry would go to hell in y our hand bag. stop.

s top. stop. s top. stop. s top.

stop. s top. stop. s top. stop."

"Please stop blaming America first and start reporting impartially."

"non" no

no

no

non

no

non

no.

"no"

"no"

"no"

"no"

"no"
She is the pose of an articulated, shortchanged equilibrium. Under, or perhaps through, the drying mud stucco on her naked torso; along, but not out of, her unmapped lips, comes persona; under, yes, under, the world-record-book fingernails. As Jean Baudrillard has her, she is all come-hither, though you don’t know why. She is the prose of an over celebrated, benign millennium. The recalibrated self that the photographer’s eye cannot engender unless he stoops to the object level, to the objective (lens) level. This much he does.

In Baudrillard’s exhibit, L’Exile e l’apparance, as elsewhere, the impossible exchange governs all. What manages, by some fluke, to be exchangeable is simply irrevocable. She is a tree, so he says.

The exhibit, held deep in the catacombs of Santa Maria della Scala in Siena, could only be accessed through the great halls off the piazza dominated by the green-and-white-marble, palimpsest Duomo. Dimly lit descent, unlabeled pilings emerging perpendicular from a wall—perhaps for shelves or perhaps biers upon which the sanctified dead were placed. Then, a museum of Sienese antiquities, oddly spaced display cases, no discernible order. A mysteriously placed freestanding guardroom. And the exhibit, disconcertingly almost at ground level.

None to repeat to. Mutatis mutandis.

He is everything she is not—abundance when she is clean, lean when she is abundance. But he too is the pose of an articulated, shortchanged equilibrium. The unsifted coffee beans efface his torso from view as they hover above his concave sieve. Much chaff besides. The dog responds to something behind the camera but off to the left.

As Salgado did it, the left hand is visible, and if anything the beans shy away from the viewer, having been sent aloft in a circular motion. What it advertises.

"Un viaggio fotografico di Sebastião Salgado per raccontare le storie dei coltivatori di caffè e il loro impegno, sostenuto con passione da illy." ("A photographic journey by Sebastião Salgado, narrating the stories of coffee growers and their efforts, supported by illy with passion.")
In principio. In principio c'era un sogno. In the beginning was a dream. Illy's dream of guilt-free coffee. A brief but widely publicized exhibit in Rome and a smallish pamphlet of absorbing photographs. The perfect coffee-table book. To complement the already purchased and perused The Devil's Cup; Coffee: Epic of a Commodity; Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World. And for the more practical-minded: The Complete Guide to Coffee; The Perfect Cup: A Coffee Lover's Guide to Buying, Brewing and Tasting; The Coffee Book: Anatomy of an Industry from Crop to the Last Drop. No worries about overworked, underpaid Brazilian laborers, even if they're in plain view. A fair parallel, by name, might be The Birth of Coffee, by Daniel Lorenzetti and his photographer wife Linda Rice Lorenzetti, the cover picture being a hand caked with earth holding a handful of beans.

In principio. First words of the Vulgate Bible. vulgis: the common people. Publicize.

None to repeat to. Mutatis mutandis.

Some point after the shoot, she towels off. Terry-cloth. Every bit of vulgarity can't be had. Or removed. If she's exclusive in her tastes, we'll never know. Café au lait, peut-être.

Perhaps she makes her way to Siena to see the exhibit, takes a fancy to visit Rome and encounters the poster for the Salgado exhibit. In the Roman light not as luminescent as typical, she passes a man, stock-still, garbed in shining gold fabric with an Egyptian mask. He slowly bows with every contribution to his tin. She takes the trolley from Flaminia to the Olympic Village. Sees the exhibit, goes next door to the Symphony's CD store, brushes past a handsome carabiniere. Returns home, buys the demitasse and saucer online. What it advertises is clear. What it obscures is, well, obscured: the empty bag, one of several being collected by the bandanaed man at the bottom. Set the demitasse down, the bag disappears. Spill some coffee into the saucer, the bag disappears. Still, is she the mother he shoots twice from above, ignorant of his eye, as she walks with her daughter along the sidewalk, past the Copif@st, which, for whatever its abundance of photocopying inside, is nothing more than a faux-frosted lettering on the glass that reflects her and her daughter?

None to repeat to. Mutatis mutandis.

José Ortega y Gasset. "It seems to me, the characteristic of new art from a social viewpoint consists of dividing the public into those who understand it and those who do not."
If the person commissioning the work of art, presumably not thought of as the public, can’t possess the full scope of the work, then what chance does the public have? Or did Illy understand that Salgado, known more for his striking images of suffering, hard labor, and refugees, would likely offer up a view of his subjects contrary to an executive’s or an ad rep’s antiseptic giddiness? Yes. With boldness, Illy asks, “Perché Salgado? Perché Sebastiao, brasiliano alla continua ricerca dell’uomo, è sicuramente l’occhio più sensibile nel cogliere ed esaltare una poesia antica e brasiliana come quella del caffè.” (Why Salgado? Because Sebastião [note the familiar address], a Brazilian continually seeking mankind, is surely the most sensitive eye in capturing and exalting as ancient and Brazilian a poetry as coffee.)

Is this new? Long and far are we from an era in which the connoisseur of art lived and breathed it, arranged (or had arranged for him) in his household a bevy of pictures and sculptures, according to the proper divisions of genres (history painting, landscape, portraiture) and the different schools (Carracci, Caravaggio, D’Arpino, and so on). The most lascivious being reserved for the private quarters, presumably to foster greater success in propagation, more vital offspring in the offing. But they were amateurs, and by name they chose and exalted that. amateur: f. L. amare, to love.

Edward Gibbon, so heavily reliant upon them for his masterpiece, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, called amateurs the “subsidiary rays of history.” What service to the crown. History by the public, or at least as much of the public as cared to get involved. Sallust, Tacitus, and Gibbon believed that the Empire fell because of conditions leading to a tyrant emperor: Sulla. Those conditions included a decline of virtue. virtue: f. L. virtus, valour, manliness, f. vir, man.

One casts the group’s canvas sheets over his shoulders, trails them behind him like a royal gown. None catches the eye of another. But each is wearing a baseball cap.

In Princípio was held at the controversial new symphony and performing arts complex in Rome. Aerial views make the buildings and blueprints of the Parco della Musica look like three computer mice. Vast parking lots, fairly nondescript residential neighborhood, several carabinieri and other assorted officers lounging about. The exhibit hall was small, fronted by a single desk in the spotless lobby. Between the two pairs of double doors a good ten feet on each side, two women sat and talked, asked if I wanted the guide in English. It was in a single room, painted black and with only track lights illuminating the photos, arranged so that the glare from one image reflected off the glass of the one directly across the room.

None to repeat to. Mutatis mutandis.

5.

So, then, hoodwink the moneyed interests? Sell them the opposite of what they think they’re getting? It’s only fair, no? How many times has the public been misled?

Tasked with a mural completing the sentence, “human intelligence in control of the forces of nature,” Diego Rivera set to work in the Rockefeller Center. Called down from the scaffolding, dismissed. Aborted compromise effort. Lenin out? No. “All art is propaganda.”

Susan Sontag. “Ours is a culture based on excess, on overproduction; the result is a steady loss of sharpness in our sensory experience. All the conditions of modern life—its material plenitude, its sheer crowdedness—conjoin to dull our sensory faculties.” All art is advertising.

None to repeat to. Mutatis mutandis.

6.

But be prepared to succumb to the greater late-stage wave. Do not be surprised at the action-reaction dynamic. Salvatore Settis, writing about Italian patrimony under siege, says, “Come mai, dopo che l’espresso all’italiana ha conquistato il mondo compresa l’America, si va diffondendo da noi il caffè americano, che la compagnia Starbucks intende lanciare con grandi messi e prevedibile successo?” (How is it, after Italian espresso conquered the world, including America, that American coffee should be spreading in our country, where
Starbucks means to launch it with much ado and predictable success?

None to repeat to. Mutatis mutandis.

7.
She is not a tree. Not in the section entitled Arbres in the catalogue. The pages had stuck and flipped. She and her companions fall under Homotypos. For French biologists, homotypos suggests the process of mimétisme, mimicry.

In other images in the group, she is wrapped, constricted in a loincloth of fabric twisted to the point of ropeness, she has Titian thighs. Think Venus d’Urbino. Or better yet, the Rinaldo and Armida of Van Dyck, though no thighs are visible. What is obscured. Armida’s retinue was an amphibious sort, too. A singing nymph with legs beset with scales, emerges from the water. Armida, gazing upon her hated rival as he sleeps, falls in love, drapes him with garlands.

None to repeat to. Mutatis mutandis.

8.
It is cold out, hoarfrost on the windows. Where hoarfrost, a greenish vague value. Where scraped in ellipticizing loops, the sharp reflection of yellow morning sky and bare trees. What blue-bottle iridescence one facet removed—vitality, that is.

Jürgen Habermas. “[T]he general interest consists in quickly bringing about the conditions of an ‘affluent society’ which renders moot an equilibrium of interests dictated by the scarcity of means.”

In Italia S.p.A.: L’assalto al patrimonio culturale, Settis describes how Silvio Berlusconi, media magnate, Prime Minister of Italy, and sitting President of the European Union, has ordered that a general accounting of all government-owned objects in Italy. Properties, statues, fountains, villas, ruins, paintings, and so on. Of the progress so far, 800 pages of items have been listed. Ultimately, this list represents those items that can be deaccessioned by the government, auctioned off to private individuals and corporations wishing to own a piece of Italian cultural heritage. Rumor has it that the auction system has been rigged so that these items may go for as little as half the appraised price. According to one news source, there is a price for the entirety of the recently excavated ancient Roman city of Alba Fucens, which was built in the 4th century BCE to resemble Rome: mosaics, frescoes, sculptures and bronzes, an amphitheater, a basilica, a macellum, a spa complex and a great sanctuary dedicated to Hercules. Priceless? Wrong. 40,615 Euros.

Rumor has it that Berlusconi, aside from his sketchy business dealings and increasing number of close associates convicted of crimes, so desperately wants to build a bridge from the boot to Sicily, to leave that as his legacy (legare: to send a deputy, i.e., not ourselves), that he will auction off irreplaceable cultural items. Estimates begin at $45 billion, with a completion date of 2010.

If Baudrillard is right, and the natural progression of the sign, with the foreseeable endpoint of the signifier having no relation whatsoever to any signified, then the glitzy Italinnness marketed around the world will slowly (as these processes must always be, so as to avoid scrutiny) lose any connection to a national patrimony. Little Caesar pizza restaurants in the US are perhaps the first foray. Imagine if we could talk about chiaroscuro, no longer able to see the paintings of Caravaggio and the Caravaggisti. The paintings exported and squirreled away, inaccessible and possibly deteriorating in private collections, fewer and fewer held ac-
countable to standards of behavior and treatment of the artworks. Private owners are much less likely to allow researchers, particularly independent scholars in to see works of art or rare books and manuscripts. And due to severe budget cuts (on the order of 40% in places), access to important archives has already been cut drastically. Art historians are in a tizzy.

The Italian media has been busy this week. After a month of unquestioned, almost total absence from the public, Berlusconi emerged, his eyes glinting. Bags and wrinkles around his eyes gone, plastic surgery suggested by his wife. He only has eyes for his wife, the papers prattle.

None to repeat to. Mutatis mutandis.

9.

Digital art and digitized art are the way of the future. Eastman Kodak has declared it will stop making slide projectors this year, June 2004, to be precise. All service and support to end in June 2011. Art historians are in a tizzy.

Salgado’s image of a cow on a slope. Reproduced on Illy’s website and in the smallish booklet. As printed, the cow stands almost in the fold of the two-page spread—virtually hidden in plain view. Visible only by virtue of the image having been offset from the center, otherwise the bisecting stitches and the uncracked spine would have rendered the cow invisible. The same with the image on the website—again, the cow is almost indistinguishable. Magnify, crop, magnify, crop. Tonality, detail, lost.

Baudrillard: “I have only really been doing photography for four or five years. I am fascinated by it, it’s something really intense. It’s the form of the object, the form of the appearance of the object, more so than in cinema, which is more realist. I like photography as something completely empty, ‘irreal,’ as something that preserves the idea of a silent apparition. This fascinated me a lot. The photo and travel, because at one time they went together, the fragment, the notebook and the diary; all these functioned together as one whole, a machine with different axles. But photography now, I don’t know, I don’t pursue it any longer as an activity, because what is done today is so beautiful, so perfect, so well done, that photography raises itself to the status of art, technically and otherwise. Once again, I can’t do photos like that.”

None to repeat to. Mutatis mutandis.

10.

audere: to dare, to be bold.
audire: to hear

Marjorie Perloff: “What a difference a phoneme makes!”
Dare to be heard, or dare to listen?

Baudrillard writes, “The photographic act is a duel. It is a dare launched at the object and a dare of the object in return.” Photography as violence is almost a commonplace idea now. So even if Salgado is the most sensitive, the most sympathetic to his fellow Brazilians, has he instead betrayed them? Baudrillard again: “So-called ‘realist’ photography does not capture the ‘what is.’ Instead, it is preoccupied with what should not be, like the reality of suffering for example. It prefers to take pictures not of what is but of what should not be from a moral or humanitarian perspective. Meanwhile, it still makes good aesthetic, commercial and clearly immoral use of everyday misery. These photos are not the witness of reality. They are the witness of the total denial of the image from now on designed to represent what refuses to be seen.”

Salgado. “[T]he picture is more good or less good in function of the relationship that you have with the people you photograph.” Baudrillard does not announce himself to his subjects, except insofar as they are masked with mud and posed or happen to be dismembered, ill-clothed mannequins. Salgado dares to hear and be heard by his subjects. Baudrillard is what refuses to be seen.

Baudrillard. “The local is a shabby thing. There’s nothing worse than bringing us back down to our own little corner, our own territory, the radiant promiscuity of the face to face. A culture which has taken the risk of the universal, must perish by the universal.”

None to repeat to. *Mutatis mutandis.*

11.

We are many Severinos and our destiny’s the same: to soften up these stones by sweating over them, to try to bring to life a dead and deader land.

So the Brazilian poet João Cabral de Melo Neto sang, as though for all the human race.

And if we Severinos are all the same in life, we die the same death, the same Severino death.

No one except a Brazilian could say, “We are all Severinos.” Perhaps, “Ich bin ein Berliner” or “We are all Americans now.” Which of these is not like the others?

None to repeat to. *Mutatis mutandis.*

12.

Baudrillard: “Everybody knows how to strike a pose within a vast field of imaginary reconciliation.” Everybody knows how to strike a pose. How long can you hold it when others are looking?

None to repeat to. *Mutatis mutandis.*
Hearing touches her limit on all sides, a community exposed.

Crying is energy permanently latent in her mind.

Hearing no longer means my original cry; it spans a real moment over this sense of being touched.

Her immanence is the absence of a totality of fragments (other of fraying, insect wing, feminine space).

She refuses to believe she is alone.

Away from home, I visualize myself the way she thinks about me, to feel real.

She sits informally, elbow on raised knee.

This circle of real and matter is the condition of the possibility of form, all touching, all composition of a world.

Photographs from L’Exil e l’apparance used by permission of Jean Baudrillard. Pictures by Sebastião Salgado for illycaffe used by permission.
Her knowing depends on our knowing world signifies dwelling, haven, safeguard, intimacy, subjectivity.

All the good gathers into relationship, as in a family, space behind each person.

Grace, tissue, sojourn, celestial body, free space, nest in the world in an unheard sense.

Her compassion reflecting from me twins, no object, trance, transcendence or passing away so originary, the mother had come apart, first of all.

A bird falls out of the air, through the anti-weave, into the anti-net, delineating anti-immanence.

Twenty-four crows upstate, each fall is a gestural syllable.

Cover them with a blue cloth of creatures ready to be born, contact like starlight that will arrive, for sure.

Let mothers catch them, raccoon, labrador bitch, girl, inter-species, conservative mothers, arms out like foliage, general, no locomotion of their own.

Two years ago, Kiki Smith and I coincidentally bought statues of Kuan Yin on the same day. Kuan Yin is the Chinese "goddess" of compassion, "the hearer of all the cries of the world." One is 18th century blanc-de-chine, exquisite and dynamic. The other, also 18th century, is larger, cast iron, with great depth and strength. Since then, we've collected others, of differing values. I remember white ones on a shelf across her bedroom window. The wind blew, and all the porcelain Kuan Yins falling to the floor. Between us, there are ideas of hearing as compassion, of being heard as receiving compassion, of being heard as being, of hearing as environment, of compassion as space, of the borders between compassion and grief, between the Christian madonna and the Tibetan masculine or bisexual Avalokitesvara, of what an embodiment contains.
Unspoken communication with strangers on the streets of Venice is nearly impossible.

Without realizing it I've practiced fleeting interactions with strangers for years. Last night I stumbled across a line in an old notebook which described such eye contact, *eye-cons*, as unusual in Paris relative to New York. In New York, eyecons can be the highlight of a walk. I now see that they are far more common in Paris than in Venice.

A full eyecon starts with eye contact and is consummated with a nod. It is the nod which interests me most. A nod is a distinctly old-fashioned gesture, practiced primarily by older men. A nod is probably a bastardization of tipping the hat, or more formally, bowing. A wave, for example, is far less intimate as a form of contact between humans; it requires seeing the other person. But actual eye contact is generally not involved, the distance is usually too great.

The modern nod, when accomplished correctly, is nearly invisible. So subtle that even an intimate, walking alongside you, does not know of the contact you had with a passerby, a total stranger. Unlike sex, eyecons are so intimate, so fleeting, that there is no room for more than two to participate. Luckily, no diseases can be communicated through eye contact. On the other hand, eyecons can not be practiced to improve health or to effectively take off weight; a proper nod only burns approximately .000008 calories.

For all its minimalistic qualities, the nod can be a surprisingly significant action. There are no bells or whistles, in fact there is no sound at all. Eyecons do not happen online, and no purchase is required. They may not be high fashion, but they remain on the cutting edge. Like good art or literature, eyecons are mysteriously satisfying. They leave the participants with a feeling of connection and wonder; and they often give rise to internal questions. What more can visual art, music or poetry strive for, except perhaps to tell a story? Eyecons are abstract, you make up your own story of what was "said" or "received."

I imagine some people don't know what I'm talking about. The Venetians certainly don't. Eyecons generally happen when two people are approaching on parallel, but not intersecting, trajectories. Humans, like most other animals (when not in a complete funk) are curious; it's part of a primordial instinct related to mating and territory. Who's approaching? Instead of antlers, we have hair styles and clothes to tell our story at a glance.

Precisely what happens is as follows: eye contact (foundation building) followed by a nod of various amplitudes. Not a wink. The nod occurs a micro second after the eye contact. The chin leads with a sharp, but extremely small, downward motion. Some are larger than others. The motion is very rapid. The other person responds in kind. There is no change of facial expression. The amplitude relates to the feeling and mood, it does not effect the contact. The two people must be on crossing paths, but the interaction can only happen when the two are close enough to make eye contact and must be completed before they pass each other.

There is nothing more to it. I attempted this form of communication whenever an opportunity presented itself during my time in Venice. I spent several hours each day on the streets, frequently in relatively untraveled parts of town, and only occasionally would the moment be right, passing an elderly gentlemen at the crest of a bridge for example. But, nothing would happen. Eye contact in Venice, though possible, is rare; the full cycle of an eyecon is as elusive as a good loaf of bread in the city. It's not that the Venetians are not looking; they are! They look; they see—then they look away. Communication is not part of it. This may date all the way back to the days of the Republic when a person could lose his or her head for espionage simply by interacting briefly with a foreigner.
The nearest I've come to a Venetian eyecon was with an elderly woman; we made solid contact, but no nod. That was the closest during nearly a month of days walking. Perhaps an eyecon only happens once a month in New York. I have never kept track, but I believe it's more than that.

The paucity of eyecons could explain another phenomenon I've noticed in Venice: people greet each other as they pass. This is common and pleasant to witness; it allows a sense of the real community of Venice which can easily be lost amongst the multitude of visitors. These greetings can happen anywhere, but are especially easy to observe as one person disembarks from a vaporetto while another is waiting to board, or vice versa. One person recognizes, then starts the interaction, but frequently there is an awkward delay in the other person's response. Then, after an observable few moments, an invisible barrier lifts and the connection is made. After seeing this same pattern many times, I concluded that the people were simply not making contact with those around them. The Venetian protection instinct is strong; this short pause in recognition is common. At first, I was sure that one Venetian did not actually recognize the other, but I was wrong. In America this type of chance meeting would commonly involve a more simultaneous acknowledgment, often with a degree of false greetings and embraces, even when the parties don't know one another well. The intimacy of the subsequent interaction between the two Venetians proved that the connection was genuine.

These cool, then warm, encounters perplexed me until I considered them in the context of what I'd learned while pursuing the elusive Venetian eyecon.
In the Spring of 2003, even as the so-called 'shock and awe' campaign was being waged in Iraq and on television screens around the world, there began to circulate reports of SARS, a respiratory disease that truly was shocking in the virality with which it consumed its victims, and the rapidity with which it spread from person to person, city to city, and continent to continent.

Gratefully, SARS was arrested before it could fulfill its potential as a worldwide epidemic, but not without claiming the lives of thousands, and making necessary the quarantine of entire cities.

It is perhaps the most obvious fact of the SARS outbreak that the conditions for its terrifying spread have never before existed. Never before has travel between hemispheres and continents been so rapid and so frequent as now, and diseases ride on airplanes along with the rest of us.

The rapid spread of SARS is but one example of a disease being aided by the products of human progress. We might cite as well the emergence, recently documented, of a strain of tuberculosis resistant to the antimicrobial medicines that were thought to eradicate the disease, or the emergence each year of a new mutation of influenza.

It is no revelation that human progress beggars progress in our illnesses, but as we make our transition from a society of industry to one of information, we must begin to ask what adaptations such a society will encourage in disease.

The widespread use of information technology has already been shown to have an effect on public psychological health. There exist on the web listenervs and sites devoted to a variety of mental disorders so strange and so specific that, were it not for the sheer numbers of users who profess to suffer from them, it would seem impossibly obscure. Among these is apotemnophilia, the subject of a December, 2002 Atlantic Monthly article by Carl Elliot. Apotemnophilia, "an attraction to the idea of becoming an amputee," has in recent years grown from an obscure syndrome to one that, on the Internet at least, is fairly often reported. Elliot writes that, "On the Internet there are enough people interested in becoming amputees to support a minor industry. One listserv has 1,400 subscribers."

While this phenomenon may not qualify as an epidemic, Elliot suggests that the Internet has in fact facilitated the spread of apotemnophilia, and to describe this spread he uses the term, coined by Ian Hacking, semantic contagion, "the way in which publicly identifying and describing a condition creates the means by which that condition spreads."

The medical effect of information technology has thus far been limited to diseases of the psyche. The New Disease proposes that the range of semantic contagion will come to include biological illnesses as well. It is our belief that, as our society becomes more immersed in and dependent on the narratives disseminated by new media, we open channels for disease to travel through. The New Disease is not intended to be a how-to. Its writers are not medical professionals, and the syndromes it reports on are semi-fictional. These syndromes exist at the horizon of what is possible. They occupy territory indicated, but as yet unoccupied, by medical science. These diseases are not real, but by semantic contagion we expect they will become so. For this to occur the narratives we present must describe sets of symptoms that are not yet classified as legitimate syndromes, but that nonetheless are suffered by a number of people. It is for this reason that The New Disease encourages its readers who may suffer ailments similar to those we describe to write to us telling of their own experience with these, or other undiagnosable illnesses.

In fact, the narratives presented here cannot be complete without such participation. It seems clear that, as disease adapts itself to the conditions of a new age, medicine will be slow to respond. The victims of new syndromes will suffer, undiagnosed and alone with their maladies until enough cases have been presented for medical science to develop treatments for them. If anything, The New Disease hopes to facilitate this process by offering a forum for the undiagnosable, and to do so we employ the same media that has likely caused their illnesses. If it was technology that made SARS such a threat, after all, it was technology too that saved us from it.

Cast as an online medical journal, this collection of semi-fictional short stories examines the psychogenic nature of disease and the media's role in spreading and/or creating modern epidemics.

The project was a collaborative effort of writers Devin Booth and Kim White and media artist Michael McCaffery. As an online publication, it allows and encourages reader collaboration in the form of "Talk Back" opportunities. The New Disease is interested in how the narrative is changed by the reader and conversely, how the reader is changed by a narrative. Will a semi-fictional disease be accepted as real? Can it manifest itself simply by the power of narrative suggestion and the validation of media promotion? The entire journal is at http://www.columbia.edu/~kwr96.
Drawing from Kristin Prevallet's investigative poetics, Heriberto Yépez's "context poetry," and John "Eddie" Welch's sign murals, we have conceived of a sign project for St. Mary's County, Maryland. This region is isolated at the tip of a peninsula shaped by the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. Although located only 70 miles south of Washington DC, it is home to Amish and Mennonite communities, "watermen" (as people who live by fishing, oystering and crabbing are called here), and—until a recent buyout by the state—to tobacco farmers.

We are interested in the social mark signs can make. Placing a sign into the public is an act of submission: one releases art into the social commons. Thus, as Yépez eloquently writes about in a recent essay for *Tripwire*, destruction is part of the performance.

Nevertheless, we weren't prepared for how quickly (in less than two hours) this sign would be pried from the post:

Although we cannot suppose the intentions of the sign remover, we do know that dissenting views regarding military aggression can arouse ire in St. Mary's County. In the early 1940s, the federal government created the Patuxent River Naval Air Station on thousands of acres known as Cedar Point, displacing farmers and watermen and erasing hamlets. In the 1990s, while the Clinton administration closed a number of bases around the country, it greatly expanded Pax River (as it is called locally), widening its scope of activity and increasing its personnel. Currently, Pax River generates half of the steady paychecks in the county as well as 85% of its tax revenue. For local politicians these figures serve as political grist. US Congressman Steny Hoyer, the Democratic Minority Whip, has said, "Thinking of St. Mary's without Pax River is really impossible."

The military's power consolidation is highly visible, right down to the many-miled barbwire fence that starkly prevents access by the non-military locals, but there are many other power brokers in the county. For instance, the Jesuits—who were among the first colonists in the area in the 17th century and who owned slaves until the 1830s—are major landowners. They, in fact, lease waterfront property to the Navy.

Meanwhile, the many local watermen have struggled recently with the near extinction of oysters and ever-slimming crab population. Some county residents live in trailer parks and lone trailers exposed to car traffic, and the "flattops," a local housing project, is comprised of dilapidated houses, many of them appearing condemned but nevertheless occupied. Clearly, many people do not own wealth in the county, so we posted this sign deep on the peninsula, about five miles from the tip:
(This is the only sign that remains intact in the over two months since we initiated the project.)

Next we placed a “Bush/Cheney in ’04 Four More Wars” sign in a high-traffic intersection through which commuters to and from DC must pass. We added this sign to one of the high-density sign groves that crop up in the county, hoping to cash in on the legitimacy that such sign clusters provide. In a sense, the context of other signs provided cover for ours. Additionally, we used stencils to make our signs look more ‘official’ and therefore possibly lengthen their public lives.

Then we went to nearby Leonardtown, the county seat, which dons a World War I monument that segregates the “White” from the “Colored” troops. Again, we employed the Sign-Grove-Method. Fozia Qazi, a Kashmiri mathematician and artist, provided the artwork for this piece. This sign was removed after about a week. We later recovered it—battered and scuffed—from the underbrush, where it was left for lost.

We completed Phase I of the Southern Maryland Sign Project by sinking the sign pictured below into the Hurricane-isabel-softened earth on Willows Road, a smaller rural byway. The sign riffs off a statement from the North Korean Foreign Ministry in January 2002: “The US loudmouthed supply of energy and food are like a painted cake pie in the sky.” At least this is the translation that appeared in the Washington Post.
This project continues. As we try to normalize marginalized discourse through the legitimacy that stenciled signs provide, we remain open to other ways of angling into poetic and political possibility. After all, signs can be somewhat of a paradox in St. Mary's County: several restaurants exist without signs—such as Courtney's, a fishing restaurant marked only by word-of-mouth. A Greek restaurant is mysteriously located with an understated sign that says, "Pizza," yet locals know it is the best place around for Greek food. As we chart the evolution of our current signs, we will continue to push how our public poetry might interact with this local landscape.

We thank our sign-making comrades for their support and general good cheer: Jen Abdella, Charlie Benjamin, Robin Hahnle, Dave Kung, Fozia Qazi, Sahar Shafqat and Kristen Sheeran.

Heriberto Yépez's essay "Contexts and Signs of an Urban Visual Poetics" (Tripwire, Winter 2000-2001) lays out his thinking on Context Poetry. For over 75 years, John "Eddie" Welch has been painting sign murals that aim to educate young people about history, and his work is currently exhibited at the Visionary Arts Museum in Baltimore.

See also:

JANA BRANCHA
Quite Specific

Public art was a promise that became a nightmare... It's like that story about the two thieves who hole up in an abandoned restaurant to plan their next job. While they are plotting in the basement kitchen, the dumbwaiter comes down and there is an order for fried chicken, Southern style. "What shall we do?" asks one. "Quick, fill the order," says the other, "or they'll come and find us." So they send up some fried chicken Southern style. But then another order comes down, and then another, and they keep filling them and sending them up. This is what has happened to our revolution.

—Siah Armajani, as quoted in an article by Calvin Tompkins in The New Yorker, March 19, 1990

The world of publicly funded art in America these days is filled with endless meetings, phonebook thick contracts, a large cast of characters, complicated politics, and layer upon layer of oversight. Arts administrators have the impossible task of trying to let artists make artwork while protecting their institutions from the ghost of a possibility that they will have an enormous permanent gew-gaw hanging around that becomes controversial or despised (which inevitably happens anyway). Since public art is so often a lightning rod for clamorous radio and newspaper rants about wasted public funds, it's too risky to give an artist an open opportunity to think something up out of thin air, let it loose, and just watch what happens. So one popular solution is to let large committees of city officials, architects, and real-estate developers choose the site, the concept, and often the form, and then simply ask the artists to execute their ideas. That way, the committees get the fun of invention and the artists go back to being paid artisans (as one person explained: "Just like
Michelangelo. What do you think the specifications for David were?

Excerpted below are a few of the “RFQ’s” (Requests for Qualifications) that I’ve received in the past several years that give a glimpse of this trend. The announcements are trimmed down but presented here verbatim, beginning with my all-time favorite. The now completed sculpture is considered a popular tourist attraction in downtown Minneapolis:

Call for Artists—City of Minneapolis

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS
A. Bronze sculpture of the television character Mary Richards tossing her hat in the air from the opening credits of The Mary Tyler Moore Show.
B. Sculpture is to be an exact, realistic, life-like rendering of Mary Richards.
C. Larger than life representation. Size requirements will be provided...
D. Bronze sculpture style and patina to match the Ralph Kramden sculpture.
E. Artist to provide base for sculpture with approval...
F. The following stages will be reviewed and approved... Mini-clay rendering, full-scale model (multiple reviews), wax model, and final bronze sculpture... The selected artist will be required to submit photos (preferably digital) of the work in progress on a bi-weekly basis.

APPLICATION MATERIALS
A narrative description of the artist's approach to the project... This section should address how the approach will technically portray Mary's hat in connection to the figure. Not to exceed three letter-sized pages.

The Tallahassee Democrat, the daily newspaper for Tallahassee, FL, seeks proposals for an outdoor sculpture that will be unveiled as part of their 100th birthday celebration in March of 2005. The theme of the sculpture must address the importance of literacy in our society and the role of the daily newspaper in American life, preferably featuring human size figure(s) reading a newspaper.

NC Zoological Park is seeking proposals from artists for a commission of sculpture in the Zoo's Africa Region. The sculpture is to feature a grouping of life size Hippos in a setting appropriate to that of the animal's natural habitat. The site is at a lake's edge.

Texarcana, TX/AR—Texarcana Leadership Class of 2003 seeks an artist/team to create a design of significant merit as a gateway to the downtown and where the two separate cities meet. The theme of the piece should combine the history of Texarcana's founding in 1873 as 1. a key railhead, 2. timber producer, 3. rich agriculture heritage. Selected material is to utilize available pieces of granite either as a walkway or sculpture. They are 3 1/2" thick x 14" wide x 48" long. There are also 1000 buff colored bricks acquired from a historic building that also may be used.

Salamanca, NY—Seneca Nation of Indians

Call for entries for a public art commission. Designs should be translatable into linear/modular designs for application to retaining walls on Interstate 86 in/near Salamanca, NY. Artwork should represent Iroquois woodland beadwork design patterns.

The medium sought by the Public Art Advisory Board for this site is art furniture or furn-art-ture. This art form blends function with whimsy, fancy and forward looking vision. The finished work, possibly a bench, should reflect a technical, artistic and historical sensitivity. It should also be durable enough to withstand and complement the demands of the site.

Henry Lay Sculpture Park ("HLSP") announces a call for an "Early American" outdoor sculpture. HLSP is located in Pike County, Missouri, about five miles southwest of the Town of Louisiana. The Review Committee is searching for an outdoor sculpture piece, to be located on the peninsula, which would express something about the people of early America. Please note that the Review Committee is open to consider pieces depicting either Native Americans and/or early settlers of the country.

Monument To Mankind—Sandstone Sculpture Project. Artists are asked to participate in Monument To Mankind, a program during which one sculptor from each of 192 nations will design and sculpt one figurative, non-abstract, five-sided block of sandstone that represents the heritage and culture of the artist's country. Sculpted blocks
will then be constructed into a Peruvian style stepped pyramid. Selected artists will sculpt their block during a one-month camp and will receive a nominal sum for the work, food, lodging, transportation, and use of necessary tools that are not transportable.

PARTY ANIMALS competition—D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities,
D.C. Art Commission has produced fiberglass casts of 100 donkeys and 100 elephants and is seeking local and national artists to submit creative designs for these icons. The “Party Animals” theme icons will be installed at various sites throughout Washington, DC from April 1st, and will continue to be on display until the fall of 2002.

Pandamania—Call to Artists—D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities,
Set you “inner panda” free and be featured as one of the artists who will create a sensation in this exciting public art project. As with 2002’s hugely successful Party Animals public art program, artists are invited to submit designs for the sculptures. The DC Arts Commission will make available blank 5-feet tall Pandas to area, national, and international artists who submit the best creative and innovative designs.

The Pacific Rim Bonsai Collection is seeking artists to create a work of sculpture—that will serve as a display stand or pedestal—that will enhance the visual and emotional impact of selected bonsai. The artwork will interact with the bonsai in relation to its spatial dimensions, overall visual mass, movement and character. The display stands/pedestals may be of traditional design, but special consideration will be given to those that interact with the bonsai in novel and imaginative ways.

In another category, I’m wondering if these planners are expecting a little too much from the artists . . .

Electrical Services Power Plant—Ames, Iowa,
The City of Ames is soliciting concept design plans that are a complete visual solution to turning an “ugly duckling” Electrical Services Power Plant into a visually appealing gateway/community landmark into the downtown area.

The Wyoming Arts Council announces a call for entries for their Art in Public Buildings Project. The project requires an artist to cast a human quality to the State Employee Parking Structure.

Traffic Calming Projects—Santa Fe, NM,
City seeks artists for traffic calming projects. Artists will receive contracts to help design crosswalks, traffic circles, medians and other roadway features in neighborhoods working to reduce or slow down traffic.

The Arlington County, Virginia Public Art Program seeks an artist to work closely with a project team comprising engineers, planners and landscape architects, to develop artwork/aesthetic treatments to be incorporated into a major Virginia Department of Transportation project to improve traffic flow at two major interchanges of interstate and local roadways in Arlington County, Virginia.

New Mexico State Metropolitan Court—Albuquerque, NM,
Site-specific, exterior artwork. Dignity and respect for the judicial system and the public’s equal access to justice should be expressed in the work. Final artwork will form a visual connection between parking structure, plaza site, and the courthouse.
When my girlfriend and I got out of college, in 1981, we were eager to get going on our future so we moved to Seattle. We lived on Capitol Hill, which we had immediately spotted as the almost cool neighborhood. I say almost cool, because nothing about Seattle was actually cool yet. But there was something in the air. Something was about to happen. Our new apartment was so much more convenient than where we’d lived before. I could walk to downtown, where I did temp work, and on Broadway Ave, a short 3 blocks from our apartment, my girlfriend could catch any one of several buses that would take her to her job in University Village. Broadway, the main drag of our neighborhood, had great cute little places like a good used book store, a family run bar that still served Schlitz, a hamburger stand called “Dicks,” a grocery store, a hardware store and a dank but nice movie theater that had big fat comfy seats. For our one and 3/4 bedroom corner unit, everything included, with a waterfront view, my girlfriend and I paid $375 a month, about half of what we would have paid for a comparable place (if we could have found it) back east. We were ecstatic. This was all before Microsoft and Starbucks and all the dot.coms.

One of the cutest things about Broadway was the Dance Steps on Broadway, a piece of public art done by Jack Mackie and Chuck Greening in 1979. The Broadway sidewalk, from Republican Ave on the south to Pike on the north, was lined with bright, happy red white and blue tiles. Plus, every other block or so, embedded in the sidewalk, were these darling little bronze-y dance steps. They were images of the imprints of a woman’s skinny shoes and a man’s wide shoes going through numbered dance steps. The idea was to stand on the steps and go through them. The dances were fun ones from the past: the Obeebo, The Mambo, the Waltz. In the early 80’s people used to do these dances all the time. Some of the dances are from the Roaring 20’s, that crazy era when some people were making so much money they thought they would live forever. They didn’t of course. Some of them lost it all in the Crash of 1929. Other people never made any money. They were always just poor. Hardly anybody ever dances on the Broadway Dance Steps anymore. Drunks sometimes, kids who are high. Dogs have shat on them and people have peed on them—people who didn’t make lots of money in the boom years, who were never going to be part of some bright rich future.
The government froze, and then we found it hard to breathe. Bus stops where no one spoke remembered other queues, where flyers underfoot dissolved like garlands, or the ghost of a belief—of willful false belief. Once we were on TV; we counted, and we lost. Apparently permanent clouds blew in, and funereal bells, and then the freezing rain.

This month the lots of rain meant thumbs down and warped wood, doorbells in Cottage Grove. How often can you trust? Twenty-nine percent of eligible, I salute you. Sunset struck late voters from their lots; the people I came to like, who slogged through wind all day, and traffic, could almost drown in one another's thin air.

Against the morning air, I sat in our car and cried. Heart, do not give your heart; better to follow a sport, where telling the truth won't hurt. For how could you compete, Being honor bred, with one

Who, were it proved he lies, Were neither shamed in his own Nor in his neighbor's eyes? Only the fine art of replacing the pins on a map could save us, and even that seemed almost entirely lost.

Obscured and almost lost amid commercial hosts, the Origins poster read Win the Cold War. We tried a water-painting kit, whose strokes fade like applause. The last drawbridge outdoors stood lonely, and to scale it seemed almost antique, while taxicabs passed, and vans, unwilling to give, backed up, sounding their basso horns.

The fabled Gates of Horn... On the way to their airport, the glowing glow-in-the-dark signs point straight up before the night. Who owns the state? Who will? Jets boom and stagger west. Drivers, you hope for more and self-sufficient lives. When you are sick or alone or miss the city, what will you discover you want? What will you tell the men who own your roads by then?

i. m. Paul Wellstone (1944-2002)
The Black Panther Legacy Tour

Here the story tells the picture. Pictured here is 1218 28th Street in Oakland, site of the April 6, 1968 shootout between the Panthers and the Oakland Police that claimed the life of 17-year old Little Bobby Hutton. In what now is generally acknowledged to have been an ambush, the police initiated a gunfight with a caravan of Party members, which escalated after thirty minutes of gunfire to the bombardment, with tear gas and fire, of the house at 1218 where Hutton and Eldridge Cleaver had sought safety. Cleaver and Hutton surrendered, but Hutton, who had stripped down to his underwear to prove he was unarmed, was shot twelve times. At this point in the Legacy Tour, guide David Hilliard plays an audiotape of an eyewitness account of the incident, and describes his own participation that night as he hid in the basement of the house next door. The only remaining evidence of this event are a few stray bullet holes in the neighboring house.

But what is also pictured here is the framing of that event itself, as history, as a very specific history located in the material world as much as it is in the narratives of its official and unofficial retellings. Through the aesthetic logics of the “legacy tour,” one is led through a very particular—and highly charged—Oakland, an urban zone remapped by the lived experiences of its actors and the physical terrain of its struggles. Here then, an otherwise “ordinary inner-city street” (already an ideological space in itself) becomes reframed by the mere act of historical witnessing, of that voice that says: “this happened here.” What then am I photographing? The event, the history, the legacy? None of these seem to show up in the frame; perhaps one is only ever photographing a photograph of that erasure, that act of reframing that in itself makes such a photograph possible at all.

Public art in this case becomes less a body of fixed monuments and works but a mobile, ongoing retelling and literal renavigation of history’s movement in both time and place. To (de)tour through Oakland by the logics of historical counter-narratives and local sites of resistance too fraught and fragile to have become museumified by the state, is to radically undo what the Situationists used to call the psychogeography of everyday life. To be confronted with the inability to capture, in the tourist’s photographic gaze, in words, in monument, a history that is at once both under threat of erasure and yet still burning beneath the surface of quotidian city streets, is a profoundly political as well as aesthetic experience, one which fulfills what we might hope for in the best of public art.
Here the bench anticipates the photograph. Positioned along a long trail that cuts through the vast salt ponds at the southern end of the San Francisco Bay, there is no apparent reason for its particular location over any other. Nonetheless, its presence seems to dictate that one should rest here, and "take in" this scenery, this view. Almost instinctually the camera comes out, to help further frame the landscape into consumable units recognizable to the postcard consciousness that such urban parks wish to conjure.

At the same time, the bench implies a resting period, a temporal gap in the otherwise forward-moving logic of the "nature walk," such that one's awareness of the surrounding bay shallows and salt-scapes shifts to an entirely different register of scale. The ideal time required for such a shift is four minutes and thirty-three seconds, during which ambient smells and sounds begin to enter the frame, which after all is only that of sensory experience, of the kind of listening or reading that most educational nature parks and urban tours usually manage to occlude with explanatory devices and predetermined routes and passages.

Across the great salt marsh runs a giant pipeline, carrying fresh water down from the Sierra and the Sacramento valley into the bay and across to San Francisco, while the neighboring Cargill Silt harvests the last of its giant salt pellets for the national soup industries, which has had a greater impact on the physical reformation of the Bay than almost any other industry. Overhead the commuter jets scream into SFO, their passengers perhaps enjoying the chance porthole-Rothkos caused by the patchwork maroon and blood-orange salt ponds throughout the lower bay, while rush-hour traffic pulses across the giant Dumbarton Bridge, waiting, perhaps, for some spectacular collision or seismological event to halt their somnambulant passage long enough to catch the dusky West Coast sun as it filters through the crepuscular fog and sets upon a lonely little standard-issue park bench, an exemplary work of anonymous public art.

Oral Alley, Oakland

Here the map becomes the territory. We set out to the so-called 5th Avenue Peninsula, our only guidebook a small booklet entitled "An Inexhaustive Investigation of Urban Content," put together in 1995 by the Los Angeles-based Center for Land Use and Interpretation. Filled with archival maps and photos, along with a key to a number of sites in the so-called "peninsula tour area," the decidedly non-touristic plot of urban refuse, industrial run-off, light industry, artist squats, and polluted marina junkyards becomes reframed into zones of public art, where the act of guided looking becomes a heightened form of cultural and geographic literacy.
The site photographed here the guidebook refers to as “Oral Alley,” a “sort of drive through boudoir, as it is a favorite spot for prostitutes to bring their customers and perform their services . . . During the day it is frequented by Caltrans and Port of Oakland workers who like to park their trucks here and take naps.” Given that the alley so named is far from any center of conventional urban intercourse or commercial traffic, and given CLUI’s talent for pushing the poetics of the documentary photograph (and caption) to the most bone-dry (and seemingly apocryphal) hermeneutics, the status of this site as “real” is brought into question, although, then again, there it is, on the map, in the guidebook photograph, and again in front of us in actual space.

The “tourist” is thus led through an otherwise unremarkable zone of cast-off urban space, the gaze now redirected downward for used condoms and any other archeological evidence that might confirm the guidebook description. But what exactly does one hope to see, to find, here? Some suggestion that “ah, things are as they are described”—? Are we photographing “Oral Alley,” or are we merely documenting our shared belief in its existence? Or is it our active participation in a conceptual artwork that, with enough willing imaginations, can actually transform a vacant alley into a tourist destination by virtue of sheer descriptive framing? Because it has been named, photographed, and mapped, it exists. And as such, writers, artists, cultural cartographers and (de)tourguides can perhaps once again open up new vistas and throughways of public art and consciousness, simply by bringing the convictions of their visions to bear upon material reality.

GERMÁN CARRASCO & CECILIA PAVÓN
Report: Eloisa Cartonera

Santiago Vega and Javier Barilaro, a writer and a graphic designer, first established a small press publishing house in 2001 called Eloisa in Argentina. Like many small presses, they began by publishing poets who were not in Argentine bookstores. At the time no publisher dared distribute poetry from outside the country, let alone outside their circle of friends. Eloisa meant that at poetry readings and other public places, one could acquire within Argentina the work of say Mexican poets or the reprint of some long out of print book. They printed their books on a photocopy machine or a home printer in a homemade format. But when the Argentine peso was devalued, the costs of these first books (which used beautiful paper in bright colors) tripled, so Eloisa could not continue.

Then in March of 2003, Vega decided to dedicate the money he received from an art grant to publish a book and so Vega and Barilaro began “Eloisa Cartonera.” They rented a workshop which had previously been a vegetable store in the middle of the Almagro neighborhood. They painted the front with the colors of the Bolivian flag, set up some improvised tables, and then began to work, making books with cardboard covers painted and cut by hand. They decided to use what they found at hand to make their books and so they used the cardboard collected by the “cartoneros.” Cartoneros—unemployed persons who search through the garbage for used cardboard which they then sell at a minimal cost—had multiplied during the economic crisis.

By using discarded materials they were able to continue to publish a range of hard to find books. But the important thing is how they worked with the minimum to show that literature doesn’t end when the country suffers. They were thus able to remove literature from the exclusivity of the intellectuals and to produce a book that contains history. When reading the books, one cannot help but read also the
This interview was conducted by Germán Carrasco and Cecilia Pavón with Santiago Vega.

GC & CP In the 90s there was a wave of publishers of independent poetry in Buenos Aires. How did Eloísa Cartonera fit into this panorama?

SV We didn’t want to start a publishing house that was limited to a circle of friends, as is usually the case. And we wanted to make books in which many people were involved in their manufacture. Our objective is to create work. If we were now to receive some capital, we would invest it in expanding so as to give more work to the cartoneros. We would continue to craft the covers in the same way so as to give more work to more people. We identify with the “arts and crafts” movement of a century and a half ago in England, especially with William Morris, a designer that worked with the Pre-Raphaelites. Those associated with “arts and crafts” said that there was a lack of spirituality in the mechanized world in the middle of the 19th century, when the first effects of capitalism began to be felt. Now that capitalism has left entire masses without work, the return to manual work also has the sense of reflection about the future of employment. A project like ours works with the figure of the cartonero, works with those that had no option other than to go out and gather cardboard. But then this cardboard becomes something artful, poetic, and it resignifies.

At this point in the interview, Santiago Vega asks us if we are going to translate something for his publishing house. We tell him that we liked a poem by David Antin that we saw the other day. He suggests to us that we might make a collection of some 15 poems to publish. He wants to publish translations, things that aren’t in bookstores.

While the cartoneros cut, paint, paste the books with homemade glue, a client comes in and buys some books. We ask him what he thinks of the publisher. He says, “it interests me that they could unite two totally separate worlds or what is generally perceived as two things that could never come together, the world of writers and cartoneros.”

GC & CP How do you ensure that the book fulfills a social function in a moment in which the book is only a product?

SV The book becomes something completely distinct from a book. It carries a history. It has the added value of that history. In addition the book is inexpensive. We don’t make a profit. We work to keep making books. We want to return to the old fashioned idea of the book as a friend. To make one of our books many hands are used. It is cooperative work. It is not a commercial product. The price is sufficient to cover the costs of the guys that work and to buy the cardboard. Nothing more.

GC & CP What type of texts do you publish?

SV We’re writers. We publish texts that are literary that we like and that perhaps aren’t for everyone. We publish books of “high culture” as some might say. And literature that some might call elite because it hasn’t been distributed outside of a small circle of people. With the cardboard books, because they have this beautiful design in spite of being born from circumstance, because they are made in this way, people draw close, ask, read. We bring people together with the book as an object. Now more than ever in Argentina books are expensive, and in Latin America in general books rarely reach out to the people.

GC & CP How has it worked up to this point?

SV We are trying to make ourselves self-sufficient with the little that we have, to not depend on anyone and to not exploit people. We employ only a few people. But we’re growing. We make around 300 books a month. And we manage to pay the cartoneros four times more than they get from the open market. And we offer employment to otherwise unemployed people. We can’t give them social security or any of those type of things. And we pay them in cash by the hour, but in any case it’s something. They can live from this activity. They are aware that if they make the books instead of selling cardboard they make five or six times more. And they also get a skill.
GC & CP Who do you publish and what is the criterion?

SV Recognized writers have given us their rights and previously unpublished work very generously. We've published Harold de Campos, Ricardo Piglia, Cesar Aira, Gonzalo Millan, Enrique Fogwill and other prestigious authors. We have also published first works, unknown poets, vanguard literature. We've published some people that no one would publish but they are doing work that we consider important. As to the selection criteria we don't wish to be customs officials and say what is and what is not good. We give space to interesting authors that nobody else pays attention to, to contemporary Latin American authors that are not published by Argentine publishers. We are creating a community of authors and intellectuals. Without that solidarity we couldn't have done anything. So finally we see it as work of solidarity and cooperation, that is the most important thing about Eloisa Cartonera.

Translated by Malcolm Shelley.

LENORA CHAMPAGNE

In the Public Eye

My mother always said that her single biggest regret was not being able to send her children to Catholic school. She had nine of us, so it would have been 1) too expensive and 2) too far a drive with so many little ones so early in the morning. Since I was the oldest, and the most restless in the country school we did attend, she said this most often to me. I argued fruitlessly that I in fact should go to the Convent School in Grand Coteau, which appealed to me because it was filled with smart rich girls, a mixture of the wild and devout, and I imagined it to be a most interesting and stimulating place.

Cut to 1985, when sculptor Claudia Fitch and I propose a public art installation/performance for Creative Time's Art on the Beach (the then future site of Battery Park City). Claudia and I share a fascination with the state of adolescence, the fuzzy bleary fantasy-filled sleepiness that afflicts girls. Both of us have a tendency to be able to go right back there. On my bookshelf we find the photographs of Mother St. Croix, a French nun who photographed students at the Ursuline Convent in New Orleans at the turn of the century (the 19th century, that is). My friend Tina Freeman “discovered” the photographs while she was photography curator at the New Orleans Museum of Art, which subsequently published this catalog. In Mother St. Croix we find our inspiration—we will explore the private, frenzied world of adolescent girls in a convent garden, girls contained within convent walls, along with any hysteria that boils up and spills over. We will do this in public. The subsequent installation and performance, The Eye of the Garden, forced the viewer's eye into perspective (the viewer, like the girls, was in a controlled environment, albeit an apparently free and open one).

Hot pink bleachers face a hot pink fence, all of it wound with plastic foliage. Sixteen girls in blousy red dresses. One short nun in a red habit. The nun flies across the sand sounding a Tibetan bell (the clapper of which is buried somewhere
beneath Battery Park City). The girls march in single file, to the sounds of drumming. They perform peculiar, ritualistic ablutions involving white towels and aluminum basins; we sense possibilities for erotic or cranky encounters between the paired girls. The nun sharply calling out, 1,2,3,4, breaks their absorption in one another as they hurriedly form another line and break into calisthenics.

During the course of an hour, the girls hide a mysterious bundle (Animal? Vegetable? Mineral?), individually run to the Mother Superior to “confess,” call out to one another across the vast space of the landfill (everyone takes a French name—the French names seem to hang particularly well in the air), play peculiar games, gang up on the youngest (she gets carried and dumped to one side), and contagiously catch a set of gestures which one girl initiates, and which eventually everyone repeats until they, too, fall from exhaustion. At one point all the girls run to the fence that separates the site from the river and hang there. At the end, the girls leave the convent, except for the two or three (or was it four?) who follow the Mother Superior into a long-term commitment to life in the convent, as nuns.

We rehearsed on site all summer, in terrible heat. The women who participated were generous and uncomplaining—it was one of my happiest collaborative experiences. The composer we brought into the project, Glen Velez, created drumming-based compositions with vocal overtones that heightened the spiritual, ritualistic feel of the work. Time felt suspended during the performance, like we were entering into an alternative zone far away from the quick city rhythms—a zone where time instead matched the dreamy obsession of adolescence.

The surprising thing for me was that, despite the public site, no spectator or chance visitor ever entered the performance space, either while we were rehearsing or during an actual performance. No one vandalized or harmed the installation. The space was respected as being a performance site, and therefore somehow off-limits to the passer-by or observer, even when there was not an official performance taking place. For all of its public exposure, the garden somehow managed to retain its aura as a space for secrets and mystery.
"For the last seven years Creative Time has sponsored 'Art on the Beach,' one of New York's most unpredictable exhibition and performance programs, on the Battery Park landfill in lower Manhattan. This season marks the end of this innovative summer series of cross-disciplinary collaborations, since the high-rise condominiums and office buildings long planned for the site are now scheduled for construction. That's a shame, because the stunning setting—the banks of dunes beside the Hudson River; the sweeping view of the harbor; the flanking wall of skyscrapers, dramatically lit (the performances took place just before sunset)—is irreplaceable."—John Howell on The Eye of the Garden in Artforum, January 1986

In summer 1985 I was privileged to be one of the final contingent of artists commissioned by Creative Time to create work for their annual "Art on the Beach" summer series, which was a highlight of summer arts activity in Manhattan for seven years. Legions of people visited the installations by artists such as Mary Miss, David Hammonds, and Claudia Fitch, who was the sculptor I collaborated with for "The Eye of the Garden," our project for the final, seventh summer of quirky surprises and unexpected wonders on that magical site.

It's my understanding that the landfill was partially created with the earth and rocks dug up when the World Trade Center was built. In one of the photographs of the performers entering the installation space, the World Trade Center rises prominently behind them. Now those towers, like the beach itself, are history. Reflecting on the project for this essay, I've been excavating the many layers of memory and associations that have turned up, and have been reminded of a Situationist slogan that was painted all over Paris in the days following May 68: "Beneath the pavement, (is) the beach."

Today, we planted about twenty papaya seedlings on "public" land near our house in Kailua, Hawai'i. In doing so, we broke the existing laws of the state which has the authority and right to delineate the precise sets of activities and usage of this "public" land.

Our act has two major purposes: one is to grow and share food; the other is to problematize the concept of "public" in "public space." While public land is supposed to exist as a binary opposite to private property, they are in reality mutually constitutive. Both are necessary to the world of global capitalism and the equally global system of national states. Legislated by nation states, private property laws keep capital investors calm by ensuring that they will personally profit from their ventures. Public property, on the other hand, keeps large parcels of land in reserve for future use. Property "belonging" to the public serves the equally important ideological purpose of assuaging a large number of people into believing that the territorial nation state is indeed "theirs" and is acting in their best interest.

The common understanding of what "public" land should be used for is narrowly defined within the confines of leisure activities: soccer, picnicking, admiring the view, walking a dog. The "public" comes to be understood as that group that has access to private property, where they can conduct all
other activities life necessitates—sleep, work, farm, love—all those things banned from public space.

In planting the papaya seedlings, we invoke the name of the Diggers. The Diggers were a radical group whose members lived in the early stages of capitalist colonization/globalization. In this period of late capitalism we continue their work. By making many of the same points, we are trying to recall and reuse their methods of resistance in the continuing struggle for social justice.

The first Diggers lived in the place we now know as England in the mid- to late-seventeenth century—a time when there was a category of land called the “commons.” Common land was that land communally shared by people to use and belonged, in perpetuity, to the community as a whole. As self-sustenance was dependent on the ability of people to “common”—to hunt, graze, forage, fish and, later farm—the struggle of the Diggers was ultimately the struggle for common land. They understood the continued existence of the commons as vital to the independence of the community from the arbitrary demands of rulers. The common lands were just as vital to their freedom from hunger and desperation. Commoning was well understood as the only way of life in which people could remain free from further bondage.

The Diggers emerged in this the embryonic period of global capitalism and of the national state system. Theirs was the time when the colonial system was expanding, when the Atlantic slave trade was becoming an inseparable part of doing business and when methods of corporal and capital punishment were becoming the main means of imposing the will of rulers. This was also the period when patriarchal gender relations were becoming increasingly commonplace and ideas of race were beginning to be discussed as rational explanations for gross inequalities.

The Diggers came together in an attempt to hold onto their common lands against its expropriation and transformation into either parcels of private property or into the public property of the nascent national state. The Diggers and their allies, the Levellers, the Ranters, the urban rioters along with the rural commoners, the fishers, market women, weavers and all the other producers were waged in a battle that was about no less than trying to hang on to (or re-gain) a communal life based on principles of self-sustenance. The Diggers therefore raged against the drive to entrap displaced people as either slave or wage labour in the nascent factories, plantations and ships of the emerging capitalist system.

One of the signature actions of the Diggers was to sow the ground with edible foods—parsnips, carrots and beans. A simple gesture perhaps but their goal was no less than global equality, freedom for all and self-sufficiency for all producers. By planting on land stolen from “commoners,” the Diggers gave notice that the battle over what kind of property laws would prevail was far from over.

The Diggers formed communes as a response to “the problems of expropriation, imprisonment, hanging, and slavery, not to mention hunger.” In their own words the Diggers believed that: “[t]his freedom in planting the common Land, will prevent robbing, stealing, and murdering, and Prisons will not so mightily be filled with Prisoners; and thereby we shall prevent that hart breaking spectacle of seeing so many hanged every Sessions as they are. . . . This freedom in the common earth is the poor’s right by the Law of Creation and equity of the Scriptures, for the earth was not made for a few, but for whole Mankind [sic]. . . .”1

The Diggers emerged in this the embryonic period of global capitalism and of the national state system. Theirs was the
In taking such direct actions to reclaim their stolen land, the Diggers came up against some of the most powerful forces in society at the time: the merchants, lesser gentry and early industrialists. These groups were eager to overturn the existing ruling structure and bring about a new world order made in their image. Such groups backed the leaders of the emerging parliamentary movement against the King. Led by Oliver Cromwell and his militant Puritans, the aim of these "revolutionaries" was to create a liberal democracy with the respectable citizen worker as its national subject. In doing so, they turned the existing world upside down.

The new elites supported the forces for a national parliament because they benefited greatly from the changes being wrought by the emergent state. In England, the new Navigation Acts protected British trade and shipping, new legislation on industry removed pre-existing restrictions on profiteering, changes in the way the stock market was operated promoted speculative capitalism and, of course, the enclosures of common land privatized property making land itself a form of capital. The new parliamentary “democracy” created the conditions of “national security” and the “rule of law” much desired by the ascendant bourgeoisie.

Initially, the emerging elites needed radicals like the Diggers, for they too were opposed to the autocratic rule of Kings and Queens. Indeed, according to the Digger's manifesto, The True Leveller's Standard Advanced (1649), their goal was "that we may work in righteousness, and lay the foundation of making the earth a common treasure for all, both rich and poor. That every one that is born in the land may be fed by the earth, his mother that brought him forth, according to the reason that rules in the creation, not enclosing any part into any particular land, but all as one man working together, and feeding together as sons of one father, members of one family; not one lording over another, but all looking upon each other as equals in creation."4

However, the Diggers, with their radical, egalitarian principles and their fierce opposition to all forms of slavery, were ruthlessly suppressed by the Puritans once the latter were assured victory against the King. They were represented as a major threat while being simultaneously belittled. Their planting of foodstuffs, according to the new Council of State, was "ridiculous, yet that conflux of people may be a beginning whence things of a greater and more dangerous consequence may grow."5 The “democratic” forces, then, were fearful of the Diggers with their firm belief in equality.

In the end, the Diggers and their attempt to repossess the commons was thought of as too great a danger to the new Parliament. Thus, one of the first actions taken by the new English republic was the brutal, military destruction of one of their most important communes, George's Hill. Soldiers rode in on their horses and under the command of the new parliamentarians, destroyed the Diggers' spades, trampled the crops they had carefully planted and tended, flattened their homes and drove the Diggers from their land. Their defeat assured the centrality of the market economy, the further entrenchment, and later racialization, of slavery and the hegemony of both global capitalism and the national state.

It is the consequences of the defeat of the Diggers and their allies that we, today, must contend with everywhere. In what is now called Hawaii, the devastation of largely self-sustaining and diverse communities was borne of this defeat of people in 'England' fighting for common land and against capitalist colonization. Their loss allowed the new ruling class to entrench themselves deeper into the lives and lands of people they came to dominate. Currently in Hawaii, practices of "commoning" have been more or less eradicated—made practically impossible by the imposition of private and state/public property laws, the ecological destruction wrought by cash crops (sandalwood, sugar, pineapple, etc.), the engineering of water canals, industrialization, tourism and the ever ubiquitous automobile.

The site where we planted the papaya seedlings is evidence of such destruction. The papayas grow on a narrow strip of public land separated from the now private Ka'elepulu Pond (renamed Enchanted Lake by developers) by a chain link fence erected and maintained by the Enchanted Lake Residents Association, its state-recognized owners. Ka'elepulu Pond was once a thriving fishing cultivation area and its
corollary streams fed taro and rice farms. It is now part of a fetid lake in which the water can no longer flow freely to the ocean. The fence by which the papayas grow is meant to keep out what the ‘owners’ association call “trespassers” who “poach” fish from their lake.

In dealing with these contemporary developments, we need to contend with something that was less of a problem during the times of the first Diggers. During their time, it was fairly clear to people that their land was being stolen, that their labour was being exploited and that nationalism, racism and sexism were being used to sow dissent amongst the motley crew of commoners, peasants, artisans and the emerging proletariat throughout the world. Yet, today, many of the things that the Diggers fought against—private property and the nation state with its “public” lands for example—are so hegemonic that to merely question them is to open yourself up to ridicule and perhaps much, much worse—think of the United States’ use and justification of kidnapping, torture and summary execution in the name of “national security” at Guantanamo Bay, for example.

We live at a time when the very instruments used to oppress and exploit us are seen as the vehicles of our deliverance. The notion of the “public” is one such instrument of capitalist colonization. While the Diggers well understood that the organization of a consciousness of national “belonging” and “citizenship” were being used to destroy the solidarity of the “multitude” whose common bonds lay not in their supposed membership in some “nation” but in their desire for self-sustenance, we now think of national sovereignty as something essential in the fight for self-determination.

Many of us have forgotten that the global system of national states, with its legalization of the expropriating practices of capitalists, has been—and continues to be—an integral feature of the New World Order. We see the fostering of national identities, particularly those of oppressed “nations,” as signs of empowerment instead of seeing such identities as a site where relations of domination and exploitation are organized within processes of capitalist globalization. This is evident in the “progressive” rhetoric that complains about the loss of “citizens’ rights” while remaining largely mute about the exploitation of “non-citizens”—an outcome that Oliver Cromwell himself had hoped for so many centuries ago. This is evident in both mainstream and “progressive” versions of nationalism.

In this post-9/11 world, where the rhetoric of militant puritans is once again the dominant discourse of the age, our planting of papaya seedlings hopes to stir desires of self-sustenance, a self-sustenance that like the demands of the Diggers is based not on the self-righteous desires of “national entitlements” for citizens but on the recognition of people’s global interdependence and our shared dreams of realizing freedom from capitalists and from national states that, at best, sell us the notion of the “public” in place of our freedom from rulers.

Next to the papaya seedlings we erected a sign. It says “These papaya plants have been planted here for everyone. When they bear fruit, in about a year, you are welcome to pick them as you need. We will return to feed the plants with organic fertilizer once a month. Please feel free to water and weed. Do not use chemical weed killers as this will poison the fruit and those that eat them. The Diggers, 2003.”

An old man walked by while we planted and said, “Oh good, I can have free papayas later.” Exactly.
Digger's Song:

Their self-will is their law, stand up now, stand up now,
Their self will is their law, stand up now.
Since tyranny came in they count it now no sin
To make a goal a gin, to starve poor men therein.
Stand up now, stand up now.

The gentry are all round, stand up now, stand up now,
The gentry are all round, stand up now,
The gentry are all round, on each side they are found,
This wisdom's so profound, to cheat us of our ground.
Stand up now, stand up now.

Glory here, Diggers all.

Notes
2. Linebaugh, p.117.
4. Linebaugh, p.85.
5. Linebaugh, p.117-118.

CHE QIANZI
Big-Character Posters

Everyone in China who lived through the 1960s and 70s knows what big-character posters are. You simply wrote down your opinions with ink and brush on sheets of paper that were posted on a wall in the street for others to read. If people agreed with you, they might copy down your ideas—so-called "copying big-character posters." I did this when I was 7 or 8 years old. In those days, a special place was set aside for big-character posters in every Chinese city. Many people wrote such posters. You put yours up and it would not be long before it was covered up by others. This usually triggered off quarrels, fights and even "armed conflict"—clashes using real weapons, sometimes even cannons. I still remember this clearly: one night my grandma squeezed me under a bed and covered up the windows with thick cotton-padded quilts, which reportedly would ward off stray bullets. I heard bullets whistling by the whole night, but I was too young at that time to feel alarmed.

To trace the origins of big-character posters, we would need to review the Cultural Revolution, which actually was launched by a big-character poster written by Mao Zedong.

My visual poem, "Big-Character Posters," is related to my childhood. However, my intention when writing it was to subvert big-character posters:

1. Big-character posters were written to be read, but my visual poem refuses to be read or at least to be read in any conventional manner. There are characters, but they no longer make sense or their meanings are compromised by my arrangement.

2. Precisely because I have closed the door to conventional reading strategies or publicity (in this respect, we might say all books are big-character posters), my visual poem is to a large extent private. Even when published, its private charac-
ter won't suffer much. For instance, a certain part of the poem concerns my intimate relations with a woman. Who would recognize this unless I pointed it out?

I detest big-character posters because most of them were filled with vituperations, libels, rumors, persecution, muckraking and lies. What I have done is merely use the form—writing with an ink brush on sheets of paper and calling what I have written a "poem." Once the poem is written in this manner (unlike the mode of expression in traditional Chinese calligraphy), it becomes a provocative act against the so-called authority of contemporary Chinese poetry. In this sense, it tallies with a certain spirit of big-character posters. Indeed, many people wrote their posters to challenge authority.

My visual poem "Big-Character Posters" represents a "bad reaction" to "public art." In a country where democracy and the legal system are insufficiently developed, I believe there is no "public art" to speak of. If it does exist, it is corrupt or deformed. For me, the big-character posters which emerged in China in the 1960s and 70s were a corrupt "public art."

In this visual poem the two opposing triangles suggest a sense of insecurity, while at the same time implying how the Chinese character for rice is written (米). However, it is not a complete "rice" character. In the traditional study of Chinese calligraphy there is a training method called "rice character squares." Every child who practices Chinese calligraphy has written Chinese characters (regular script) in such squares: one character for each square. Yet here we have so many characters within this incomplete "rice character square." Excess also means hunger, a sensation that springs from the visual imagination—the incomplete "rice" character poses a question (of eating) that we (all developing countries) must face. Though not metaphysical, it has a philosophical flavor. The characters (both complete and incomplete) in the two facing triangles are from an inscription on a Tang dynasty tablet.
All the characters in this visual poem are based on a calligraphic piece titled "Four Classical Poems" by the great Tang dynasty calligrapher Zhang Xu, best known for his cursive hand. Modern studies show that it is a spurious piece done by someone in the Song dynasty. In other words, it is a forgery. I copied it down in an unrestrained manner to reveal the other side of creativity—to some extent the nature of forgery.

This visual poem is a (childhood) memory of the big-character posters ("public art") that appeared during the Cultural Revolution, expressing a sense of covering up or being covered up: scarcely is a big-character poster put up when a new one comes and covers it up . . . and this goes on and on. While this covering up goes on and on, in the poem it is visually frozen. The characters in this poem are based on an anonymous tablet inscription written in 405 AD during the Later Jin period.

Translated by Yang Liping and edited by Jeffrey Twitchell-Waas
Third Oration (The Murder Trials)

My friends, only a change in significance can stop an advancing army.

I am convinced, my compatriots, that decent creatures do not want to see other creatures perform like circus beasts. Besides, it can take a long time to say very little. As we have the life of a fellow citizen at stake, I hope you will permit a few digressions.

Some of you, I believe, may envy the creamy white of my mantle, or the number of olive sprigs I wear in my hair. But I must remind you that, like Cicero, I was born in Arpinium, with only three slaves to call my own.

How many soft and pungent evenings have I given up to obtain the little eloquence I possess? No matter, for tonight my own hardships are not on trial.

Your mistrust, fellow citizens, is natural. I realize you are wary of every calm and logical argument, for they are indeed the products of privilege. I know how your pleasures have been manipulated. But this does not condemn oration any more than it condemns love.

You know as well as I that robots are not enough for conducting everyday life.

Today, on the promenade, I saw a young girl standing with her mother. She wore a red embroidered shirt and blue flowered pants, and stood in exactly the same stance, using exactly the same gestures, as her mother.

My friends, this is not the trial of a man, but the trial of an aesthete. Many of you know that Anataxius has recently left me for another lover, but you may not know that I encouraged their affair, thinking I was generous, modern, and most of all complex. So you see, our pity is often for ourselves.

This morning I set out for this stage, intending to remind us exactly who may suffer our decisions, and to argue for the innocence of a living person. I pictured your curled and scented hair, your ovations, and your warm praise. And now I see that I have lost you.

But tomorrow I will begin again, in a way I hope will strike you as clearer and better.

Fourth Oration (On Democracy)

Senators, I am happy to stand here and speak a few words about democracy. Furthermore I thank you for giving me that right.

As I explain to my students, immortality is the great obsession of democracy. Yes, more than anything democracy does not want to die, for it knows very well how things can turn out. Its purpose is to endure, and we admire this.

Citizens! The republic is not stupid. It already knows you are the most compromised and calculating of beings!

Now, it is not clear whether democracy really is this way. Confident of your sound judgment, I will suggest a few possibilities, and let the illumination of the intellect make its own selections. In short, let us try to reason together.

Before our empire was founded, decisions were made using the lightning, swords, and birds of the natural surroundings. A rock was wrapped in a cloth, and hurled into the canyon.

Things are different now. But how are they different? We find that the rock is now covered with mirrors.
My friends, the individual falls with her country. Isn’t it true that she can see power falling alongside her, in its most murderous and noble intentions, and meanwhile cannot see herself fall?

Democracy, it stands to reason, therefore pities itself. I see you do not agree, Minneleaus, and are suddenly intent to throw me from the stage. But aren’t I just a citizen, as worthy to say these things as anyone?

Today democracy is content to bleed, cry, and expand itself. Every day of its young life it declares itself more scientific than the last, its instruments the very genetic instruments it pretends to deplore.

Nevertheless the ballots are distributed. Calm, in the appearance of a gentle rain of numbers, pervades the voting area.

At this sudden lull in my speech, let me hurriedly quote from the Russian writer Vasily Rozanov:

“At times the writer does not wish to reveal some side of his soul, and yet the thirst in him for immortality, for an individual life different from all others, is so great that he conceals and secretes it among other things, and, all the same, he leaves in his works a reflection of this side of him. Centuries pass, the necessary feature is revealed, and there arises the complete image of one who is no longer afraid of being embarrassed before other people.”

And so we find, shall we say, that a system without flaws is not a system. The mind can see democracy lying to itself. It can feel the feelings of pleasure and superiority.

But what am I suggesting? What should we do? My judges, here I appeal to the excellence of your discerning minds. I thank you for your time, and in some cases your concern.

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Much of this text and style are stolen from Cicero's speeches, mostly his murder trial defenses and the First and Second Philippics. Personal material is mixed in, some of it present day, with the intent to create a sense of a discombobulated authority of empire. This authority is punctured by the private, but the conventions, tactics, and culture of public discourse continue to prop it up, even and especially where it performs the belittling of its influence.
I had a private thought I thought

of making public; the art
of war; a private domain made frames around us. What art is there

in the shoot-around-the-corner gun, tracking device, sights, invented by an ex-army lieutenant, a design made available to police departments and armies, not
the public? "Who owns contours & silhouettes?" she asked. In other words, "What art is there?" Our legs overlapped, doubled up and taxed as we listened.
A small park—really a square—sits between some buildings on 48th Street, just beyond 8th Avenue. Before a tan brick wall along the western edge or at a few spots between the three rows of benches, trees stand in built-up brick planting areas. I call it Social Security Park: New York City's Social Security Offices are about two doors further east. For the last year, I've often gone there to write—sometimes to read. I read most of Paul Reé’s Heidegger volume there. The place houses a shifting population of a dozen or so homeless people, four women—one Asian, two whites, one Hispanic—and at least eight men, mostly Hispanic or black. A few have been there for two years or more. Most are crackheads. All drink.

At any given time, on opened-out cardboard cartons, under blankets or sleeping bags, or stretched on the benches’ unpainted gray planks, two to six will be asleep—day or night. The soap-opera component is high. They’re always swiping things from one another—(IDs, birth certificates, money) especially when a stranger comes to sleep on one of the benches. A bizarre undercurrent of sex inheres there. Twice now I’ve caught guys in the corner masturbating—while they watch one or another homeless woman, whose clothes are coming apart, asleep on some cardboard.

Because so rarely is anyone there whom you could call sober, people make endless (and often wildly inaccurate) calls on who stole what from whom.

At one time or other, I’ve had half-hour to three-hour conversations with pretty much everyone who stays there.

The women have all been, or are still, occasional prostitutes. Even the most beat-up and dilapidated of them plays a constant game with the various men: How long can she hold out and for how much, whether it’s a swallow from a bottle of beer or wine, a hit from a stem of crack, a bite of food, the distribution of clothes, or what have you—before this man or that one grabs a feel, hug, or fondle.

I’m tempted to give portraits of its several individual denizens. This summer Darrell Deckard (of my book Times Square Red, Times Square Blue) has been sleeping there regularly, with his current partner, a good-looking young Hispanic. The last time I ran into them, I gave them change toward a quart a milk, as they’d gotten hold of some cookies. Both were going on about how good cookies and milk were.

But I’ll turn from this node of degradation, misery, and excrement—the toilet is the corner drain: three square yards of pavement stay contiguously foul with urine turning to ammonia, shit, and flies darting off or spiraling down—along with heroic attempts to wring some enjoyment from life (cookies and milk!) despite crack, homelessness, and the material forces—like the cops’ visit, every two days or three, to throw out blankets, cardboard, any belongings and junk—that shatter what passes here for happiness, for another park to the east.

Here’s my promised reading of the Garden of Eden story, as the J-Writer’s version (those biblical texts presumably written in the late period of the Court of David, shortly after 722 B.C.E.) has been separated out from that of the later P-Writer (the Priestly Writer, as he is called; or often the Elohist, since this writer uses the word Elohim [which James’s translators rendered “God’”] instead of the J-Writer’s YHWH [which they translated “the Lord God’”]) and the D-Writer (the Deuteronomist).

It might help to consult the Friedman translation, the Rosenberg translation, and the King James (this last with the later-written P-Writer’s material still attached to the front: the traditional seven days’ creation). The best way to appreciate what follows is to read all three, then my exegesis—then to read the translations again.

A trope repeats twice in the tale of the Garden of Eden, more or less clearly, in all three translations. To retrieve that trope’s narrative force, however—along with its narrative playfulness—we must look at two contextual aspects and two translational fine points.

The first contextual element is YHWH’s humanity, remarked on many times by generations of commentators. The J-Writer’s YHWH has a very different feel and affect from the P-Writer’s Elohim in the opening chapter (along with the first three verses of the second chapter) of Genesis. Elohim is
a Spirit that moves on the water and on the land and speaks and creates the world in seven days—making man on the sixth in His own image—and rests on the seventh day, which he blesses and sanctifies. But the J-Writer's YHWY is far more embodied. He dirties His hands in mud, blows on clay figures, calls, speaks, grows angry, mutters to Himself, and walks and searches among the trees of the garden.

As noted, today, the general scholarly consensus is that the P-Writer (author of Genesis, chapter one) wrote about five hundred years after the J-Writer, and (believes Friedman, correctly by my lights) that a later editor (possibly the Duteronomist [D], or the Redactor [R]) cut the J-Writer's text up and "filled out the story," for and aft, with the more recently written pieces.

YHWH fashions man, however, from wet mud. After putting Adam (Hebrew: Of Red Earth; Of Red Clay; Of Red Mud) to sleep, YHWH pulls a rib loose from his creation, from which, by the time Of Red Earth wakes, YHWH has made a woman. YHWH walks in the garden during the afternoon breeze. YHWH makes garments of skins for the naked Adam and the woman. But over and above the human scale of YHWH in the works of the J-Writer (who, now and again, as we shall see, rivals a 19th century realist in her delineation of human idiosyncrasies1), there is a repeated playfulness to the narration itself, which we shall examine in this second, but chronologically earlier of the two creation stories which open Genesis, the first book in the Bible.

At the start of that earlier story, after a rising mist wets the earth and creates a garden, YHWH places two trees therein, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He forbids eating from the second tree, with a threat of death ("for on the day that thou eatest of that tree you shall surely die")—and from the second tree alone. Though J does not specifically say so, all the others are allowed, including the first. But the subtle serpent beguiles the woman in a conversation back and forth that is made up almost entirely of quotes and paraphrases of what God has already said (presumably as recounted to her by Of Red Earth [Adam]), with the serpent adding a bit of what God knows, in order to explain and interpret the words:

The woman: "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

And the serpent said unto the woman, "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day that ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good from evil."

This conversation is, I believe, the playful core of the story. I call it playful because it suggests a contradiction that the text itself must resolve, a resolution that can only be carried out through the closest reading of the text's rhetorical play. Indeed, to stray too far from the specific language that tells this tale is to obscure the resolution which marks both the original text as literature and the King James Translation as the best of the three I have here included. Any such straying begins to make the tale noticeably less interesting: For if what God says is true, then the serpent is a liar and the truth is not in him. But if what the serpent says is true, then God is a liar and the truth is not in Him. From a superficial reading of the text, at least, it would seem that the serpent's words are the literal truth. The woman and Adam eat the apple, and on that day they are cursed and expelled from the garden—but both Adam and Eve have many years of life and child rearing left them. This seems to contravene everything we know of "the word of God." One seriously doubts that, if the reigning interpretation of the tale had been "God speaks falsely," the redactors who assembled the texts that made up the Bible would have even included it, much less put it first.

A careful reading of the text, I maintain, shows, however, that both speak versions of the truth; God's truth appears simple but, we shall see, is, in reality complex. The serpent's truth at first appears more complex than God's (it takes more words to say). Finally, however, it is revealed to be only partial—indeed, tragically incomplete: what today we might call "a lie of omission."

God is right,
The serpent is wrong.

But we cannot understand the nature of the resolution of the apparent textual aporia unless we start with exactly what it means to be "as God." Is it just a matter of knowing good from bad? (That is the translation Friedman prefers, and we shall adopt it.) Or is it more complex?

I maintain that it is more complex, but that we only find out what the complexity is in the last sentences of this opening story from the J-Writer (she provided many tales in the
Pentateuch, including the story of Abraham and Isaac, identified by vocabulary, grammatical form, and syntactical usage [i.e., specific rhetoric], these latter modes being two that St. Jerome, the Bible's earliest "modern" editor does not take into account when assigning various texts to various authors)—and, what's more, that complexity is set up by the previous employment of the same trope earlier on in the story.

The other contextual knowledge that we need is knowledge of gardens, deserts, snakes, and the realities of the birth of human beings.

Now, having highlighted the core, we can go back and read the story from the beginning. It was written down sometime toward the end of the reign of the Court of David (possibly, suggests Harold Bloom, as one of a set of teaching tales for children; and surely, suggests Friedman, as the opening symbolic movement for a prose history of brilliant construction):

Once again, from the beginning.

The story starts, before there was a man to till the ground, on the day of the misting that saw YHWH's creation of earth and sky. When the fog retreats, there is a pleasant garden—of the sort that often blooms after such alluvial floods, as are common around mid-eastern rivers, once, indeed, the river returns to its bed. Now two trees are mentioned that YHWH caused to grow, the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and bad.

Next we survey the four rivers and four lands of the area, before the tale continues—

This paragraph may also be an interpolation from a later written text. (Cush is an old name that covered an indistinct region including some of Egypt and stretching south into Ethiopia.) But the passage is small enough so that it can be absorbed by the tale, by the text.

—YHWY models the first man from wet clay, into whose nostrils He blows life and sets the man in the garden to work it and to watch over it. With that responsibility goes the command: "You may eat from every tree of the garden. But from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad: you shall not eat from it, because in the day you eat from it: you'll die!" (Translation modified.)

Now, we must look more closely at those italics, may eat and die. Friedman tells us that, in Hebrew, these represent what he calls infinitival intensifiers. Literally: "you to eat in order to eat from every tree" and "you will to die in order to die." But in English the literal translation is almost without meaning. (But not quite—and on that 'not quite' hinges the truth of YHWY's assertion.)

In a number of languages infinitives and participles do similar work. Translations far closer to the literal meaning of the Hebrew are: "you in eating may eat from every tree" and "you will in dying die." (This substitutes English participles for Hebrew infinitives.) Friedman points out that the intensifiers are sometimes translated, as the King James translators do, as "may certainly (or 'of course') eat" or "surely die." But we must remember the other, literal meaning: "You may, in order to eat, eat" and "You will, in order to die, die." That is to say, there is a complex and nuanced literal meaning as well as the more colloquial meaning, signaling simple intensity.

In my reading, both meanings of both phrases are appealed to in the story. Those phrases will, by the end of the tale, be re-read to take on the literal sense: especially "you will, in dying, actually die"—as opposed to not actually dying when you die. Or, as I would interpret it, not actually dying when you know the real significance of dying. (Not truly dying when you learn the real meaning of death.)

But we shall get back to this in due time.

The other translation point has to do with the words "good" and "bad." Friedman tells us he uses these words rather than the more austere abstract pair "good" and "evil" that King James's translators employed, because, in fact, in Hebrew the words (tov [good] and ra [bad]) are the most ordinary words for what's good and what's bad—often in the sense of what's good for you and what's bad for you. The connotation of evil and goodness are secondary, not primary, but rather a bit of historical transcendentalizing the postmodern reader should easily be able to bracket.

Very well: The tree of "knowing what's good and what's ill" (another possible translation) has, in that sense, a suggestion of prophecy in it: Knowing the good to come and the ill to come.

This might be seen as a primitive—but also a practical—noi11o[1 of wisdom itself: the foreknowing of the good outcomes of things and the bad outcomes of things. This is, of course, one of the ways gods and men differ: presumably gods have a greater—even an absolute—foreknowledge of
how things are going to work out that mortals lack. Indeed, part of the great historical importance of this story is that it is the earliest text with any popular dissemination that recounts humanity's learning of its own mortality, its philosophically defining characteristic.

Now we come to the creation of woman. Though there are many things to say about this mini-story inserted into the larger story, we mention only three: First, overtly it convenes common sense and adult experience, putting us directly into the world of folktale and myth. Second, the story is used to explain the reason man dominates women (it tells us that this is a patriarchal society) and also—third—that this is (for all the society's patriarchal structure) also a matrilocal society: Man parts from his father and mother to go live where his wife lives—as was the custom in most middle-eastern tribes at the time.

Now . . .

The serpent tempts the woman by offering her the possibility of being "like God"—by opening her eyes to the knowledge of good and bad. So the woman, then Adam, eats the apple: "And the eyes of the two of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked."

Here we have to ask: What precisely does this mean? What exactly did they know? And is that all they knew? Or did they know something else as well?

Here again, one question must be: Has the serpent spoken the truth—or has he lied?

Looking ahead, the answer is clearly: He speaks the truth as far as he goes. He simply does not speak the whole truth. "Eat of the forbidden fruit, and you will be like God in one aspect"—but, the serpent has failed to say, "You will not be like God, in another."

What is this distinguishing aspect?

Well, here, when God comes walking in the garden and confronts first Adam, the woman, then the Serpent, the text would seem to play a little joke on us.

As we said, the first knowledge that Adam and the woman appear to have taken on is that they are naked—that they are without clothes against the elements, that they are unprotected, both from the contingencies of the world and from the ebb and flow of their own sexuality. Some control over this last is what covering the genitals presumably affords them. That done, they can now choose when to have and when not to have sex. Do you think they now know also what the outcome of sex is likely to be (i.e., children)?

Probably—though the J-Writer skirts that issue with the redirection of the fig-leaf tale: The fig leaf is the leaf that accompanies and often hangs down to cover the incredibly sweet and luscious fruit of the fig itself.

But, again, what other knowledge have their eyes opened to?

Is the narrator telling us all his or her archetypal humans know, or only some it—the way the serpent told Adam and Eve only the way in which they would be like God (but, again, not mentioning an all-important way in which they would not be)?

Any attempt to control sex is to put oneself in a matrix of shame and embarrassment. To cover the genitals is—practically by definition—to court shame and embarrassment when they are uncovered, or uncovered at the wrong time; or, indeed, even when they are uncovered at the right times! What starts as simple conscious logic, soon becomes social habit—and the violation of the social, even for so necessary a process as procreation, is always anxiety ridden. Fortunately the urge for pleasure seems to be stronger than that all-powerful super-ego that is the primitive motivation for the story itself. The question is: Is the story a mythical expression of that super ego, or is it a sophisticated literary dialogue with/against (a playful engagement with) that super-ego? I maintain it is the 2nd—and that the sign that it is the 2nd is that permanent undecidability as to whether it is the 2nd or the 1st, an ambiguity literature has to maintain in order to survive. ("Literature survives by fertile ambiguity.") The J-Writer would seem to have had a sophisticated understanding of the move from sexual innocence ("they were naked and they were not ashamed") to the trammels of, dare we call it, "adult sexuality" in which some responsibility is assumed ("they saw that they were naked and they were ashamed"). The insight is worthy of Freud.

The text conveys the anxiety of Adam and the woman's explanations to YHWH by other reduplicated intensifiers that Hebrew can muster (rather like present-day Swahili), "the snake that snake" (reduplicated nouns) and "she that she" (reduplicated pronouns) and "tricked in tricking me" (this
last, another infinitival), which Friedman and the King James translators again convey by italics—and which Rosenberg ignores:

(8) And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

(9) And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? ["Hey, where are you?"] "Where have you gotten off to?" "Where are you that you are?"

(10) And he [Adam/Of Red Earth] said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked ["After all, I was naked." "I was that I was naked."] and I hid myself.

(11) And He [the Lord God] said, "Who told thee that thou was naked?" ["Who told you that you were actually naked?"] "Has thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?

(12) And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me ["whom you gave to be with me that she be with me," "whom you really gave to me," "whom you gave to me to be mine," "the woman you gave me, after all"], she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. ["The woman whom you gave me yourself, she gave me the fruit, and so I ate."]

(13) And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou has done? ["Did you really do that?"] And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me.

But we can hear the raised voices, the stressed words (the reason we used italics for stressed words today is because that's how King James's anonymous translators dealt with them), the intensity of their utterances, as Adam offers his anxious explanation to YHWH, and the woman gives Him her timid excuse. . . . Though we might lose some colloquial details, we can recognize an auctorial attempt to register not a heated exchange, but an extremely emotionally invested dialogue, across translation and three thousand years! That's quite a piece of literary ventriloquism.

YHWH's response is to curse the snake (verses 14 through 19), before turning to extend that curse to the woman and Adam. Like a Celtic flying, here the text reverts to poetry. In the course of that curse, suddenly we, the hearers, learn something about the serpent that we could not have known before. Declares YHWH to the snake:

(14) . . . “Because you did this . . . you'll go on your belly, and you'll eat dust all the days of your life.”

Suddenly we have to revise our whole picture of the past of this story. We all know that in folktales animals talk. But we thought that the snake was crawling around all the time, just the way snakes do today. Now, subtly, the J-Writer has told us that our picture of the snake up till the present has simply been wrong. The snake has been walking upright till now, even in this very story—just as God walked in the Garden, just as Adam and the woman walked, or, indeed, the other domestic animals walked—walked upon legs.

Adam, the woman, and YHWH certainly all knew this before the apple. Only the ideal first-time hearers of the tale (the children that the tale may have been intended to instruct, gathered together on the floor, as surely their parents lingered in the background of the palace chamber) do not.

The J-Writer has used her account of some overheard words, spoken by YHWH in anger, to open their eyes to a bit of folk history.

What has happened is that, in effect, by having overheard a few words uttered by the angry YHWH, we have taken on knowledge that the history of the world, especially of snakes, is different from what we thought it was only a word or two before YHWH spoke. We have had to revise our picture of what the world was like before we learned this—even the very part of the story we have just read.

Such an effect can only be done with words. It cannot be done—with the same results—in pictures or theater. This is one of the supreme moments of the tale that makes it literary.

In a moment's irony and humor, I believe, this is also the story's controlling trope: for, shortly, at an entirely different level, the tale will surprise us with the same trope once again. Only then the story will use it to effect the narrative's major point. The double usage of this trope, among many other skillful effects, again, makes the story literature—and, yes, great literature.

The snake is cursed—and with that curse we gain our knowledge of its upright (or, at any rate, four-legged) history prior to the curse.
The question of sex (specifically the attempt to control sex, and therefore procreation, which the nakedness/shame/fig-leaves allegorize) returns us to the story of the creation of the woman from Adam's rib. The mode of this sub-tale (verses 18-25) is in the same mode, we should note, as that of the revelation of the serpent's ambulatory history: which is to say, it told us that—as counterfactual as it may seem—years closer to the origin, even so fundamental a process as birth itself, under the hand of YHWY, could occur entirely otherwise from the way we now know and experience it. Unlike the revelation of the serpent's walking, however, it is not accomplished by a verbal trick. Rather it was told to us relatively directly—perhaps to prepare us for the later revelation of a formerly-upright serpent: If you'll accept this, you'll accept anything—it says, with its somewhat knowing tone, even as it evokes what the Romantics will eventually dub “the suspension of disbelief.” But just see how knowing that tone is. Certainly rumors of farmers and husbandmen with their flocks and herds—the tales of feral children (c.f., the childhood of the beast man Enkidu—surely the result of an unnatural union—the secondary hero in the Epic of Gilgamesh) were as common then as now, if not more so.

18) And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him. 19) And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. (Sometimes the verb to be and certain pronouns are simply understood in the Hebrew. These added words are also indicated with italics by the scrupulous translators.) Adam names them all, but they are apparently not help meets (i.e., help-mates, i.e., helpful companions/powers) enough. At least one sign of their insufficiency of help to him is that—certainly known to the more knowing among the audience—congress with them (re)produces neither their kind nor his nor any other. Thus YHWY causes a deep sleep to fall on Adam. YHWY tugs free a rib from Adam's side, from which he fashions a notably more helpful mate, presumably for sex and everything else.

Surely, this is the place to note that, even so far along in the story, the woman has not yet received her name from Of Red Earth. It is easy to imagine a patriarchal discourse in which each of God's creatures is brought before Of Red Earth so that he may know this creature (and we may read “knowing” in as knowing a tone as the tale teller might use to tell the tale)—whereupon the mark of his knowledge is the name he gives. This, then, would be the dramatic incident in which Adam comes to know (in both senses) the woman. This explains why his naming of her only comes at the far side of the curse of Edanic expulsion.

The pleasure and joy of sex is, in brief, what they knew before the apple.

The results of sex and the responsibilities those results result in is part of the knowledge that comes with eating the apple itself.

But the very complexity of such knowledge should reprompting the question we have already asked once: Have they learned anything else?

Before we leave this tale within a tale, however, we note that at this time the conventions of dialogue are not as fixed, at least in the precinct of narrative, as they will be even five hundred years later when the P-Writer will remake God (Elohim) from a body that speaks and even mutters and in whom such speech can result from an excess of emotion, into a spirit (a breath) and a voice (that moves over the waters) alone, or, as Auerbach notes in Mimesis, a few hundred miles across the Aegean, The Odyssey, with rhetorical figures such as Odysseus's scar, will construct more intricately mimetic modes of narrative. There are two places in the tale where we are not sure who is speaking, character or author:

(23) And Adam said, This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. (24) Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. (25) And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Clearly Adam speaks the indicated words that conclude verse 23. As clearly, the teller speaks the whole of verse 25. But where, today, should the concluding quotation mark fall?
At the end of 23? At the end of 24—or even somewhere in the middle of it? The most probable answer is certainly the first (at the end of 23). But the content of 24 is knowledge that all men and women and Adam are presumed, by the narrative, to share with the narrator, so that she might, in the all-knowingness of the folk tale, speak it.

After YHWH lays his eloquent three-part curse upon the serpent, upon the woman (who is still without a name), and upon Adam, spoken actually as a poem (again: somewhat akin to a Celtic flyting, a poetic denigration, curse, or insult), Adam names the woman Chava (Hebrew: Living) "the mother of all livings" (anglicized: Eve), and YHWH now clothes them in skins. Just after he does so, we hear him speak again:

(22) And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever:

(23) therefore the lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from when he was taken.

(24) So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubim, and a flaming sword ... 

Again, the question is where the concluding quotation mark falls. Again I suspect we are to read this as an early narrative version of realist mutterings. But of the three translations, the one that best preserves the rhetorical sign of a historical discourse is the King James (perhaps because the English novel with all its vast invention of rhetorical techniques to specify time, place, perception, incident, and specific sequence did not yet exist).

And the Lord God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and bad: and now, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever ..." And from this moment the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden ... etc.

Adam and the woman have put on fig leaves so that they may know/control/protect themselves from their own uncontrolled sexuality. (Knowing and sexuality will be associated all through the J-Writer's texts.) Now YHWH continues what they started by giving Eve and Adam garments of skins (and thus, through the off-stage killing and flaying of beasts, the so-human YHWH—and not Of Red Earth or Chava—brings death into the garden, as more than one commentator has noticed), to protect them from the physical effects of the weather outside the garden.

Next a conflicted God, both angry and concerned, readies himself for his next act, while muttering:

"And YHWH said, 'Here the human has become like one of us, to know good and bad. [While the infinitive carries the meaning it would in English, "in order to know good and bad," it also carries the meaning we have used before: "Here the human being has become as one of us, in (or by) knowing good and bad."] And now, in case he'll put out his hand to take from the tree of life as well, and eat and live forever ... " YHWH's words trail off, as he puts Of Red Earth out of the garden of Eden, to work the ground from which he was taken. But, in the same way that YHWH's overheard words once let us know, before, about the history of the serpent, here the overheard words of YHWH let us know the answers to a set of questions that we have been asking up till now—or, more accurately, let us know the answers to questions that we should have been asking, but may have been too ignorant to have posed (in the same sense that we were too ignorant to have questioned the serpent's means of movement about the garden):

[First:] What is the significance of the tree of life?
[Its fruit grants eternal life.

[Second:] In what way did the serpent deceive Adam and Eve by his partial truth?

[He did not tell them to eat of the tree of life. Had he told them to do that before they ate of the tree of knowledge of good and bad, then, indeed, they would have been "as God" in the aspect which actually counted.

[Third:] What ways are God and human beings different?
[God knows good and bad and lives forever. Human beings know some good and bad, but we die. And we know it.

[And (Fourth:) What is the significance/truth of God's prophecy, "You may, in eating, eat from every tree of the garden. But from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad: you shall not eat from it, because in the day you eat from it:
You shall, in dying, die."] With the intensifiers restored, and in light of the tale's end—

And He expelled the human, and He had the cherubs and the flame of a revolving sword reside at the east of the garden of Eden to watch over the way to the tree of life.

Indeed, it is the combination of His muttered words before the expulsion and his subsequent action afterward—the setting of a guard to keep the way back to the tree of life—that actually open, as it were, our eyes: Suddenly we understand that YHWH was speaking above with the same signifiers of anxiety that Adam and Eve spoke with in their protests and excuses to Him: The anxiety that comes from too much knowledge: You may, in eating, eat of any tree—and, indeed, you should have... that is, you should have eaten of the tree of life. But what the hearer knows, now—and we learn it only on overhearing God's last words to himself as he expels Eve and Adam from the garden—is the remainder of the knowledge Adam and the woman actually took on when they ate the apple: "We should have eaten from the tree of life, first! Because we have all these other things to take care of, we will be caught short. And because we disobeyed instead of doing what we might have done, we shall—now we know it—die. Though we disobeyed innocently, as children disobey when tempted by evils they do not fully understand, we incurred God's anger and now we know truly why disobeying is bad for us."

We have already noted the serpent's partial truth. Now we can understand the truth in YHWH's prophecy: "On that day: You shall in dying, die" The story has already made clear, no, they are not actually killed on that day, but go on to live for a substantial number of years, in sweat and toil outside the garden. A superficial reading would suggest that the serpent was right. ("You will not die [in dying die, on that day]!" the serpent told the woman.) Thus, the way in which the serpent was again right is clear. But now, we must ask, in what way was God also right—so that, indeed, we can say again that the serpent was only partly right?

Again, I think we have to reread—and specifically reread that infinitival intensifier—in light of the new knowledge we have gained of the knowledge Adam and the woman gained, through our overhearing YHWH's final angrily muttered words. By the same token that Adam and Eve now realize they have not eaten of the tree of life (but have eaten of the tree of knowledge instead), now they know they will surely die—and that dying is bad and frightening. Before, unless they happened to have eaten from the tree of life (which, in the story, specifically they know not to do), they still would have died, but they would not have realized the significance of dying. (As Freidman points out, nowhere in the extent of the J-Writer's words is there any mention of an after-life. The idea does not seem to come in till several hundred years latter.) What God's words actually were, "On that day (and thus from that day on): you shall (whenever it is that you shall, and you will) in dying die (you will really die: you will know the significance of dying, the terror of extinction, the meaning of death: on that day you will become a cognoscente mortal. On that day, you will become someone who shall in dying—whenever it happens—die). Presumably, before the woman and Of Red Earth ate the apple, and their eyes were opened to the problems of living and reproduction, they could not even understand the words of YHWH in this sense. (What the woman presumably hears is, "On that day you shall certainly die," as do most readers of the text today; she hears that, as it were, because she only knows enough to hear that; and the subtle serpent beguiles her by saying, in effect, and quite rightly, no, that's not what it means.) Thus, in dying, they would not, as it were, really have had to die with the terror and fear of death. They would not have known death: It would not have meant to them what it means to us—and what it would subsequently mean to them.

On that day, however, along with the knowledge of sexual control (not sex), they also took on the knowledge of death's terror and inevitability. To the extent that on that day they know the terror of death, in effect they now can understand death in the same way that they will at the moment of its actual arrival (know death's meaning).

That knowledge of death's terror is, of course, the loss of the garden—just as the knowledge that procreation/generation can ameliorate some of that fear, however provisionally, is the possibility of at least its provisional and interim recreation. But the moment we try to control generation, however (i.e., to know it), either to make it happen or to hope for it to happen or to guide its happening or to work to make the
world a better place in which it might happen, immediately
the garden vanishes once more in the web of guilt, shame,
worries, and civilized anxieties, which attend the knowledge
of how to effect any of this. And we are always-already
expelled. That is what prevents our return.

The story of the Garden of Eden is the West's earliest
tragedy of knowledge. It says; most simply: An unavoidable
fall-out from taking on knowledge is that one must also take
on with it the knowledge of how ignorant you were before
you learned whatever it was you learned; as well, you must
learn, along with any knowledge, the irrevocable and tragic
mistakes you made before you took that knowledge on: the
fatal errors you made in the very process of pursuing the
knowledge, before you actually gained it.

Those errors can have tragic consequences.

Because you have gained the knowledge of good and bad,
you know as well that it would have been good for you to
have eaten of the tree of life, and that it is bad—at least
terrifying—to have to die. But now God has set out some
cherubim (the Hebrew plural) with a flaming sword (I
suspect those cherubim are an atavar of the Greek Chronos,
or rather, not Time so much as the Irreversibility of time),
whirling about, to prevent your going back and getting its
fruit—and, with the apple, you took on the fear and knowl-
dge of dying, which you must live with and around, until
you die, a fear that can make of any day in your life a death
itself.

It says as well that during your pursuit of knowledge, you
will learn things, in passing, that are contrary to common
sense, that snakes once walked on their feet or that, while
today baby boys and baby girls come out of the womb of
laboring, screaming, protesting women, once a woman came
quietly out of the side of a sleeping man.

But the price of knowledge is knowing your own igno-
rance, as well as the effort you must expend to put that
knowledge to work in the world as it has become, now that
you are expelled from the garden—the easier world of
childhood and the ignorance that went along with not know-
ing.

By the particular narrative trope of the overheard words of
YHWH (in both cases, words attendant on a curse: indeed, in
the second case/curse, the words are the mutterings that
follow it, a further example of the human-scale portrait of
YHWH), the narrator makes us twice return to revise our
picture of the story—first our knowledge of the way in which
serpents once walked, and second our knowledge of what Of
Red Earth and the woman knew when they ate the apple. It
is interesting to compare the J-Writer's story of God's over-
heard words and what they reveal to us with the story of the
hearing of the words of Prajapâti, God of Thunder, in the
second Brahmana of the fifth lesson of the Bhâdarânyaka
Upanishad (Shorter Views, 156).

But it's astonishing how many other stories—most fa-
mously Goethe's Faust—tell fragments (or even versions) of
this same story. Many others, from Conrad's Heart of Darkness
and James's Turn of the Screw, to Wells's Time Machine and
Joyce's The Dead, from Cather's My Mortal Enemy to Kafka's
Metamorphosis and Wescott's Pilgrim Hawk, to D. H. Lawrence's
Odour of Chrysanthemums and Disch's The Asian Shore, from
Davenport's Robot and Russ's Souls tell it, or tell parts of it,
with extraordinary beauty and artistry. But any accurate story
of the taking on of knowledge must, in some of its aspects,
retell it. Few tell the whole story, however, and none tells it
with such clarity, irony, concision, and power.

Two years—almost three—beyond 9/11, Social Security
Park has been closed up, remodelled, and opened once
more. The benches have been removed and replaced with
metal seats and tables. Today, in the center, is a monument to
the firemen, from the firehouse around the corner on Eighth,
who died in that 2001 September catastrophe. At night, great
gates are pulled across the front and locked, so that it is no
longer so hospitable to the homeless, who have been exiled
in Central
Park, to the north. Though it is far more pleasant,
because one October afternoon, as I was sitting there, writ-
ing, I watched while the police arrived to drive out those
who had lived there a year or more, tearing up their papers,
confiscating their clothing and blankets, while some begged
and cried to have them back, I do not find myself returning
all that often.
For a number of provocative reasons, both Friedman and Bloom assume the J-Writer is a sophisticated noblewoman in the later days of King David's court.

2 [q.v., "What Is an Author?" by Michel Foucault, Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology, Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984, vol 2, edited by James D. Faubion, Paul Rabinow, series editor] Such an omission has endless ramifications for criticism today, as Foucault's great essay suggests. It is what supports the notion that any criticism worthy of the name "modern" or "postmodern" must take grammar and rhetoric (i.e., style) into account. Style is not only "l'homme lui-même" (Buffon), but is as well both history and the major technique by which the writer steps ahead through history: it is the repository of signs for the shift of discourses. Not to acknowledge this is to obliterate these two aspects of the historical from any possibility of sophisticated critical understanding.

3 The cherubim of Solomon's time were not pudgy winged boys but rather giant, terrifying winged sphinxes with the bodies of lions and the heads of humans. (Such a "cherub" riddled Oedipus at the Theben gates. This shared image between Greece, Egypt, and Mesopotamia is a major sign of the living dialogue between the cultures.) The plural may be a plural of respect, like the royal "we," or the editorial "we," especially since "sword" is in the singular. But the King James translators preserved it. Also, the Throne of David and the Ark of the Covenant each sat on a platform held on the backs of a pair of such cherubim—which suggests that cherubim simply came in pairs. Possibly the pair guarding the way back into the garden tossed a single sword back and forth between them, so that it "turned and flashed [or flamed or burned] every which way."

It's simple. The city requires its public be defended. That those unwilling to hear be brought to listen.

The defense of a people who cannot afford to trust others must be afforded them, to speak for them against the machine which runs them down.

The machine which must be slowed, if not brought, down that it not run down those innocents it otherwise chooses to ignore, having cast out of mind all things not of use.

This charge entrusted: to be the voice of the public when the public has no other and stands accused, all too often previously judged.
The world is known by the senses as the city is known by the senses of its public. Whether it is just or unjust may thus be determined.

The just city redeems itself, must constantly redeem itself, by the virtue it extends its public.

The unjust city will never be able to understand its public, let alone redeem itself from the harm it bears them.

To be the defense is to walk the line of the just and unjust city. To speak on behalf of a public right fully or wrong fully accused. It is to hold to the ideal.

A city should be for public use first and foremost.

The public is the city as the city is the state and the state the country the country the world.

A community worth defending, worth believing in.

That each day brings fresh light to bear upon the just alongside the unjust.

Those able to speak for themselves as well as those not. The heard and unheard songs of life.

The truth by which the public lives day by day fighting for the right to speak and be heard no matter what the song they sing.

I walked into a bar in San Francisco, a fellow I know pretty well was sitting at the bar having a drink with a guy newly elected to head up the SF Public Defender's office. The fellow I know knows poetry and art, appreciatively so, and I love him for it. He suggested I write a poem for the guy just elected. I agreed. I had a couple months before they needed it. I let it sit. I waited until I was ready and then let the thing out. The result is “A City Defended.”

I meant it to be what it is. I hope it touches somewhat on Olson’s notion of “polis” while keeping to itself. That is, I mean the thing to be approachable by, and understandable to the public. An Anyone Poem, if you will, was what I meant: a serious attempt to merge the unreadable (poetry/poetics) with the knowable (“the public”).

I mailed the thing off to the appropriate parties and they said, “Okay, good. We’ll use it.” I show up at city hall on the appointed date and find that my poem has been hacked at. I am now Whitman to their Longfellow sensibility. I leave in a rage: the end of it.
City Hall version of the poem:

A City Defended

It's simple.  
The City requires the public be defended. That those unwilling to hear be brought to learn.  
The defense of a people who cannot afford to trust others must be afforded them, to speak for them against the machine that runs them down.  
The machine which must be slowed down, if not brought down, that it not run down those innocents which it otherwise ignores, having cast out of mind all things not of use to its ends.  
This charge entrusted to be the voice of the public when the public has no other and stands accused, all too often previously judged.  
The world is known by the senses as the City is known by senses of its public whether it be just or unjust may thus be determined.  
The just City redeems itself, must constantly redeem itself, by the virtue it extends its public.  
The unjust City will never be able to understand its public, let alone redeem itself from the harm it bears them.  
To be the defense is to walk the line of the just and unjust City. To speak on behalf of the public right fully or wrongfully accused. It is to hold the ideal.  
A City should be for public use first and foremost.  
The public is the City as the City is the State and the State the Country, the Country the World.  
A community worth defending, worth believing in.  
That each day brings fresh light to bear upon the just alongside the unjust.  
Those able to speak for themselves as well as those not. The heard and unheard songs of life.  
The truth by which the public lives day by day fighting for the right to speak and be heard no matter what the song they sing.  
Written by Patrick Ounagan for the occasion of Jeff Adachi's inauguration to the office of Public Defender, January 3, 2003

RACHEL BLAU DUPLESSIS

Draft 62: Gap

The 12 meter plug is now sealed into its thick-walled shaft inscribed with whatever words, names and symbols onlookers scratched onto its lead sheath, lead being that soft like a pun on “led.”

Sometimes it was grafitto’d over in red. Four styluses, available at the site, had been taken up to write stale, humble messages, slogans, poignant bits, political signets, devastating, simple, simplistic, signatures, dates, and initials, the usual signs of being here, words inadequate by the conditions under which and through which, we (they) are calibrated, in the nature of this employment, and in the nature of things.

After one part is covered with words high enough so no one else can reach, the stela ceremoniously (a rite) gets lowered into the underdirt prepared for it. This exposes a new blank lead surface on which to write. Greyland gunmetal drypoint for tanglewords. And people do. This goes on until the stela stops. The words have reached the top. All in the ground, the slab is capped with a plaque like a dried out well or a played out mine.
Will we be implicated?

Listen.

"It is proper to go back to the shadows."

The lead is what it is, it cannot differ
from its properties.
And thus it did or will leech out.
Results are not explicitly predictable
but general parameters can be suggested.

Bitterness. Poison. Site damaged
into its half-life, quite the unconsoling term.
Dispersal along scrimshod ventricles
soak along faults and veins
cloaca inside fissure. This the shrine.
Like a “roof leak” like a “wall leak”
it’s origins are tricky to track.
The material seeks and turns,
it seeps and finds its way.

How not to be implicated?

What is the color and gleam of implication?
No one chrome or metal.
It is fine and unnamable in tone.
Dust of dimensions, beware,
red smudge, dried.

What is the shape of implication?
I cannot tell.
I know that it will touch your cells
is what I know.
Long as a line, quiet as most air.
Small as insomniac twisting.
Triangle fires, tangled rectangles.
Something disappeared once there.
Tell me when you know.

November 2002- January 2003
Before the US Invasion of Iraq

Notes to “Draft 62: Gap.” In 1986, Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev-Gerz made a counter-monument Against Fascism, War,
and Violence—and for Peace and Human Rights set in
Harburg (a suburb of Hamburg, Germany). Counter, because it
is no longer “there.” It was a 12 meter (40 feet) high lead-
covered column of aluminum with steel-tipped styluses attached
for inscribing the lead. As each 5-foot section was covered with
statements, scrawls and graffiti, it was lowered into the ground,
set in a prepared chamber. This monument, created precisely to
disappear from view, was begun in 1986; it disappeared totally
into its site in 1993, covered by a slab. This poem is based on
my hearing about this monument, then reading about it in
James E. Young, At Memory’s Edge: After-Images of the
Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture (Yale
U.P., 2000). The poem should not be taken as a direct
commentary on this memorial. “It is proper to go back to the
shadows,” cited from Luce Irigaray. The poem is, like Draft 31:
Serving Writ, deliberately short. Donor drafts are the poems in
Drafts also called Gap.
CAST

A canon is placed on a stone paved area, on a small hill or slope.

The canon is loaded with seeds collected from the eighteen native tree species of the British Isles.

One round of seeds is fired off in the direction of each of the four points of the compass.

The canon remains.

Some trees grow.

The Duke of Atholl seeded a pine forest in this manner in the 19th century.

WINDMILL GENERATOR

A proposal for a windmill powered generator. The electricity that is generated will be used locally. The three blades of the generator are inscribed with a poem, one word on each sail.

As it turns the poem will read

turning / toward / living
living / toward / turning
toward / living / turning
WATERMILL GENERATOR

A proposal for a watermill powered generator. The electricity that is generated will be used locally. The watermill is inscribed with two poems, which turn in and out of the water. As it turns the poem will read

I want the water

I want the air

ALICE FLIGHT

Public Art Do Gooders

With an attempt to get my work seen somehow, I have opted to do guerilla type public artworks, often things that fringe on the outskirts of trespassing, graffiti and other unlawful things. These things all stem from a desire to do good in my own small way, to be a catalyst for change; art does have this power.

Because I fund myself I am free from the constraints of bigger public artists, who inevitably play more spokesperson and diplomat, than artist. I am a folk public artist.

Good public art happens when the word art is forgotten, and the thing is left to be whatever it is. I say give the 2% of funds that is available to artists and musicians so that they can create art without the pressures of doing good in the community. The art produced will inevitably be public.
1. A project for the walls of British transport buildings where quick fix jobs are often done in order to appease the disgruntled public that use it. (British public transport is slow, dirty and never on time!) I stuck transparent lettering to the walls that were being re-decorated. After the painters had left I peeled off the stencils to reveal the original color of the wall.

2. A project for a beach in Portugal made at 6am, an hour before the place was flooded with tourists. I made footprints in the sand from giant 3 foot long, concrete feet.
A project in a small coastal, British town. The town had recently become home to many immigrants who were seeking asylum from Eastern Europe. The town was also a stronghold for the B.N.P, the British National Party whose basic belief is to keep immigrants out. I originally intended to build a large, sand sculpture raft and to fly this flag in it, but the project changed. Some East European boys were playing on the sand and asked me if they could do a parade along the beach with my flag, they then took it home to show their mother!
These photographs were made before, during, and after the United States invasion of Iraq, sometimes referred to as Gulf War II. During four major protest marches and rallies in San Francisco, tens of thousands of people carried or wore signs (and in some cases, applied images and language directly to the body) to express their outrage and contempt for the Bush administration’s unremitting bellicosity. The spirit of these events communicated that diplomacy most certainly would have avoided the loss of untold thousands of lives, ecological disaster, and continuing American unilateral foreign policy.

My primary intent was to document the language of dissent, in the form of homemade signage that demonstrated an individual or a group speaking to others in the crowd, to onlookers, to those not in attendance, to those in the United States and other countries receiving only audio broadcasts of the protests, to corporate media—whose scant coverage of these events has historically minimized the magnitude and ingenuity of anti-war protests. Thus, these images are most urgently public. They are a form of agitprop art, composed of written language and figuration. On occasion, I veered from words to other media—that is, there were several collectives of protesters whose garb and masks offered their own irresistible visual languages of dissent.
N loaned me a camera and encouraged me to make a document of my trip back to New England. Two days before taking this photograph, I sighted two separate overpasses while driving north toward the New Hampshire coastline. Both were covered with public signs in support of the troops. The first overpass exhibited a collage of small manufactured American flags tied to the fence, whereas the second displayed a hand painted banner welcoming a soldier back from duty overseas. I discovered the third banner upon my return trip while driving south to Boston. I found this heart and American flag constructed of Solo cups above an overpass attached to a chain-linked fence and decided to pull off the interstate and take a photograph. I drove up to the site and realized that there was no place to park. So, I ended up parking my car half on the local road and half on the sidewalk and ended up walking 50 yards. There were cups missing from the flag and I wasn't sure how long the cups had been in their arrangement, but the plastic red, white, and blue colors were fading white so that only their shapes were distinguishable.
I am interested in the residual places and lost areas of an urban environment. Using existing materials and visual languages to reevaluate the given conditions of this urban context, I have worked on an ongoing series of unauthorized public works projects.

In my Territories series, I superimpose drawings onto the street at an architectural scale. To make these drawings, I use a line marker, commonly used to paint enamel stripes on asphalt. The Public Worker identity used to perform the drawings is a clandestine way of asserting the image into a public space. The drawings reference plans for failed prefabricated homes and obsolete, manufactured electronic products.

In Manufacturer Territories (seen in the above images), the drawings originate from cast product-packaging forms, and imply a hypothetical architectural space growing out of the refuse of a disposable culture.

If the postmodern could be said to entail in part the privatization of what was once a public sphere, as well as the collapse of art and culture into entertainment, then Orlando—which offers little in the way of either a public sphere or art in any recognizable sense—functions as a kind of gregarious ground zero of the postmodern. Here in Central Florida, a no place of strip malls and endless sprawl, of gated communities and the Pleasantville of Celebration, Walt Disney World looms under a blistering sun, its faux medieval castle serving to remind toiling subjects near and far once and for all who remains king.

To be sure, the public in all its plenitude can't seem to get enough, as millions each year pay the steep price for the privilege of the Disney experience. And while not quite the first Happiest Place on Earth, Disney World's four theme parks certainly multiply the opportunities—if not for happiness exactly, then at least its representation. For in Fantasyland (one of several enchanted lands comprising the Magic Kingdom), one can find the attraction "It's a Small World," in which happiness has been "imagineered" out of a not-so-distant past, a past that once believed it was still possible for all the world's children to be held together in song.

Here guests board small boats to embark on a voyage around "the world," treated to a multitude of mechanical children joyfully singing in unison, "It's a small world, after all." This being Disney, of course, the politics are abysmal. European children are differentiated by distinct countries through costumes and props, while Africa passes by in its obtuse Otherness. Orientalism abounds. Yet all are united in cliché: hula girls (Hawai'i) and cancan girls (France), snake charmers (India?) and pandas (China), leprechauns (Ireland) and what must be Cleopatra (Egypt).
Apart from the generic signifiers of “nativeness” (windmill, gondola, hippo), difference is marked audibly by subtle variations in the one-world sing-along—Samba-ish emphasis here, vaguely Middle Eastern double-reed winds there. Barely perceptible accents skip across the black pool, striking countless ears from around the world. While this indelicate dance of identity and difference can indeed be heard, with verses occasionally diverging into separate languages, small world always comes back together for the chorus sung in rousing English. This imperialism through language, though, is trumped finally by ontological uniformity: these cherubic little robots, standardized products of a machine-age mentality, could well portend a cyborg future for us all.

But It’s a Small World points more to a receding past than an inevitable future. Initially designed for the New York World Fair in 1964, in a Pepsi-Cola funded exhibit, the attraction’s now obsolete technology and underwhelming spectacle recall nothing so much as “yesterday’s tomorrows”—then corporate culture’s answer to the 1960s counterculture, when global unity could be brought to us by commercial sponsor. If it was possible then to come within proximity of a poignant moment, it was there, drifting through the cavernous space of a poorly lit and echoey tomb. Amidst all those creepy robotic children, imprisoned in childhood and condemned to sing that scary song for all eternity, their empty eyes and fiendish grins daring us to embrace them after all these years, here finally was something terribly, terribly sad.

For while bearing witness to a failed utopian moment may have felt nearly tragic, the attraction also asks us to feel the weight of nostalgia, the not always useless duration of an (un)intended trip to another time and place. With the present temporarily suspended, approximating the not-here not-now, the experience itself of temporal and spatial dislocation allows us to inhabit another’s memory, in effect redeeming an otherwise lost dream. And after all, isn’t that what we used to ask of art?

LAUREN GUDATH

Awe Shucks: A Survey and a Poem

The following survey was given to 50 people in November of 2003. Depending on the type of information solicited, their answers are presented either as counts of selected answers or as percentages.

As a part of a writing project, I am conducting a survey about both writing and the current situation in Iraq. I would like to include your opinions in my survey. This information will be used to write a poem about the current situation in Iraq that reflects the opinions and preferences of respondents to this survey.

Question 1: Which statement best describes your relationship to poetry? (Please check only one)

7 I enjoy poetry and read it at least once a week.
25 I am not a frequent reader of poetry, but I occasionally read poetry or attend events that include poetry.
16 I rarely read or encounter poetry.
 2 I never read poetry.

Question 2: Consider the forms of artistic expression listed below. Which one has had the greatest impact on your life? (Please check only one)

12 Fiction (Novels and short stories)
 21 Poetry
    6 Visual art (Painting, sculpture, and photography)
    7 Film
  2 New media (art created for the Internet or other digital mediums)
11 Architecture
  2 Theater and performance art
  2 Dance
Question 3: Thinking about poetry that you find to be engaging, how important are the following factors in forming your opinion? Please rate the factors on a scale of one to five where a one means not at all important and five means very important. If you don’t read poetry often, consider the question in terms of artistic forms that you do enjoy.

Factors
Circle one level of importance for each factor

| Clarity and understandability | 1- 3% | 2- 8% | 3- 30% | 4- 43% | 5- 15% |
| Humor | 1- 9% | 2- 26% | 3- 33% | 4- 21% | 5- 10% |
| Seriousness and gravity | 1- 5% | 2- 21% | 3- 42% | 4- 26% | 5- 5% |
| Objectivity | 1- 14% | 2- 34% | 3- 34% | 4- 10% | 5- 7% |
| Political or social relevance | 1- 2% | 2- 26% | 3- 28% | 4- 33% | 5- 9% |
| Inventiveness and originality | 1- 2% | 2- 2% | 3- 7% | 4- 33% | 5- 56% |
| Displays of skill and virtuosity | 1- 0% | 2- 5% | 3- 18% | 4- 25% | 5- 52% |
| Other | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Several items were mentioned in the other category. Only two were mentioned twice or more: spirituality and passion.

Question 4: Read the following statements about the current situation in Iraq and the events leading up to it. Please indicate, on a scale of one to five where one means strongly disagree and five means strongly agree, whether you disagree or agree with the statements.

1. Despite today’s climate of instability and violence in Iraq, the ultimate outcome of the situation will be positive for the Iraqi people.
   1- 19% | 2- 40% | 3- 28% | 4- 14% | 5- 0% |
2. The situation is likely to increase global instability and diminish the influence of the United States in world affairs.
   1- 7% | 2- 26% | 3- 26% | 4- 40% | 5- 25% |
3. The lack of international support for the war should have caused the Bush administration to put greater effort into seeking a non-military solution.
   1- 0% | 2- 7% | 3- 2% | 4- 16% | 5- 74% |
4. The news media is doing a good job of reporting on the situation in Iraq.
   1- 49% | 2- 28% | 3- 19% | 4- 2% | 5- 2% |
5. We’re only making things worse in Iraq; we should bring our troops home immediately.
   1- 5% | 2- 14% | 3- 28% | 4- 25% | 5- 28% |
6. Not enough attention is being paid to the needs and opinions of women in Iraq.
   1- 2% | 2- 16% | 3- 9% | 4- 28% | 5- 44% |
7. The news media is over-emphasizing difficulties in Iraq. Taken as a whole, the Bush administration is managing post-war Iraq very effectively.
   1- 62% | 2- 20% | 3- 16% | 4- 16% | 5- 2% |
8. It’s important that the United States maintain a strong military presence in Iraq until the country is stable and a democratic government is in place.
   1- 25% | 2- 25% | 3- 35% | 4- 14% | 5- 0% |
9. The risk of civilian casualties makes war unacceptable in all but the most extreme of circumstances.
   1- 2% | 2- 2% | 3- 16% | 4- 32% | 5- 46% |
The war in Iraq is an example of how US imperialism and greed contributes to making the world less stable and just.

Question 5: Imagine you encounter a poem about Iraq at an event or in a publication. Thinking about the possible contents of the poem, which of five of the following twenty details, images, or perspectives would be most likely to attract your attention?

Please check only five

9. Numerical or statistical facts
16. The point of view of a US soldier
9. Recent historical facts
15. Language that mirrors post-war instability (for example, fragmented phrases)
8. A non-partisan or balanced tone
17. Descriptions of violence
5. Mentions of notable figures (for example, Saddam Hussein, Donald Rumsfeld, or Jessica Lynch)
15. Descriptions of the natural features of the area
9. An explicit call for peace
19. Ancient historical facts and imagery
22. Unusual or unexpected metaphors
9. Descriptions of specific incidents (for example, a single bombing or military action)
14. Oil consumption imagery
8. Surrealistic imagery
9. The inclusion of real quotes from notable figures
10. Any first person perspective
10. Mockery of the Bush administration
23. The point of view of an Iraqi child
1. Patriotic imagery (from a US perspective)
15. An implicit call for peace
0. Other ____________

Thank you for sharing your time and opinions. If you would like to receive a copy of the poem your opinions helped to craft, please include your mail or email address below.

21 of 50 respondents requested a copy of the completed poem that follows:

Awe Shucks

Green Iraq-shaped crayon lines
Crossed by two blue lines
Red heart at Baghdad
As I might have placed a star
At Washington, DC, or Austin.
Those kids are just like the young me!
The world is just like me
They shall see and agree—
Rivers aren't blue.
They are colored by muck,
Silt, and such. I see my vision
Everywhere. Our teens in armor
Make do with duty. They
Water a bitumen mountain, like
The plumbers of Babylon. Infrastructure
Blooms—a lion its virility
Unwearied. There are no demons
Ascending—those are just reeds
Lining the banks of the Tigris and
Euphrates. They come as simple
Customs clerks approaching
Boats laden with metal, grains,
Apples, and cucumbers. We eat.
The beagle eats meat as the lamb
Grass. Hungry beasts devouring.
A hostile act you shall not
Perform that fear of vengeance
Not consume you. Or so goes
The Sumerian proverb. But
I see the lamb lying down
With the lion like a Watchtower
Cover come alive. Spread
Crayons all around. My dove
Is a gray "M" on a yellow horizon.
Evildoers prepare to meet your
Bridegroom and illustrator—
The end is nigh.
In college and graduate school, I conducted phone surveys for political and market researchers. Unlike polls conducted by news organizations, which seem designed to uncover shifts in people's views, these polls were used to determine the content of political speeches and advertising by finding out what pieces of information were most likely to sway people's views. Today, almost everything politicians say in the course of campaigns has been vetted before the "public" in political surveys and focus groups. This is not to say polling has much influence on the actual views of politicians—it helps their handlers decide points of emphasis and how to spin or obscure unpopular views.

Interested in exploring the process by which survey results can be turned into public discourse, I developed a survey that focused on poetry and the invasion and occupation of Iraq. The results of the survey were used to help determine the content and tone of a poem about Iraq. I was excited by the answers, and the directions in which they sent me. Left to my own devices, I probably would not have written about artwork by Iraqi children, Babylonian plumbing, and common Sumerian metaphors.

The survey was given to a total of 50 people on two consecutive weekend afternoons in the Sunset district of San Francisco. The survey took most people about 10 minutes to complete. Though not gathered in the most progressive neighborhood in San Francisco, the views of the residents of the Sunset are almost certainly to the left of the views of many Americans. People were very generous with their time, and I was surprised by how willing most people were to complete the survey. Many people had questions about how the results of the survey would be used and why I was conducting it. This led to many interesting discussions about politics and contemporary writing. So no matter how limited the merits of this project may prove, I highly recommend undertaking projects that involve random passersby.

GORDON HADFIELD & SASHA STEENSEN

La Paz

La Paz, a word that cannot be translated: it suggests, "what belongs to the people"

—Myung Mi Kim, Commons

Public space. Common space. There is no one common experience of public space or public art.

In a city, roads constitute the largest publicly used space. Each house and apartment is partitioned off, but the streets and sidewalks are shared, even as they continue to reflect the socio-economic realities of driver, rider of public transportation, and pedestrian. In Bolivia, roads are sites of exchange, celebration, and political performance. Vendors lay their goods on the sidewalks or push carts through the streets. Musicians, comedians, stuntmen and women perform for donations. Roads are regularly closed for parades and processions. On national holidays, streets become restaurants and bars—families set up tables and chairs and sell plates of homemade food and bottles of beer. The largest union in the country, the Bolivian Workers Union (Central Obrera...
Boliviana), frequently uses road blockades as a political action; the miners’ and teachers’ unions do as well. Like the space left in Kim’s untranslatable noun, the streets exist as a place for action, a space to act within. A common place. The roads, never permanently occupied and always in flux, cannot belong to a single person or institution.

A single road divides the Bolivian capital, La Paz, from east to west. It moves along the lowest point of the valley, in line with the Río Choqueyapu. The road changes names, from Avenida Mariscal Santa Cruz, to Avenida 16 de Julio (El Prado), and then again to Avenida Villazón and Avenida Anciento Arce. South of the Plaza Estudiante, just as the city begins to sprout skyscrapers and deluxe apartment buildings, and just before this road descends into the more affluent neighborhoods of Miraflores and the Zona Sur, there is a large mural. Here, on the eastern flank of the road, American flags serve as gags for two large faces. The shoulders, barely visible beneath the gagged heads, appear to be pulled back, indicating that their hands are bound. There is a third, ungagged face, mouth open in a scream. Next to these figures, a crowd of campesinos raise their right hands, each grasping a rifle. Behind the crowd, other campesinos are marching toward them, as if support for their struggle is constantly growing.

The text of the mural reads:

CON EL PUÑO CERRADO
WITH A CLENCHED FIST
CON EL Grito EN LA SANGRE
WITH A CRY SURGING THROUGH BLOOD
ESTA TIERRA NE SE VENDE
THIS LAND IS NOT FOR SALE
NO AL ALCA
NO TO FTAA

Blood seeps through the drainage holes in the side of the embankment. Below the writing, an unattached eye looks at the viewer. Because the mural appears right before the road enters a tunnel, the sidewalks are positioned above the road. Traffic is heavy here, and in order for the mural to be painted, either the road was closed, or the artists took great risks. Public art is dangerous when it speaks not only to, but for the public. The creator of this mural, El Grupo de Arte Willka, takes its name from the Aymara word for “the sun.” Near the signature on the mural, just above the most prominent campesino’s rifle, a small sun is rising. El Grupo de Arte Willka defines itself as an independent collective committed to covering the streets, markets, and other public spaces with messages of social change and justice.

This mural, fixated on blood, lies in the heart of the business district, beneath the mass of El Alto, La Paz’s “Other” city. El Alto, which is populated by the poor, is perched along the canyon’s rim, and when it rains, the water washes down, flooding the business district. Just as La Paz’s arteries, its streets and alleys, empty into the valley where we find the mural, the mural itself reminds us of our biological arteries and the blood that runs through them. We understand that blood is being shed, but we also understand that this spilt blood strengthens a sense of kinship, solidarity and resistance—we cannot discern the end of the line of approaching campesinos.

We think of the biological difference and the evolution of the Andean heart. Due to the extreme elevation, the Andean heart produces a higher concentration of oxygen-absorbing red blood cells, and most indigenous bodies contain two quarts more blood than we do. CON EL GRITO EN LA SANGRE. CON EL PUÑO CERRADO. As we look at the mural, dancers practice in the square behind us. In an event that lasts twelve hours, the participants dance the entire length of this central road, from Avenida Mariscal Santa Cruz to Avenida Anciento Arce. Watching them, we are reminded that in the Andes, we lose our breath trying to ascend even the most minor incline. There is no one common experience of public space or public art, but something is shared.

The mural supports a refusal to participate in one’s own exploitation. In the photograph Sasha has taken of the mural, several indigenous women, dressed in bowler hats and polleras, stand on the walkway above the mural. One woman can be
seen selling produce on the sidewalk. Bolivia's economic policies have been strongly shaped by US pressure and the International Monetary Fund's "structural adjustment programs." ALCA (Área de Libre Comercio de las Américas) is the Spanish acronym for the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas). The first meeting towards the establishment of the Summit of the Americas took place in 1994, and all present democratic countries pledged to complete negotiations by 2005. Several months after our encounter with the mural, the Bolivian president, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada (Goni), would propose that natural gas be sold to the US and exported through Chile. This would result in a series of riots and blockades led by a number of Aymara leaders. At least 74 people would die protesting the government's pro-US, free-market economic policies. Willka=Sun. Ultimately, vice president Carlos Mesa would replace Goni as president. After entering office, he would carefully address "the country's most excluded." Those who make roads common, public, untranslatable.

HEWITT + JORDAN
WINNER—Liverpool 7-2

Our recent projects have examined the function of art within economic and cultural systems in the UK; we have been concerned with the role of the artist and the art within our contemporary culture. We have attempted to examine the contradictions and the conflicts of interest between public and private agendas within regeneration objectives. We also attempt to discuss the functions given to art via Government cultural policy and by the patronage of capital interests.

As a result of working through a project, you develop a further understanding of the issues; when you reflect upon it you can feel far wiser. We have tried to steer a way from a revised account of the experience. When writing about our work we can only really talk about the work in terms of context and outcomes; to make any qualitative judgments is very difficult. Therefore, in this text, we have tried to concentrate on discussing our intentions and articulating our experiences.

We believe in the possibility of art having a role in the development and support of democratic systems. We are concerned that art continues to be appropriated, used for investment by capital and increasingly as a tool within government social policies. The dilemmas for the artist working between the powerful agendas of capital or government funding policy make it all the more urgent to maintain art as a space for thinking and for contesting authority and the prevailing culture.

Art practitioners, who for ideological reasons choose to work outside of the gallery market and seek to make art that is critical of capital and commodity, find that the public funding of art is equally problematic having its own set of patrons and agendas. The public realm is becoming less public as capital interests have taken over more of what we once understood to be public. We see the "subordination of society to capital"
with capital orientated culture representing itself as alternative "public" culture. Parallel to this, a functionalist agenda within the public funding of art practice channels it toward the support of economic goals within culture-led regeneration and a "third way" partnership with commercial concerns.

An art practice that develops an antagonistic relationship with these forces is one that risks being marginalized and unsustainable. Artists are faced with developing strategies to work around these agendas, avoiding becoming compliant whilst critically engaging with the place of art within a social and economic context. However difficult this is to maintain it is preferable to relinquishing the autonomy that is inherent to art.

It is this "culture of capital" that we attempt to investigate within our projects. Our practice is about questioning: confronting accepted systems, methods and approaches. We want to reveal that art and cultural systems are not benign but are deeply affected by political and ideological agendas. We believe in the arts as having some agency to support democratic systems but in order for this to be effective there is a need to fight for the control of its production and mediation.

The project, WINNER, came from a period of research into the UK competition for Capital of Culture 2008. The work examined the use of culture to brand a city as part of culture-led regeneration. The European Capital of Culture is a European Union agreement under which each year a member country takes its turn to select a host city to become Capital of Culture. After a long competition process Liverpool was, this year, selected to represent the UK as European Capital of Culture for the year 2008. During the run-up to the final selection we worked on a project entitled WINNER. We sought to understand why this competition was in operation, how each of the competing cities would interpret the word "culture," and how the arts were going to function within any subsequent cultural strategy.
The competition was already promising to become a cultural phenomenon as an unprecedented twelve cities entered the UK competition. In August 2002, over a two-week period, we visited each one. Birmingham > Cardiff > Bristol > Liverpool > Belfast > Oxford > Brighton > Canterbury > Norwich > Bradford > Newcastle > Inverness. Following on the heels of the official judges that included media and sports celebrities, like Jeremy Irons and Tessa Sanderson, it was our aim to experience for ourselves the culture of each city. We met with people from the visual arts communities and representatives from City Councils in order to find out what was being planned. Along the way we gathered objects and information and recorded our impressions on camera.

The Capital of Culture competition proposes a clear link between the arts and the social and economic regeneration of our post-industrial cities. Then Culture secretary Chris Smith said (of Glasgow, the UK's previous title holder, 1990) that the city experienced "substantial economic and social benefits and made excellent use of arts and culture to strengthen and communicate its regeneration." Cultural policy and the Creative Industries became the object of government attention during the re-branding of the Labour party into New Labour. Cultural policy and the Creative Industries were central to the mythology that was "Cool Britannia," an image of the UK that would be spun around the world. Taking the lead from capital interests government hoped cultural industries would give post-industrial Britain new economic solutions to the tough complexities of advanced capitalism. Since taking power, the Government found it had fewer options for economic intervention and they now sought to harness the magic of 'creativity' for their regeneration priorities of economic development and social improvement.

Culture remains the buzzword or "get out of jail card" for our post-industrial cities. Culture has added value in the re-branding and marketing of the city as a centre for tourism and leisure. Highbrow or popular, culture is paraded as a symbol of a sophisticated and confident city; the arts are cool as they have the whiff of an intelligent, savvy and upwardly
mobile culture. However with all UK cities now embarking on cultural reinvention in a fight for business and development opportunities (regardless of the Capital of Culture) it's become a competitive business in which to keep ahead.

The Capital of Culture 2008 is itself a cultural phenomenon being the largest example of a culture-led regeneration competition. It offers the winning city a marketing windfall that promises to generate economic growth, inward investment, tourist cash, as well as a bonus for local politicians. Competing cities enter into a marketing war, like medieval city states in a free market jousting competition draped in garish banners emblazoned with “can do” slogans.

This form of competition can be useful when it tests the city and asks tough questions of its leaders and citizens. If the city is fully committed to developing a meaningful strategy it can become a tool with which to think about the future and one that can help generate initiatives. If it provided an opportunity for many more people to become involved with a vision of their city, it may offer new possibilities for a sense of civic society. It was the question of how these strategies had been developed that we took with us to the twelve competing cities.

The council officers and visual arts workers we met gave us mixed views about the value of their cities' bid. We found that in some cases the bid was used to develop long-term strategies and relationships that would improve the communication between community initiatives and the City Council. But in the majority of cases there was concern that the bid team (often consultancy firms from outside the city) were not listening to those people at the grass roots of city culture, their concerns being bypassed or they were simply not part of the consultation process. The quality and relevance of some bid documents was clearly in question, perhaps the result of hasty decision-making processes. The common message to interested community groups was “if we win we can talk then.”

In our final analysis we hoped that when the marketing teams had gone home and the banners had come down it would not all have been in vain—that the publicity material, printed
brochures and hackneyed slogans ("Bristol is the best city in the world") generated through the process had not been made at the expense of existing funding for local services and cultural initiatives.

From the mass of collected images, brochures and badges we developed a work to present at the Independent at the Liverpool Biennial. The Liverpool Biennial was part of the art strategy for Liverpool’s bid to become Capital of Culture 2008. The city of Liverpool and development partners funded the event in order to establish an international arts programme that would bring kudos to the city. The Independent section of the Biennial was an event proposed by groups working within the city, an event that would include city artists and local audiences. At the last minute the city council pulled the funding from this part of the Biennial (North West Arts and the A Foundation had to step in to fund it, leaving it cash short). Artists in the city pointed to this lack of support for grass roots initiatives in favour of international projects as revealing the bigger agenda for culture in Liverpool. This context appeared to us the appropriate setting in which to present the outcome of the project.

The work WINNER comprised of an image of the council chamber from each of the cities competing for CC2008. Each image was marked with the betting odds as provided by the bookmakers William Hill Ltd. The twelve poster-sized images were presented at St. Johns Market a former food hall in the city centre.

The city council chamber represents the headquarters for political discourse, grand symbolic architecture, proudly decorated to depict the economic and political ambition of its ruling elite. The buildings are often nineteenth century, pointing to a period of growth and prosperity when the city fathers were powerful and held economic control of the city and the fortunes of its citizens.

The council chamber now stands as a symbol of an earlier imperial system of democracy. The power to affect ‘local’ economic, political or social change has been consumed by global conditions, local government is now an agency for
regeneration and engaged in winning funding. The city council chamber still functions and is now increasingly popular with tourists who may visit while following the cities' heritage trail.

2 Arts and Social Policy Statement, Department of Culture Media and Sport Website (www.culture.gov.uk/)

Keys for images . . .
page 146
Belfast
Bradford
Brighton House

page 148
Bristol
Birmingham
Canterbury and East Kent

page 150
Cardiff
Inverness
Liverpool

page 152
Newcastle
Norwich
Oxford

HEWITT + JORDAN
The Americans are Coming!

"The Americans are Coming" is a text work made for Artranspennine 03. On the 4th July 2003, this ideological conjecture “traveled” between the Northern English cities of Liverpool and Hull as livery on a wagon. The vehicle called at sites in the city centres of Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds and Hull. The work suggests an imaginary event in the very near future; a major migration of American citizens passing through Northern England on their way to find a new life. This proposed migration is in the opposite direction from the last major movement of people through the region, when in the 1800s thousands of people left Europe on their way to North America. They arrived at the port of Hull, from Northern Europe on the Wilson Line, crossing the region by rail before leaving from Liverpool in the West. The émigrés were fleeing persecution or looking for a better life in the United States.

Our project was to propose this simple and playful supposition. What if the US has reached a watershed in its history, no longer seen as a destination for those seeking asylum? What if it has lost its attraction as “the land of the free”? The project therefore suggests an exodus of American citizens who are looking for a place that offers them a new sense of hope.

Artranspennine 03 is the largest exhibition of publicly sited art ever to be held in the UK. It involved over seventy artists working on fifty projects at over fifty locations. Curated by Nick Crowe and Ian Rawlinson. www.artranspennine.org.uk.
"The Americans are Coming, Liverpool"

"The Americans are Coming, Leeds"
1. If you leave the neighborhoods you know and set out walking, with no map, does the city seem ___ empty or ____ full?

2. If you live in the country and buy groceries in town, is your gas tank ___ empty or ____ full?

3. "More than any other state of mind consciousness of the void about us throws us into exaltation." —Georges Bataille

   If the void is empty, can the exaltation be full? ____ yes ____ no

4. The Ahwahneechee people who lived in the Yosemite Valley before white settlement practiced a complex system of horticulture (as opposed to more sweeping, and therefore visible, agriculture) that included burning, selective disturbance of habitats to encourage growth, and subtle cultivation of native plants. This sustainable practice not only provided for their needs and made the valley "beautiful" in the garden-like way that appealed to white explorers (thus ultimately leading to the valley's being granted national park protection), but was so invisible compared to European agriculture that the explorers assumed the land was "virgin."!

   Was this horticultural practice ___ empty or ____ full?

5. If a wilderness designation draws visitors to a piece of land, necessitating roads and amenities and signage, and simultaneously preventing logging and mining, is the land thereby made ___ empty or ____ full?

6. Match:
   prairie  ♦  beautiful
   Mt. Everest ♦  ugly
   Mojave desert ♦  sublime
   Rhode Island ♦  terrifying
   urban decay ♦  pleasing

7. If we cease to think of all matter and energy as potential resources (and thus erase anthropocentric significance from some parts of the world), are the resulting "gaps" ___ empty or ____ full?

8. If each being has its own worldview and no one worldview is immutable or objective, yet each being is completely immersed in its own world, is your worldview ___ empty or ____ full?

9. If the totality of matter and energy in the universe is a fixed amount, but cannot be measured, is the universe ___ empty or ____ full?

10. True or false: empty or full.

11. Overproduction of food has led to a culture of overeating and hence widespread obesity in America. Match:
   full stomach
   supply silo
   empty demand

12. The author Wendell Berry practices archaic farming methods but survives partially on income from writing. Is his way of life ___ empty or ____ full? Are his ideas ___ empty or ____ full? Is his pantry ___ empty or ____ full?
13. Match:

- past
- country
- technology
- complex
- cyclical time
- childhood
- transparent
- body
- linear time
- dense
- future
- city
- simple
- adulthood

14. Circle one:

Technology is useful. Technology is painful.

15. If settling the American West was, as Carolyn Merchant claims, a process of liquidating the “absence of hero” in that region, was that absence ___ empty or ___ full? If this process was fueled by government land grants, was that absence of monetary cost ___ empty or ___ full?

16. If we all need to eat, but our eating habits are culturally mediated, is food ___ empty or ___ full?

17. “An art that heals and protects its subject is a geography of scars.” —Wendell Berry

Fill blanks with “significan(t)(ce),” “relationship(s),” “full,” or “empty”:

Scars are ____. Art is ____. Fullness is ____. 
Faces are ____ and breath is _____. __________ is the inhalation and exhalation in ____. Fullness is half of ____. Geography is ____. Subject is ____. 
Object is ____. 

18. Given a container with some things inside and other things outside, is the container ___ empty or ___ full?

19. Travel can encourage wonder by defamiliarizing. It shocks us both with the concrete thereness of what we anticipated in a place, and with the equally undeniable presence of what had been left out of the preconception. Given this, is a map ___ empty or ___ full?

20. If green is natural and red is artificial, but soil is red and green is irrigation, and people plant orchards in the desert, is the resulting fruit ___ empty or ___ full? (Remember that green is the color of an apple only until it ripens.)

21. In artwork that does not use the system of linear perspective, unarticulated space is not accounted for, hence constitutes wildness. If the camera “sees” from a single godlike point, thus overlaying the earth with receding lines of perspective and denying the possibility of unarticulated space, is the resulting world ___ empty or ___ full?

**Bonus: True or false: The camera can be used to subvert the convention of perspective.

22. Which is emptier, the past or the future?

23. Fleeing persecution in the East, the Mormons settled near the Great Salt Lake specifically because it was a place no one else would want to live. They saw it as a blank slate for their specific inscription, a Mormon-defined culture and architecture. But they weren’t necessarily prepared to adapt themselves to this environment—in fact they were extremely industrious about adapting it to their requirements, according to legend breaking ground for crops the same afternoon they arrived. Now Salt Lake City is leafy, smoggy and highly commercialized, an ugly American city of wide streets and strip malls. The outside world is fully integrated, having ridden in on the promise of economic activity that goes with building a technological city on a salt flat. Is Salt Lake City now ___ emptier or ___ fuller than the day the Mormons claimed it?
24. If you see something every day, is it _____ empty or _____ full?

25. If the construction of a dam floods a canyon, is the resulting lake _____ empty or _____ full?

26. If the construction of a scenic highway necessitates cutting deeply into hills that form part of the desired scenery, are the resulting roadcuts _____ empty or _____ full?

27. "For something to be empty means to be empty of independent being, which is synonymous with existing only in dependence upon the other . . . Primarily the doctrine of emptiness is an attack on the conceptual mode of grasping the world." —Francis Cook

Is emptiness thus _____ empty or _____ full?

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**MARISA JAHN & DENNIS SOMERA**

*Report: Kindling*

date and location: 18 December 2003
Powell Street (San Francisco)

media: mixed media performatve sculpture
(wood, vinyl lettering, paint, people)

participants: Marisa Jahn, Dennis Somera, teens from Meridian Gallery Interns Program

*Kindling* is a performance that asked participants and passersby to consider protest as a ritual that activates and transforms people within their environments. The performance unfolded like a protest: teens and art instructors from the Meridian Intern Program marched down Powell Street where we passed luxury hotels, downtown department stores lit up in their holiday decor, art gallery and theater districts, Powell at Ellis Streets (purportedly the busiest foot traffic west of Chicago), turned around at the Powell Cablecar turnaround where we made our way back up Powell to Union Square and the large four story Christmas tree. Most
of us held protest signs, which were fabricated to look
generic: white signs, generic font, with nonspecific but
provocative text that self-reflexively references the act of
protesting itself (tERROR, poLICE, sLAUGHTER,
OVERThrow, fiRE, patRIOT, sWORDS). Altogether, the
absence of a specific, didactic message abstracted the perfor­
mance into a meta-protest—a protest about protests, a protest
about a generalized post-9/11 unease.

A few of us artist instructors at the Meridian Interns Program
were initially uncertain about the effectiveness of the protest,
which relied on the group’s performative authenticity. The
youths with whom we work vary greatly in ethnicity, age, and
intellectual development; this diversity is the program’s
beauty but also proves at times challenging. Indeed, while a
few participants clearly reveled in the attention, there were
others who had never previously participated in a protest
and/or any such public displays. As we walked onto Powell
Street with our signs, the reactions from passersby tended
toward the quizzical readers, suspicious Christmas shoppers,
puzzled tourists. One youth reported being flipped-off by
someone in a passing car. Another youth in the group was
faced with “What are you protesting?” The youth (admittedly,
with some coaching) answered calmly: “Read the signs, just
read the signs.” Others (admittedly, with less coaching)
answered similar questions with “What does it mean to
you?” The most outgoing of the bunch improvised and hybridized
protest chants: “Down with dope, up with hope,” “Crack
open a bible and get high on Jesus,” “down
with Bush, up
with purple
...”

The Interns varied in their reactions more than we might
have expected. A few “felt supported” and “comfortable.”
Another was annoyed at the questions, using “dude” and
“clueless” somewhat in the derogatory towards his torren­
tors. One young woman just felt people were “curious.” Still
others noticed the “strange looks” and felt “weird.” A boy
went so far as to use the term “outcast” to describe his sense
of the experience. Then there were those, of course, who
claimed to feel “nothing” and that it “had no point.” How­
ever, there were also those who felt as though they were

“speaking out.” Finally, one (the most outgoing/outspoken of
course) suggested we do it again, which is more than likely.
Through the performance and post-performance discussions,
Kindling initiated many of our youths into public protesting as
civil/moral right, granted emotional purchase to specific
social justice movements, and reified their affective relation­
ship with their environment. Miriam-Webster’s multiple
definitions for the word “kindle” captures the incendiary and
transformative nature of the performance for both passersby
and for the teen participants.

Main Entry: 'kin·dle
1 : to start (a fire) burning : LIGHT
2 a : to stir up : AROUSE <kindle interest> b : to bring into
being : START
3 : to cause to glow : ILLUMINATE
4 : to catch fire
5 a : to flare up b : to become animated
6 : to become illuminated
In the Loveland Art Museum is a giant, zombie beet collector, perpetually harvesting one cunningly muddy vegetable. When you press the button, to interact with him, he explains, in a mechanized monotone, who he is and what he is doing. “I place the beets in a bucket.” Free admission, so I go there a lot, as inspiration for a series of horror stories set in the local, post-beet-boom sugar factory. That Nate, as I call him—the wax figure of an invented historical worker, the “sugar factory employee”—exists in a public art setting in much the same way as statues of kings, lovers, and musicians are encountered in the lobbies of metropolitan art museums is fascinating to me. I read him as art, even though that is probably a mistake. He makes me feel things in a way that local, street-corner effigies of elk, ballerinas, bears and caroling young children—not to mention the naked “Indian” woman on the corner of Fourth and Lincoln, complete with her naked child and trailing, fringed shawl—do not. I think this is because he connects me, in his absurd real-ness, to my sense of locatedness in the landscape of northern Colorado: a region rich in agricultural ruins, overlaid by the subject of development: the place I am trying to write in. As they are for me, the ruins are a source of inspiration for other local artists. Students from Ames Community College, for example, can often be seen on the railroad tracks, photographing or sketching the nineteenth century alfalfa scales or grass-sprouting caves of the dilapidated grain mill that looms above the downtown shops. “A man from Italy came to look at it and said to keep the pillars in good shape. I can’t imagine what he wants with it,” said the grain mill owner, of one of the “artifacts” on a sagging porch. I myself enjoy the complex hooks, for hanging meat by its eyes, on the outside of the structure. It is one of the few places in town where I can think and breathe at the same time, writing in my notebook. Yep. This is how Colorado goes into me: vast silver gelatin prints of pine trees and architecture. I populate this terrain with automated citizens who sleep in wrecked factories and mills, drinking oil from the abandoned oil pump operations, south of First Street. At night-time, even Nate wakes up, wandering through the art museum, his home, blinking with astonishment at the display of Haitian voudon flags that’s passing through on its way to Kansas City. There’s even a very pink mermaid with glittering black buttons for eyes. He’d like to mate with her; produce small, practical children who can surge through town before sun-up, defacing the heads of the “active bronze wildlife” that local foundries produce en masse. I hope I don’t seem upset. It is my daily setting. Writing, I want to dream this setting into my body, any way I can.
While on an artist's residency at Caribbean Contemporary Arts in Trinidad during summer of 2001, I decided to travel to a small coastal town called Grand Riviere for a few days. This place was known for its natural beauty and wildlife, including giant leatherback turtles that came up onto the beaches to lay their eggs during a brief window every year. Trinidad hosts an incredible variety of plant and animal life, and is particularly well known as a bird watcher's paradise.

During my time in Grand Riviere I decided to spend an afternoon hiking with a local guide who took me far up into a remote area in the mountainous rainforest. We climbed up narrow, winding paths into areas thick with vegetation that surrounded and disoriented me. It was an environment unlike any I had ever been in before. Stopping to take a breather on the way down the mountain, I suddenly heard a very familiar noise in the midst of the unfamiliar surroundings: a car alarm. I stood listening to it for a few moments before things snapped back into place and I realized that this sound couldn't possibly be a car alarm. It was a bird.

I believe in misunderstandings as fruitful starting points for art works. Moments of confusion can be incredibly expansive mental spaces for me where I can momentarily access a particularly flexible way of considering things. Most people have had the experience of sleeping in an unfamiliar place and for a instant having no idea where you are when you wake up. Standing in the rainforest at that moment was a bit like this, and I tried to preserve and suspend both interpretations of that sound for as long as I could. I also made a mental note to remember the error for later.

In Spring 2002, SculptureCenter was doing major renovations on their new exhibition space in Long Island City and wanted to commission a work that didn't require a roof over its head. They approached me, and I proposed a project called Natural Car Alarms: a flock of three cars, each to be outfitted with a different car alarm modeled on the ubiquitous six-tone siren so common in New York City cars. Although they would behave just like the real thing, the alarms would all be composed of bird sounds.

I contacted the Macauley Library of Natural Sounds at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. They were known for having a vast archive of animal sounds, and agreed to work with me on the project. I recorded a screaming car on my street one day, sent them a CD, and they set about finding bird calls that roughly matched those sounds. A few weeks later, I had a CD in hand with 33 different birds on it and got to work to edit the sounds. Each car would have a different alarm soundtrack, and each alarm used six different birds, so there would be 18 birds involved in all.

The choices were tough. I wanted to find a good balance of sounds that were shockingly alarm-like but also distinctly bird-like in their quality. Almost as important as matching the sounds was finding a patterning that mimicked the swooping cries and punctuated honks of the familiar six-tone siren. They also needed to be as loud, intrusive, obnoxious and surprising as the real thing. Ideally, I wanted to replicate some of the ambiguity I had experienced in the forest, to create a situation where "the urban" and "the natural" were suddenly very continuous and the boundary between them confusing. Car alarms were after all a completely natural part of the Long Island City landscape where the piece would be shown.

The piece was shown at several locations during the summer and fall: MoMA QNS, PS1, Socrates Sculpture Park, and SculptureCenter, where the flock finally came home to roost at SculptureCenter's opening of their new space. At each site, the cars were parked adjacent to one another on the street and left there for the day. Each car had yellow windshield decals of bird silhouettes of the type found in bird identification guides. They also wore bumper stickers announcing "This car protected by NATURAL CAR ALARMS." In order to ensure that the cars would sound actively throughout the day, the alarms ran on timers, not synchronized to an-
other in any particular way (this was not obvious to viewers, who occasionally tried to bump or kick the cars to provoke the alarms). There were call-and-response moments, where one car was screaming and another would go off a few seconds later, and also instances when all three cars would go off at once—a completely chaotic, jungle-y effect that in a funny way reconnected the project back to its origins.

Summer 2003 the gallerist Jack Hanley e-mailed me, proposing a “series of temporary art interventions” for an exhibit he was organizing with the independent curator, Kate Fowle, in the Mission District of San Francisco. In the art world, writers often play the maiden aunts whom nobody really needs, but who make ourselves useful watching children or darning socks,—in short writing things. These curators, and their show which they called “17 Reasons” thus were the team of gift horses I wouldn’t look in the mouth. I first felt flattered, then at a loss. What did I make of public art and how would I make some myself? “Public art is like public TV,” Bo Huston used to sneer. “Always some cockamamie Rodgers & Hammerstein special that couldn’t offend a soul. Followed by pledge breaks.”

Vague images stirred my brain: my effort would somehow involve the elusive figure of Kylie Minogue, the Australian-born pop singer whose exploits I have been chronicling for the past three years. I asked Jack and Kate if I could re-situate Kylie in the Mission, a turbulent barrio posing as melting pot.
but the home, as well, of Irving Rosenthal, Jess, George Kuchar, Harold Norse—elder statesmen and (in their various ways) all kings of camp. To execute my vague sympathies I turned to Colter Jacobsen, a young artist who'd been one of Dodie Bellamy's students at the San Francisco Art Institute. I gave him a print-out of my poem about Kylie, "There's a Dark Secret in Me," which had appeared in the Boston-based journal "The Poker," and let him blow up the poem into three dimensions.

Colter prepared panels of cardboard, canvas, cloth, then wired them to a local landmark, the bronze tablet that commemorates the site of the original "Mission Dolores" at the corner in the Mission where Albion crosses Camp (literally). Bystanders goggled. "17 Reasons" opened on a Sunday afternoon, and in the lambent twilight I took some photos—good thing too since 24 hours later our entry had been torn down. The pieces were more or less neatly stacked on a sidewalk nearby, and Colter was able to drag them back to the gallery, and presently Modern Times, the cooperative bookstore, re-assembled them in their shop windows.

The moment I saw it I was wracked by anxiety, an anxiety indistinguishable in affect from the fear of physical assault. I knew the piece would be vandalized, I just didn't know when. I hadn't expected to feel this way. If anything, we entered the show with a "cast your fates to the wind" nonchalance. But then everything turned grave. My heart seemed to clutch up in my chest. I always wonder how artists actually can bear to surrender physical possession of the things they've created. How complex the system of projection that enabled me to empathize with the righteous Philistine who, stumbling down Camp Street one evening, grew outraged at what had been done to a favorite plaque and—

"17 Reasons" was happening in the context of an intense mayoral election. The Mission had its own candidate, the Green Party god Matt Gonzalez, who had mounted an increasingly successful grass roots campaign against the Democrat-backed, plutocrat straw man Gavin Newsom—strikingly handsome in that Kennedy way. People said that Matt was the "before" and Gavin was the "after" in some beauty school campaign. The runoff energy was exhilarating, and something in the air convinced even jaded "former voters" to get back in the race and stump for their man. We could make a difference after all, it seemed insanely feasible.

Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy!
For mighty were the Auxiliars, which then stood
Upon our side, we who were strong in love!
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven!—Oh! times,
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in Romance!

And in another light "17 Reasons" was also manifesting itself in the context of San Francisco's bid to become a center of international art, a campaign in which Jack Hanley and Kate Fowle are principal players, and thus this particular piece of public art had to it, or so I felt, a political aspect, as a nationalistic act. You can't tell from my photos, but Colter's colors are largely San Francisco pastels, varied with heavy browns and blacks, and a patina of gold used sparingly, only when Kylie's name pops up in the text. They're "used" colors, he suggests, to match his materials, which include one large cardboard box in which was once shipped a computer monitor, and a second box, the waxed stiff kind used to ship fruit in. The "New Mission" school follows—unconsciously or not—the tradition of the "funk/junk" pioneers of San Francisco postwar modernism of the 1950s and 1960s, and revels in the used; the collage artworks of Jess and the hideous, death-dripping assemblages of Bruce Conner for example. Other materials include fishing line, Scotch tape, acrylic paint and gouache. Its crown is made of coffee stir sticks, and the side panels were already recycled bedsheets when Colter found them, clumsily made into a dressing screen, at a neighborhood thrift store. They're the bed sheets with the strange reiterative pattern of rivers and mountains and endless horizons, Like Kylie, they speak of "the West" but refuse to commit to it, preferring an Eastern stoicism and perdurability. As public art, it no longer exists, but for one afternoon it was the spiral jetty of Camp Street, San Francisco.
Simulated surveillance cameras were installed throughout the World Financial Center in lower Manhattan in 2002. Non-functional and playfully constructed from a variety of materials, each of these sculptures was a unique “portrait” of a standard surveillance camera commonly found in public space. The personalized nature of each of these sculptural objects was in marked contrast to the industrial high-tech appearance of typical surveillance equipment and the World Financial Center’s sterile, corporate architecture. The installation questioned the anonymity and omnipresence of modern surveillance while diffusing the new sense of discomfort and anxiety experienced by many in public spaces.
THE DETECTIVE pushes red tacks into the map to indicate where bodies have been found. The shooter is aware of this practice and begins to arrange the bodies, and thus the tacks, into a pattern that resembles a 'smiley face.' The shooter intends to mock the detective, who he knows will be forced to confront this pattern daily on the precinct wall. However, the formal demands of the 'smiley face' increasingly limit the shooter's area of operation. The detective knows, and the shooter knows the detective knows, that the shooter must complete the upward curving of the mouth. The detective patrols the area of the town in which bodies must be found if the shooter is to realize his project. The plane on which the killings are represented, and the plane on which the killings take place, have merged in the mind of the detective and the shooter. The shooter dreams of pushing a red tack into the map, not of putting a bullet into a body. The detective begins to conceive of the town as a representation of the map. He drives metal stakes into the ground to indicate the tacks.

IN THE EARLIEST FILMS actors pretend to accomplish prodigious acrobatic feats by rolling around on a black carpet while being filmed from above. The prophet who seems to ascend to heaven is actually being dragged across the floor.

THE MASSIVE SWASTIKA, 20 meters in size, could only be seen from the air in autumn, when the larch trees turn a yellowish brown and stand out against the evergreen forest. Had the pattern been sewn in the distant past, it would have been visible only to a higher being. But advancements in aerial photography allow one to read this signature from above while on the ground. At half time, the marching band assumes a formation fully legible only to the blimp. But the blimp communicates the image of the field to a giant screen,
allowing the crowd to perceive the flag formed by the musicians. The displacement of the horizontal plane by the vertical plane is the displacement of the God-term by the masses.

THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA has launched a man into space. He claims the only made-made structure visible from the shuttle is The Great Wall. What about the Kansai International Airport (which is sinking)? The light from the Luxor Casino? What about smog? For visible from space read in the eyes of God.

ALL ACROSS AMERICA, from under and above the ground, from burning towers and deep wells, hijacked planes and collapsed mines, people are using their cell phones to call out, not for help or air or light, but for information.

A LARGE GROUP OF CHILDREN was struck by lightning while picnicking under a tent. Four girls and four dogs were fatally injured. Twenty-three children suffered injuries including burns, cataracts, macular holes, tympanic membrane rupture, and skull fracture. At the church service, the pastor organizes his eulogy around the trope of 'being called.' God reached down with a finger of light, etc. The positive charge, however, originated in the ground, and climbed an invisible ladder of electrons skyward.

READING IS IMPORTANT because it makes you look down, which is a posture that expresses shame. When the page is shifted to a vertical plane, it becomes an advertisement, decree and/or image of a missing pet or child. We say that texts displayed vertically are addressed to the public, while in fact, by failing to teach us the humility a common life requires, they convene a narcissistic mass. When you window-shop, or when you shatter a store window, you see your own image in the glass.

WE DREAM OF RAIN that, in lieu of falling, moves parallel to the earth. Sheet after sheet of rain. Then an upward rain that originates a few feet off the ground. You can get under the rain and watch. With the disappearance of public space, we dream a rain that's moved indoors. A miniaturized rain restricted to one room, one wall, a box. Then we dream snow.

HIDEAWAY BEDS were not invented to maximize space, as is commonly believed, but to conceal the unseemly reality of prostration. Thomas Jefferson, who held the first United States patent on a hideaway bed, devised a system of elevating and securing the bed to the ceiling. Each night the bed would be lowered slowly, and with great ceremony, thereby associating the animal fact of sleep with the plane of the divine. The contemporary hideaway bed, which is stored vertically, has snapped shut and killed at least ten sleeping businessmen. Research shows that most people can be trained to sleep standing up, to sleep with their eyes open, to speak, or at least make noise, and to sleepwalk. Mobilizing this tremendous dormant workforce is an ancient dream. Astronauts sleep strapped in their beds, like lunatics, like the lunatics they are.

IF IT HANGS FROM THE WALL, it's a painting. If it rests on the floor, it's a sculpture. If it's very big or very small, it's conceptual. If it forms part of the wall, if it forms part of the floor, it's architecture. If you have to buy a ticket, it's modern. If you are already inside it and you have to pay to get out of it, it's more modern. If you can be inside it without paying, it's a trap. If it moves, it's outmoded. If you have to look up, it's religious. If you have to look down, it's a book. If it's been sold, it's site-specific. If, in order to see it, you had to pass through a metal detector, it's public.
Times Square accommodates tourists and natives, two populations whose uses of the space often overlap and diverge. For many, the crowds and space are the event.

Elevated catwalks would provide access above the street and—like Fred Astaire dancing up the walls—up the sides of the buildings, inhabiting the spaces behind the billboards. The proposal of a secondary level of pathways would enhance the passage and allow stopping to view the Square. It would afford multiple and varied vantage points and could be variously programmed, changing to accommodate larger crowds and the everyday viewing of daily traffic in the square.

The project has two sets of components, one horizontal the other vertical:

1. An elevated series of paths allow for passage above the bowtie of intersecting avenues, connecting with side streets, as well as the raised portion of the new TKTS booth and the subway system below. This new layer of circulation has flexible components that can adjust to specific events, such as collapsible stage and bleachers.

2. Activated billboards provide views and amenities such as comfort stations, lunchtime perches above the street and visitor orientation not unlike Berlin’s Infobox. They also provide balconies and box seats for spectacles, and platforms for politicians at civic events. These suspended rooms are also elevated media staging areas for film and TV camera crews to record the life below.
Rocky Mountain National Park of Colorado has been a public space since 1915. Additionally, it has been recognized by the United Nations "Man and Biosphere" program as an International Biosphere Reserve. This network of protected samples of the world's major ecosystems provides a standard against which the effects of human impact on the environment can be measured.

This first map was drawn in Rocky Mountain National Park during high elk-mating season of October 2003. It tracks the movement of eight elk at dusk in Moraine Park, on the eastern side of the Continental Divide at 7390 feet. The grey x chains denote the cows, the black x chains indicate the yearlings and the hollow x chain represents the buck. An x circled indicates that an animal has lain down. This map was drawn over the course of twenty minutes as it was beginning to snow. Fifteen other cars had pulled over and visitors sat together under blankets or standing with arms folded watching and snapping photos of the elk. A ranger milled through the crowd "educating" interested parties.

This mapping of movement within public space is interchangeable on natural and urban planes. It could recall traffic, people in an airport terminal, leaves in a pool of water, the sleeping and rising patterns of people on benches in Central Park, crab-apples falling, or even the elk gazing crowd itself. Interchanging the urban and the natural is such a comfort.

This second map was drawn in Piazza Republica during 4pm traffic in Florence Italia March 2004. The solid x's denote the paths of bicycle movement and the hollow represents cars. A circled mark indicates stopped movement. This map was drawn over the course of two minutes.
Ausländer zu Mieten began in Switzerland in the spring of 2003. Participating artists included Alexey Lunev (Belarus), Ivan Igor Sapic (Australia), and Heidi Schlatter (USA). Based out of a small village near Zurich, and initially sponsored by Kuenstlerhaus Boswil where we were all in residence, the project's goal was to work directly for Swiss citizens and perform tasks that foreigners normally do. We wanted to draw public attention to the issue of foreigners’ status in Switzerland. This topic seemed to always be surfacing at get-togethers we attended where there were a lot of Swiss citizens. Somehow conversation usually came around to the question of how to handle the ongoing problem of the steady influx of foreigners from Eastern European and African countries into Switzerland.

We advertised our services in local village newspapers and in the Zurich Tages Anzieger classified section. Through additional press and radio interviews we began to get requests for our work via email and phone. Since none of us spoke Swiss-German we hired a manager, Oliver Kielmayer, to take phone calls and arrange appointments for us. He was paid a percentage of our wages for his booking services.

The most common requests were for garden work (it was springtime in Switzerland) and for catering food prep. Other services we provided were car washing, office work, welding, and consultation services on a variety of topics specific to our skills and experience. Occasionally people called us after seeing the newspaper articles written about our services because they were curious about the art aspect of our project. But usually, in the end, they really only wanted us to work—our rates they said were “cheaper than most foreigners,” unbeknownst to us when we had set our prices.

Our t-shirts, red and white and in the spirit of the Swiss flag, had our names on the front in the shape of a cross and “Ausländer Arbeiten fur Sie” (“foreigner working for you”) printed on the back.
Bettina Mathes & Amie Siegel  
Marching Up, Crawling Through and Coming Out—Public Art in Germany

Amie Siegel  There are so many foreign artists who come to Germany in general and Berlin in particular to make public works of art and site-specific installations—as a German, what do you think of that?

Bettina Mathes  That is a very good question, because it makes me wonder why Germans who are so utterly territorial are at the same time so eager to let foreign artists use their public spaces. Are we afraid of “speaking up” in public or are we even afraid of our public spaces because of all the buried history that remains hidden underground or untouched or goes unnoticed?

AS  Maybe it’s guilt, which is a simple way of saying perhaps Germans prefer for others to do their work excavating their past for them, since it also gives the foreigners a chance to feel self-righteous and declarative, although one hopes the art works have more ambiguity than that, and the Germans can neatly distance themselves from that too.

It’s fascinating how often “buried history” breaks out of its metaphor and becomes literal when speaking about Germans and public art. Think of the construction site that now surrounds and obscures the Bebelplatz book burning memorial by the Israeli artist Micha Ullman. It is a lit-up, sunken room of empty shelves—a library—visible from above through a glass ceiling, situated on the very site where the book burning took place in 1933.

As I’m sure you know, just recently however, Berlin’s city government decided to build an underground parking garage at Bebelplatz on the very spot where the memorial is although they claim it won’t effect the memorial, thus appropriating the very metaphor—burial and absence—that the artwork itself uses.

BM  You’re right, the construction site on Bebelplatz is all about the reality of buried history in Germany. In fact, I think that in Berlin, Germany’s capital, where the Nazis planned and organized the murder of the Jews, “buried history” is a reality and a metaphor at once, in that Germans literally try to transform, to “carry away” the history buried in their ground. For me, Ullman’s installation symbolizes not only Germany’s buried history, but also the pained emptiness that the killing of the Jews has left in German society and culture, while at the same time resisting physical accessibility and therefore identification with the victims. But the current digging up of the ground and removal of its historical foundations, despite all the protest—even by Ullman, who wanted to remove his memorial—the Senate went on with this plan for the underground garage and right now there is a huge construction site surrounding the memorial which itself cannot be touched, so now the site has become a symbol for Germany’s need to get rid of its buried history. It is therefore not a coincidence at all that a parking garage replaces the sandy underground, since cars are, at least in Germany where the car industry is so prominent and important for the economy, the very vehicle for forgetting, for leaving the past behind.
Well it was Hitler who built the Autobahn, maybe he had that in mind. . . Actually, I'm fascinated by how there are no closets in German apartments, only wardrobes, but no actual built-in closets, it's like there's no place to put one's secrets, so they must go underground. It reminds me of a scene from Aviva Slesin's documentary, *Hidden Lives*, when two older German women show the filmmakers where they hid a young Jewish boy when they had visitors or they thought he was in danger—in the closet!—and they still, fifty years later, had the same wardrobe and little chair that this quiet, frightened little boy had to sit on for hours, even days on end. One gets the sense the very thing that saved his life was also a shameful, humiliating and terrifying experience, possibly for everyone involved. It makes me think that Public Art in Germany is a kind of "coming out" of the past, public art is the country's closet, with its doors wide open. In the instance of the Bebelplatz memorial, it's the Senate that has neutralized the transgressive space between the closet (the hidden) and what lies beyond it (the public), with this latest use of the historic space as commercial space.

I would even go further and say that all of Germany is a closet—and that's why Germans don't have closets. But I would also say that German wardrobes are portable closets that allow us to put our secrets in a secure place and take them with us wherever we go. Every time you move, your portable closet moves with you—and you don't even have to open it up and be confronted with the history hidden inside. If public art is indeed Germany's coming out—which I think it is—there seems to be at once a desire for this "coming out" and a strong need to repress what has been made public.

Susan Hiller's new show "Learning to Love Germany," at the Volker Diehl Gallery in Berlin, includes a lovely and clever sound installation *What Every Gardener Knows (A Garden Carillon)* which is a very interesting example of just that phenomenon of repressing the past as it is made public. Hiller originally made the installation as a site-specific piece for Stadtpark Lahr, in the Black Forest. During a site-visit, already interested in Mendel, the father of eugenics, Hiller discovered that the garden included "a hall built to welcome Hermann Goering," and composed a sound work that cunningly plays on the connection between Mendel's plant breeding and Goering's desired elimination of unwanted races, turning the garden into a "social metaphor." Hiller wrote an accompanying text for the show, but apparently when she received the catalogue for the show, her phrase "built to welcome Hermann Goering" was mysteriously changed to "built for the marching ups of the Nazis," thereby eradicating the very connection which both inspired the piece and makes its site-specific nature so dynamic, since, as Hiller has pointed out, "it was Goering who proclaimed the racial laws at Nuremburg and who, as 2nd in command to Hitler, on 31 July, 1941 wrote to Reinhard Heydrich directly authorizing him to organize the Final Solution and the Lahr Hall (which is now the local Rathaus, forming one wall of the garden) was built to honor a visit he made to Lahr, from which point he possibly reviewed the troops."

You know, in German, "marching up" is *Aufmarsch*, and then you imagine yourself as not even a participant but an onlooker, "over there are the Nazis, here I stand, but they intruded—from I don't know where—and I have nothing to do with it, I may be a victim too." When I hear the word *Aufmarsch*, I have images in mind of the spectator, you are always the spectator, the onlooker.
"Marching up" isn't even an English phrase. Listening to your translation of the German definition, I agree that it seems a distancing device, especially for the curators or residents of the town in this instance.

When I heard the sound installation and learned about its "history"—both the historical site it responded to and the changes that the organizers made—it made me wonder if the purpose of public art in Germany lies in the art work's ability to break through the numbness that is so characteristic of German public spaces. And I am not only talking about the spaces themselves—their somewhat sterile or utterly nostalgic quality—but also about the way people inhabit this space respond to it, or rather do not respond to it. What Susan Hiller's piece made very clear to me was that we need to open our eyes and ears even if we do not know what we shall see or hear, because only then will we be able to sense the reality of the history that we have buried underground or hidden in the wardrobe.

But, you know, when we start to talk about "experiential art," then I start to get a bit nervous. I agree with you that friction with German public spaces, particularly that which aggravates our perception of history, is theoretically productive but it often devolves down into a kind of instant-recognition process of almost morbid sympathy. One of the things I like about Hiller's sound piece is the way it uses the "other-worldly," computer-generated chords—which seem to reference that final scene in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind,* the "dialogue" between the space-ship and the US Government—to express a passion for abundance and variety, one that exists in nature. It cleverly, and even joyously, turns the Mendel-cum-Goering nature-cum-race laws upside down. I find the piece both ironic and tender, a sort of post-modern humanism. But I wonder if I wouldn't like it so much if it didn't have that ironic, smart edge. During my time thus far in Germany I've traveled from being mildly annoyed to relatively disgusted with the heavy-handed, simplistic "literalization of experience" public artworks here tend to employ. In this I would certainly include Libeskind's Jewish Museum as a public work of art. Though people claim the building was more interesting when it was empty, and that may certainly be true,
a memorial in Germany, for Germans to contemplate, and with all the kvetching over the memorial plans and details, people here seem to forget that. I love that story of the representative from Degussa flying to New York City to consult with a Rabbi there about whether they should indeed continue to use the graffiti-repellent coating on the memorial “steles” and the Rabbi responded, “It’s your business.”

BM Indeed, the Holocaust memorial clearly is a memorial for the Germans, but at the same time Germans look at it from a tourist’s perspective. That is to say, rather than allowing or enabling Germans to remember and mourn the killing of the Jews, the memorial begs for identification with the murdered Jews. It is like a visit to EuroDisney—only cheaper. And with the graffiti-repellent coating the steles will convey this exact kind of sterility and numbness that we have been talking about earlier.

AS How exactly does the Eisenmann memorial beg for identification with the exterminated Jews? And how does the graffiti-repellent coating create sterility in your opinion—because it prevents public “discourse” in the form of markings on the monument? I think we here in Berlin all know the anti-graffiti is to prevent the Neo-Nazi’s from desecrating it, as they do most every Jewish site in Berlin from time to time, like the memorial for the deportation of the Jews on Grosse Hamburger Straße which gets toppled and spray-painted each year by the Neo-Nazis.

BM I think your two questions are related. Eisenmann’s memorial was chosen because its design, with the gigantic field of huge steles and the field’s uneven, slanting ground, makes the visitor experience fear and disorientation just like the Jews did. But since the memorial is for Germany it enables the perpetrators to feel like the victims—and this is exactly what Germans have tried to prove ever since the end of the war: we are victims, too—or as member of parliament Martin Hohmann (CDU) very recently put it: the Jews are “a people of perpetrators too,” a comparison which thus suggests Jews don’t have a right to claim they are victims. In addition to the architectural design of the memorial, which makes you feel you are entering another world, the anti-graffiti coating bestows upon this place a timeless, a-historical quality that enhances its unworldly presence. I know that the repellent is meant to protect the memorial from being desecrated by Neo-Nazis, but the Neo-Nazis won’t go away only because they don’t find places to spray-paint with their anti-Semitic and racist slogans. I guess what I am trying to say is that Germans should confront Anti-Semites rather than silence them. One has to talk to them, argue with them, continually show them that one does not share their beliefs and oppose their violent actions. From this perspective the memorial seems like a place that is “immune” to Anti-Semitism—but this immunity is deceitful, because an immune system needs to be in contact with the “enemy” in order to protect you. To try and create a stainless, immaculate memorial comes from the same logic that tried to achieve the Final Solution. But as the history of Degussa, the company which today produces the graffiti-repellent and during the “Third Reich” produced Zyklon B, shows—there can never be a “final solution” of the past in Germany.

AS I do often wonder if abstraction in public art, particularly work that seeks to engage a political past or present, is a dangerous thing, not only because it’s so unspecific as to run amok in a wash of “feeling,” but also because the desire to replicate experience—such as the aspiration to disorientate in both Eisenmann’s memorial and Libeskind’s Jewish Museum—runs the risk of making the work into a thrill ride of temporary empathy, and a non-specific one at that. The feelings that evoke violent hatred of others, whether race-based or otherwise, are complicated and deserve more complex and careful examination. I don’t think this means all public art (or even any art with a subversive, politicized intent) should thus render its materials and themes in a conceptual paradigm, but perhaps a more effective approach than the giant sculptural abstraction is in cracking open the details—I’m thinking now of Susan Hiller’s work in the same show about the colored pencils still manufactured today in Nuremburg with skin-tone, race based names that reflect their colors: African Central, Spanish, Indian South, Chinese Oriental, Pakistan, Mainland Chinese, Caucasian, Indian Asia North, American Indian, Egyptian North African, Chinese
Oriental, Greek Mediterranean, etc. . . . or even the art work at the Wittenbergplatz U-Bahn station here in Berlin which presents people entering the station with directions to trains going to Dachau, Auschwitz and Buchenwald. . . . These works use relatively sparse, direct means that provoke complicated reactions. Your comments about perpetrators and victims and my feelings about abstraction and specificity in public-politicized art makes me realize that perhaps interesting, effective activism—you know the famous New Left aspiration of the 68ers, “the sacrifice of identity to achieve true effectiveness”? Well perhaps this sacrifice of the individual, the details, the synecdochic (the part that speaks to the whole), to the egoless collective is exactly what public art should avoid.

BM I would even say that most of the public art in Germany—at least those works that refer to the Nazis and the Shoah—purposefully seek to achieve what you have called the “sacrifice of the individual,” although I would say that the individual is made to disappear rather than being sacrificed. I think that a more detail-specific approach achieves is to remind us that “history” consists of histories, that everything is connected and that deeds do have perpetrators.

1 “‘Kill the weeds’ is the guiding principle of all manorial, municipal, suburban and Grundstück gardeners. When Mendel made plant breeding a science, gardeners were enabled to produce internally-consistent plant populations; this meant they could do more than merely eliminate weeds, they could also seek out weed-like (e.g., undesirable) traits existing within garden species and attempt to eliminate them as well. I could not avoid considering the garden as a social metaphor when thinking about the Lahr garden, which includes a Bismarck corner as well as a hall built to welcome Hermann Goering: words like exclude, purge, and eliminate in this context refer to more drastic means than pruning shears, hoes and weed sprays. Mendel’s system, lovingly constructed, has been the basis in the past not just of genetics but also of eugenics, the ‘science’ of breeding a perfect human population. . . . My garden carillon, “What every gardener knows,” plays the system controlling the distribution of inherited characteristics discovered by Mendel. It is a code that celebrates patterns of sameness and difference, dominants and recessives, in a more profound and complicated way than at first may be appreciated, since it accounts for the transmission of invisible characteristics and the possibility of combining and recombining traits in complex and surprising ways. In contrast to church bells or the call of the minzcin, my carillon doesn’t exclude anyone, since all of us, plants and humans, are composite patterns of inherited traits. Weeds and other undesirable or intrusive elements in the garden are composed of the same patterns. This is the song the garden is singing.” (from Susan Hiller, 2003)

2 www.holocaust-denkmals-berlin.de

3 Degussa, one of Germany’s biggest chemical companies, produces the graffiti-repellent coating “Protectosil,” which was applied to Eisenman’s memorial “steles” (the 2,700 concrete slabs that make up the memorial) to protect them from being spray-painted. In order to show its commitment to the building of the memorial, Degussa largely discounted the coating for its use on the “Field of Steles.” Shortly after the first steles were coated with the graffiti repellent, it was pointed out that the Degussa owned company “Degesch” had produced Zyklon B, the deadly gas used by the Nazis in the gas chambers, sparking a debate about the appropriateness of its use that continues as we write this.

4 Martin Hohmann is a member of the German Bundestag and until very recently was a member of the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU). On October 3rd, 2003, German Unification day, he delivered a speech in which he described the crimes of the Bolsheviks during and after the Russian Revolution as, for the most part, instigated by and committed by Jews. He also called the Jews “a people of perpetrators” and compared their putative crimes to those of the Holocaust. After a week of strong public protest against his anti-Semitic speech, the CDU finally excluded Hohmann from the party. He is still an elected member of parliament.

the Bebelplatz in November 2003
When the Chain gang asked if I could to write about “evil” histories of public art works, two things initially came to mind: George W. Bush’s “Evil Doers” speech and the “Dr. Evil” character in the Austin Powers movies. I envisioned dark rooms filled with diabolical maniacs plotting world domination through the careful placement of sinister sculpture. Half-joking comparisons aside, public art—not creation but rather its destruction—has played a surprisingly large role in al Qaeda’s “jihad” and the US’s response, the War on Terror.

If art, as artist Mike Kelley once said, is the concretization of thought, then public monuments can be viewed as the concretization of ideology. On one level, each work of public art is analogous to a conquistador sticking a flag in the ground upon landing in a new territory and claiming it for their crown. On another level, monuments function as billboards communicating whatever the commissioner wants to the broadest audience possible—the public. They distill the commissioner’s power and ideology into a single object. The monumental scale of Daniel Chester French’s sculpture for the Lincoln memorial, its pristine marble, and its proximity to the Washington Monument respectively convey the political power the President had won, his saintliness, and his prominence in American history. In case anyone nussed the point, the architect, Henry Bacon, inscribed enormous excerpts from the Gettysburg address and Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address on the hallowed, temple-like building that surrounds the sculpture. The winners may write the history books, but they sure seem to build a lot of public monuments as well.

In retrospect, the Taliban’s destruction of the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan seems to be an ominous omen for our current clash of cultural ideologies. At the time, it seemed odd to me that these benign ancient Buddhas, having existed innocuously for over a millennia in an Islamic country without being harmed, would suddenly be so controversial that they would warrant removal. (At one point, these Buddhas did serve as gigantic, colonial advertisements for Buddhism, which was not native to Afghanistan. When they were initiated, there is no doubt that the practitioners of Balkh, a Zoroastrian religion, or someone else raised objections.) It is as if the Taliban, knowing that they were about to come under international scrutiny for other reasons, wanted to send a final message to the world: “We will not tolerate any other culture, ideology, or religion other than our own.”

The al Qaeda network, the Taliban’s ally, despite their disdain for Western influences, has likewise relied heavily upon the media. Sending (intentionally?) poorly recorded audio and video tapes to media outlets has been their chief way of communicating with potential followers. When the cameras roll, however, they need something in front of them. Even Osama knows that those tapes of him prattling on in caves simply do not make for good reality television. Although the Twin Towers may not literally have been a monument, it is hard to think of any built structures that represented America as the imperial seat of global capitalism more than they did. (An examination of the words individually—world, trade, and center—reflects their symbolic potency.) Attacking the Pentagon or even the White House may have shown the vulnerability of the United States, but destroying no two other buildings could have articulated the same grievance.

The toppling of the Saddam Hussein sculpture in Firdos Square and removal of the Bamiyan Buddhas might have served as neatly bookends to the post-9/11 clash of cultures, except that the conflict neither began nor ended with the demolition of either monument. Although Iraq seemed to be filled with murals and tributes to the former dictator, this sculpture’s extended hand evoked the infamous Nazi salute and reinforced the United States’ attempts to draw similarities between the two regimes. The media images from the event, which according to some forward-forward-forward emails I received was staged, was a way for the United States to issue a powerful visual statement that required no translation into foreign languages: “Mission Accomplished.”
The speed at which a design has been selected for a memorial for the victims of the World Trade Center seems to be an unnecessarily hasty attempt to show the world that the United States was unbowed by the strike. By contrast, the Lincoln monument was dedicated 57 years after the President's assassination, and the creation of a World War II monument in Washington D.C. was recently dedicated.

Unlike a monument, the creation of a memorial is often a collective, social process. It almost seems as if we, the public, collectively allow a monument to be completed when we are at a point in the grieving process when we are able to let the bereaved go. When we are grieving, the deceased are never far from our thoughts. As time passes and our grief abates, memorials serve as permanent markers so that the departed will not be forgotten. Thus the value of the monument is not just in its physical presence but also in the process it takes to create it. During the planning process, we become a community of mutually concerned parties who discuss and debate what the memorial should be. By building memorials too quickly, we shortchange this process and risk making the event easier to forget.

The adversaries in the current conflict of cultures—the global spread of American culture and radical Islamic fundamentalism—are difficult to delineate. The battle lines are vague and span four continents, if not more. The foot soldiers are hard to locate and speak dozens of languages. Victory is almost impossible to define. Despite the tens or hundreds of thousands of casualties, it has become a war fought through mass media in the minds of people throughout the globe with public sculpture serving as unlikely but important symbols.

AKILAH OLIVER

The Visible Unseen

double face days
murdering days

hyena days  days of last regrets  haunting days

the absent visible body—writing comparable to guerilla tactics—to strike, retreat, in striking, to change the landscape, to alter the public, i.e. political, space, to force a discourse outside of the script, to flip the script—the body is present in the visibility of the language, in the style, in the technique(s) that inform the writing, but the actual body is coded, is phantom, is transient and nomadic, therefore evading not subjectivity, but ownership
and control over that body, over the writing itself, since the author(s) are apparitions. who is the nomadic body, who by its very evasiveness, transmutes a stationary location? this body that is not a locatable physical subject. how does this kind of writer who has abandoned attachment to the author as a position that must be located in discursive proximity to its production, its writing, convert the very systems and conditions of language = producer, receiver?

and then in the lilt of this afternoon, a phantom boy whistles

if by definition writing as cultural activism is concerned with engaging socio-political systems, then it is concerned with form as well as content. graffiti uses collage, uses bold gestures, concerns itself with fonts, stylistic conceits, concerns itself with not just its public nomenclature, but in upsetting and reconstituting the visual forms of public discourse, of public space—it advertises difference and insurgency, illegality, vandalism, distraction—not just in its placement, but in its aesthetic, in its attention to the shape of the emotion, to the act of naming

the days of times

crossroad days

days of disguise

crossroad days

days, they reconstruct the lies

the storied days

crossroad days

days of disguise

crossroad days

days, they reconstruct the lies

as a form graffiti is in a constant state of tension

shifting its nomadic position spatially

transiently it upsets redistributes through combat

disassemblage distortion

the bodies insist on painting themselves in markets they seemingly have no legitimate right to

in its refusal to disappear it forces a discourse in the public imagination we are forced to see what we would rather not
to make sense of an encoded language that we can not read on the level of meaning it irritates forces its agency upon us speaking outside and beyond semiotic reach that is, it is a glossary that shifts mutates has stable referents that are constantly and seemingly arbitrarily defined codified and discarded

breathing days
dream days
two timing days
days of gasp forget me not days
cross-over days
last night days fist days
thirst days
second sight days
yellow shirt days vandal days
days of let me go
days of ahhhh
complicating or troubling the position of the graff writer as phantom absent author is that we know very well that in fact the ghost is/was embodied, speaks to and through cultural productions, specific identities, home communities, but still manages through encoding to evade as it upsets and redistributes identities through combat, distortion, disassemblage, reiteration each piece each throw-up chronicles the days
over and over again that day, i called your name, 
it was as in awe, as if we had entered a chamber of dreams

today if we was talking, we would 
speak of Causality

giving time days
little days
days of not now then if
travelling days
there goes my baby walking by days
what days
days of oracle
hush mouth days
aching days
be good days
mistaken days
don’t let the sun catch you crying days

go days

grace days
thank you days
silly girl days
beautiful boy days
hatchet days
days of clear sight
innoculated days

now, well now this action is

or signifying event

I/not I days
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News of last moment: the Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef died under the torture of the strong sun of the tropics on July, 2002, in the bath of Guantánamo. Abdul Salam had been ambassador of Afghanistan in Pakistan and its mouthpiece during the offensive of the anti-terrorists. Then, he was rewarded with gratuitous vacations in Guantánamo that, unfortunately, he could not resist.
NEWS...!

Third World people will never have as terrible and sophisticated weapons as the ones of the First World, like the missiles and airplanes from the United States of America, Israel and European Nations of the NATO.

However, within their possibilities, they have developed their own armament for saying NO! to the aggression and to the trample of their national sovereignty:

LONG SLINGSHOTS
SHORT SLINGSHOTS
STONES
SAUCEPANS

AND, IF IT IS NECESSARY... THEIR OWN LIVES...!

Detroit’s skyscrapers are 10 times as high as the ruins of the Roman forum. Why not let trees grow on their roofs and peek out the windows? Why not let the Indian chiefs, lions, maidsens, griffins, and other ornaments crumble, revealing the brick and rusting steel behind?

—Camilo Jose Vergara, “Downtown Detroit: An American Acropolis”

Detroit, where dat party at? ... Right here!

—DJ Marquis, “Detroit Party”

Long regarded as America’s urban nightmare, Detroit, it seems, is a photographer’s dream. With its vast collection of pre-World War II skyscrapers, many now in various states of decay, the narrative is compelling—and easily captured. One need only say the word “Detroit” and the associations arise: abandonment, dereliction, failure, fear. The photographer must do little more than activate the shutter. From the amateur (every third café exhibitor within a 30 mile radius of downtown) to the renowned (Camilo Jose Vergara in his book American Ruins, Stan Douglas in his exhibit Le Détroit), Detroit’s forsaken buildings, and their attendant storyline, have captured the photographic mind.

The cavernous buildings do create a certain imaginative space—one that is at once spiritual and corporeal. Yet to find beauty in abandonment is to buy into the myth that the city is, indeed empty. And while it’s true that the city’s population has dwindled from just under 2 million in the 1950s to 950,000 at the turn of the millennium, what of the ones who stayed?

Eighty percent of Detroit’s current population is African American, which means that when we talk about the city as “abandoned”—or visually depict it as so—we mean all the
white people left. And when we speak about it as “empty”—or, again, represent it as such—we mean only black people, invisible people, remain.

“A new study says cities must attract the new ‘creative class’—or they’ll go the way of Detroit,” read a headline in Salon a year or so ago. “Where exactly did we go?” I immediately wondered. But, in retrospect, it is little wonder that the editors at Salon, like most of America if not the world, fail to recognize that, as DJ Marquis has noted in his popular techno anthem (a music form, it should be noted, that was largely perpetuated through parties held in abandoned buildings—an exciting, and productive, appropriation of urban space), we are “right here!” But my presence—and more significantly, the presence of 760,000 African Americans—does not fit the narrative. And so the gaze is focused past us—through us—time and time again.

RENATA PEDROSA
Maio do que um

The objects that surround and give support to the body in domestic spaces are similar, in the way they are made, to some improvised constructions in the streets of Sao Paulo; the materials used inside houses to organize clothes, sheets, and textiles are the same that sustain the nylon meshes, plastics and canvases in public spaces. The grids which isolate public works, the vendor tables and tents, the mesh that covers buildings under construction catch my attention. Their precarious tangles and setting of one thing into another create a disorder that I find very attractive.

From this disorder, I construct works that echo the materials of the domestic interior. For example, I use the textiles of sheets or cotton mesh and wood or iron structures and make sculptures to be placed in public areas. By means of simple manual operations like sewing, knots, patching, nails, screws and props I try to explore the possibilities of making art outside of the usual exhibition spaces. The intention is to make an art work available to the public without the restrictions of museums, galleries, or cultural centres; the parks, squares and streets offer other ways of thinking about the
construction and the execution of art. How to reconcile these materials, which are used on a domestic scale, with the city’s dimensions? How to expand the individual use to a collective apprehension?

To create an appropriate relation between the chosen resources and building systems, and the work’s scale, I use the repetition of equal elements; like vendors tents mounted one after the other in the sidewalk or the public works isolating grids displayed side-by-side, I install self-sustaining elements that support textiles. It is by means of additions that the work grows until it assumes a dimension which establishes proper spatial relations with the place where it will be installed.

My first experience in this sense was the piece Maior do que um; the creation of this work is due to an investigation I have done with sketches, drawings and photos resulting in a project of modules; these modules should be installed one after the other, creating a volume which respects the singularity of the place where it is displayed: scale, topography, climate, the ambiance of changes and uses. . . . The public space seems to have lost its limits because the building solutions found inside houses or shelters are very similar to those we see in Sao Paulo streets. The fixed and solid appearance we expect to find in sidewalks and public ways are substituted by unstable and movable constructions. Like living beings they move and are ephemeral.

After testing some knots and overlaps with textiles and wood, I have built a “U” beam that sustains the white sheet; it is stretched and tied with a cotton cord at the top edges of the modules. Each module is 1,00 meter high and its length varies from 1,50 to 0,90 meters. The first opportunity I had to install these modules was in June 2002 at the Julio Prestes Square in Sao Paulo. I proposed to install 48 modules at a depressed part of its pavement, measuring 5 x 5 meters. The modules, tied in groups of three, were displayed in four concentric squares, which occupies half of the depressed floor, leaving an empty 2.5 x 2.5 meters area at its center. The rigidity of the geometry was softened by the cotton cord knots which tied the textile, folded in half, at the modules’ edges. Like sheets drying in the sun, the white textile freely moved with the wind.
The PIPA (Poetry Is Public Art) Project is a conceptual collaborative endeavor which is based on the site-specific potential of poetry projects to intersect with public spaces. What this means is that poetry can happen anywhere, at any time; can intersect with space and time not as random wordplay but as covert reflective commentary. PIPA is a concept that has been exercised around the world for many centuries. PIPA has no members except for those who, intentionally or non-intentionally, choose to break poetry out of the frame of the page and test its assimilation and/or intrusion into public spaces. Although the archive implies organization, there is no organizing principle behind PIPA, except for the organizing principles at work in the mind of any poet who, at any time, chooses to design, orate, sloganize, decorate, or sculpturally infiltrate public space. (See disclaimer.) PIPA is not a container for the minds of poets, but rather is a convergence of minds working independently or in groups to infiltrate public spaces at the level of poetry. PIPA activities will include and/or have included:

- any poetry activity that causes passersby to pause.
- handing out poems on busy avenues (the haughtier the better).
- slapping poetry stickers on advertisements that “talk back” to the advertisement.
- leaving poems behind on park or subway benches (a.k.a. “the problematic poetics of littering”).
- leaving poems in the form of messages on phone booths or public toilets that cause passersby to pause and think: that language looks quite strange.
- proclaiming poetry from soapboxes.
- using poets’ skills as condensers of language to create witty and provocative slogans for political rallies.
- designing poetry signs to blend in with the surrounding signage.
RACHEL POLLACK

The See of Logos

— for Stephen Karcher

Dreams And Prophecies
Guaranteed 100% Accuracy!

How to tell your fortune with The See Of Logos

The prophetess Indigo Cloud, illegitimate child of Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and an Indonesian sorceress, revealed the See of Logos after her trip to the planet Hermes, original name of the First Solar Colony before the Empire reduced it to an empty satellite called Mercury. IC, as her followers call her, journeyed to Hermes through the dual bites of two snakes whom she enticed to criss-cross around her body until their tongues reached her ears. The serpent’s caresses and bites speeded up her synapses and molecules until she could endure the swiftness of genuine Hermetic Vision.

On Hermes she conferred with Charles Fourier, the true French Revolutionary and voice of Harmonial Luxury; Andrew Jackson Davis, “Seer of Poughkeepsie,” whose Conjugal Marriage seduced ecstasy back into the dead Earth; and the Publick Universal Friend, who as Jemima Wilkinson died of plague in Buffalo during the Revolutionary War, only to come alive at her funeral with the urgent message of Publick Friendship.

Indigo and Jemima became Solar Conjugal lovers, and at the moment of orgasm the sun flares that reared up like the serpents of her journey revealed to IC The See of Logos.

Directions
Cut a piece of ivory 80 pound cardboard into 32 pieces 4 inches by 6 inches. On 32 successive dawns copy each of the prophecies onto one of the cards. Immediately wrap the prophecies in a piece of silk with a ragged edge; place the wrapped cards in a plain almondwood box and bury them in a foot-deep grave. Exactly one week later, dig up the See of Logos, remove from the box and silk, and hold it up to the Risen Sun.

Now you may begin. Shuffle the cards 7 times, from the left hand to the right. Set them down and with the right hand cut the deck into three piles. Let your left hand hover 3 inches above each pile until you hear a tuneless whistle in your left ear. The top card of that pile will contain your prophecy.

Caution: The prophecies themselves guarantee their own 100% accuracy. As IC herself put it, during her short-lived occupation of The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, “They do not come true. They become true.” The act of the hand as it chooses, the act of the eye as it reads, the act of the tongue as it speaks, these three bring the See to life, and life to the See.

The Prophecies

1. You will get very sick and vomit up a woman with red and silver wings. She will make tea for you and stroke your forehead until you feel better. The next morning she will leave and you will find a note on silver paper, in red ink, written in a language you have never seen.

2. Poll takers will call you and ask you a. whether God should resign, b. whether cannibalism has gotten a bad press, and c. whether the time has come to elect a raven for president. All your friends will tell you you said the wrong thing.

3. On a trip to New York your soul will grow larger than your body. Where it has broken through the skin you will see hundreds of color coded wires, fragments of black and violet shells, and the gold earrings your grandmother lost three weeks before her death and accused you of stealing. Bits of your soul will cling to cell phones, or smear themselves on window panes of cooking schools, or get tangled in the hair of women buying frozen yoghurt from street vendors on East
Broadway. Other fragments, however, will catch hot air currents from subway vents and spiral up into the sky, until nothing remains of them but tiny streaks of silver in the polluted air.

4. You will become part of a trapeze team, the Flying Perfectionists. Every night, as you and your partner glide up the hoist to your platform, as you smile and wave to the crowd, you will whisper through your teeth “Tonight’s it, you know. The night you drop me. The night you forget to put sawdust on your hands and I slide right through your sweaty palms.” And then later, after the performance and the circus have ended, you will cry on your knees, and whisper to him, “I’m sorry, I’m really sorry. Do you still love me?”

5. You will become a famous Tarot reader, only to discover that all your readings are dreams, and all your clients characters from 19th century Japanese novels.

6. You will kill your father and marry your mother. Every year, on Mother’s Day, your mother will kiss you and say, “Thank God you didn’t do it the other way around.”

7. You will become a thief and break into the house of a revered elderly rabbi. Rare books and silver torah covers will lie all about, but a series of plain copper jars will draw your hand. You will take only one, and when you get home discover that it contains your soul, stolen from you when you were a child.

8. Look outside your window, right now. Do you see them, crouched in a group across the street? It’s already too late. You know it is.

9. You will show up early at your lover’s house and find her making love to God, who wears black cowboy boots, and black silk streamers. The streamers flap in your face as you try to watch. God will leave, and your lover will cry and tell you it was not serious, it was only a pickup, a rash moment that will never happen again.

10. During a pause in the David Letterman show you will hear a faint click sound under the bed. When you bend over the mattress you will discover a yellow and black snake who uses his tongue to scatter small piles of brightly colored pebbles into random patterns. The snake will declare himself an apprentice fortune teller. He has lived there for years, he will say, while he researches his self-help book, “Love Stones: Discover Your Future In The Pebbles Of Life.”

11. Rain will change to smoke, followed by total darkness for three days, and then the Sun will refuse to leave the sky until everyone offers up their secret children as ransom for the twelve invisible colors woven into the fabric of the trees.

12. You will read an article in the newspaper about animals that impersonate other animals, and you will suddenly remember—you are not you, but an animal that saw you in the woods, ate you, and now impersonates you. You grab the paper, hoping to discover what animal you are, only to realize that you do not know how to read.

13. You will come home and find a very old woman, wearing only handcuffs and silver spurs, asleep in your shower.

14. Your body is an engine of prophecy. Thousands of years old, you were constructed by a team of seers and alchemists. Every hair, every fold of skin, every bend of your joints, they all symbolize hermetic wisdom of future events. All the people you know—your parents, your teachers, even your childhood friends, are all magicians who have come to study you, your gestures, the length of your fingernails, the fall of your hair, as they search for clues to God’s messages on how to find a path through this blindly terrifying world.

15. The Goddess Isis will put you on her email list. 75-100 emails a day will fill your inbox. They will include stories about the Night Sky, travel tips from Anubis, Nepthys’s recipes for turning mud into cake, and advice columns from Thoth, inventor of writing, mummification, magic, and Tarot cards. Once a week, Isis herself will issue progress reports as she searches the world for her husband Osiris’s missing penis.
16. You will decipher the oldest known human writing, on a
cave wall in Botswana. The translated inscription will read,
“Make it stop. Make them go away.”

17. Red angels darker than blood will follow you every­
where. At work they will stand around the coke machine and
pretend to discuss sales reports and hockey scores. At the
movies they will fly at the screen, terrified. They will keep
you awake all night as they make love in the shower, slashing
the curtains with their wings.

18. Your grandmother will die of an unknown ailment that
will cause her heart to break open and flood her body. In her
will she will write “I give my beloved child (your name here)
the gift of prophecy. At first it will hurt, unbearably hurt,
and (s/he) will curse me in groves of silver birch. But that is
only because (your name here) has never experienced true
pleasure, and mistakes pleasure for pain, and pain for plea­
ture. On a certain Friday morning, (your name here) will
understand, and will wash the curse from the trees and bathe
them in rose water.

19. God will visit you one day as you are getting ready to
meet a friend for lunch. He will tell you that he used to be a
woman wrestler named Venus Sky Trap, who one night as a
joke wore a strap-on to a party. Now the strap-on won’t co m e
off but instead inscribes more and more outlandish deman d s
on slabs of stone.

20. You will receive the Nobel Prize for Dreams. During your
acceptance, a naked woman will stand up and tell everyone
you stole all your dreams from her. She will say that you
kissed her while she slept, and sucked the dreams out from
behind her teeth.

21. You will take a job as an advice columnist. Elvis Presley
will write you about his relationship with Joan of Arc. You
will tell Elvis that even death is too short to deny love, and he
should just wear whatever Joan needs.

22. Wild cows will invade your house. They will trample your
garden, charge up your driveway, and butt their heads against
the door until the jamb shatters. You will hide in the bath­-
room, the one room they do not dare to enter, while they
will drink your wine and scatter cartons of milk all about
your kitchen. At night they will whistle to the bulls that roam
the streets with their horns brighter than the Moon.

23. Tiny cities will grow in your palms, and the soles of your
feet, and behind your knees. They will send out expeditions
to colonize each other for the glory of God, but the ships and
dogsleds will founder on the desert of your belly and the ice
of your tongue.

24. Christ will return and become your roommate. At first
you will enjoy his company, especially his grand plans, and
his gossip about his mother and her outrageous love life. But
then he will become depressed, and not speak to you for
days. When he does speak he will say “What was I thinking?
Was I nuts? Why did I do this? I knew it wouldn’t work. I knew
it.” Finally, you will ask him to leave and he will start to cry.
“Oh no, not you” he will say, “I thought you were different.”

25. Cary Grant’s ghost will take you to a party of dead people
where you will keep silent the whole time, for fear of insult­
ing somebody. Later, Cary will kiss you and for a week you
will occasionally feel the press of his body against yours.

26. Artemis and her brother Apollo, who have not spoken in
millenia, will come to you for counseling. You will discover
that they were lovers as children but broke up when Apollo
killed their grandmother’s pet snake. “Can’t you make it
good again?” Apollo will ask you. “I’m tired of the sun. I
want the moon again.”

27. An old book in the library will turn out to be the story of
your life, written years before your birth. You will read it and
discover the writer has got it all wrong, has made one mistake
after another, even your name and the names of your parents.
Just as you are about to throw it down in disgust, the librarian
will touch your arm and whisper “It’s true, you know. It’s all
true.”

28. You will break every commandment in the Torah but one.
God will smile at you and tell you “It’s okay. You got the right
one.”
29. A voice in a rose bush will tell you that on Aug. 2 holes will open in heaven. Wings will fall down, setting houses on fire and blackening the walls of courthouses. “What year?” you will ask. “You mean this Aug. 2? What year?” You will cut yourself on thorns as you shake the bush to make it speak.

30. Tiny cities will grow in your palms, and the soles of your feet, and behind your knees. They will send out expeditions to colonize each other for the glory of God, but the ships and dogsleds will founder on the desert of your belly and the ice of your tongue.

31. You will see a diaphanous green cocktail dress in a thrift shop, and decide that it will be perfect for your cousin’s annual St. Patrick’s Day Protest Parade. As you walk to the parade a woman will cry out “Oh God, where did you get that dress?” She will tell you that her mother gave the dress away to punish her (she will not say for what), and she will beg you to change clothes with her, right there, on the street. The woman will help you out of the dress and then the green bra you bought especially to go with it. At that moment a van will roar up and the woman will jump inside, laughing wildly. As the van speeds off, she will lean out the window and take your picture. Seven months later, a Tunisian man who lives in Copenhagen will ring your bell. He will tell you that your photo, with its mixed elegance and pain, has moved him more than anything since his mother’s death, and he will ask you to marry him. The day before the wedding, the woman from the street will come to your office. She will hand you the green dress (but not the bra) so that you can wear it for the ceremony.

32. There are lights inside your face. A wind of fragrance sails from your tongue. Your skin sings the names of the stars. There are lights inside your face. And all night a voice in your cheeks will whisper to you “Your teeth are mountains, your fingers forests, your eyes are the oceans of life.”

Divination, the Publick Universal Art
Both the diviners and their clients often mistake divination for a kind of information science, used to produce facts, or else a proto­psychotherapy, the production of images that will heal, console, or trouble. While divination can, in fact, do these things, they occur as offshoots from the actual experience, which is art. At Delphi, the central oracle of the ancients, called the world’s navel, the seeress spoke in riddles and sounds, and it was not a systems analyst who translated the message, but a poet.

Divination may be humanity’s oldest art. The bulls and horses on European cave walls may constitute divinatory emblems; the rays of light around the heads of petroglyphs identify them as seers, artists of prophetic vision. Unlike the lonely arts of painters and writers, done in private with only the hope of an eventual audience, divinatory art can only take place as a public conspiracy: Without someone to ask the question the diviner cannot bring forth the answer. Without a client to bring his troubles and urgencies, the Ifa diviners of West Africa could not generate their elegant precise poems.

The See of Logos forms both a parody of conventional fortune telling, and an experiment in excess. I wrote the fortunes in response to people who expect Tarot or other divinatory systems to give them detailed information of future events. At the same time they attempt, through comedy and a dream aesthetic, to reach into the poetic mix of probabilities where all genuine divination takes place. The instructions (written, of course, after the text) similarly seek to use excess to create an origin myth liberated from limitations of physical representation. At the same time, it draws on my current interest in the mad visionaries of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Fourier, Davis, and Wilkinson are all historical figures.
Public art has long been treated as a stepchild by art critics, with some justification. Its parentage is always uncertain (it could be any combination of artists, designated communities, design teams, and sponsoring institutions). And with no single party shaping the offspring’s goals, much less claiming responsibility for its conception, it’s hard to judge success. Hence writers often resort to anecdote, the ultimate hedge: if no criteria avail, simply report how the work came to be, who opposed it and why, what compromises were struck, where the money came from. This makes sense not only as a default tactic, but also because public art is always (as compared with studio art) an epic. Its realization is time consuming, and entails compelling and instructive conjunctions of culture and politics. The tendency of the art press toward journalism (or, journalists) in covering public art is exacerbated by logistics: it doesn’t follow the geographical contours of the art world, and its dispersion makes it hard to track.

The creation of a monument at the World Trade Center site to commemorate the lives lost on September 11, occasion of an order-of-magnitude leap in the already lively business of memorializing nationwide and around the world, is changing the degree but not the kind of attention paid. Questions of whether public projects are fundamentally and necessarily collaborative, of whether there are unbridgeable differences between permanent and temporary, elegy and celebration, continue to go largely unaddressed. Similarly scanted are questions of whether public art must always serve a purpose, or an ethic—or, of whether it exists as a definite category at all.

One reason for the neglect is that, to a considerable degree, public art has become a specialized professional technique, conservative in nature and necessary in function but not bearing on the life and death issues of progressive artists. By the same token, the evolution of contemporary art at large has been such that the ambition to create work in a public language, on a public scale, is treated with suspicion. Analysis, exegesis, and even provocation are prime motives in recent art, but not catharsis (which assumes a level playing field between creators and audience). Humor, subversion, allusion, and indirection are favored. Contingency is celebrated as process and subject.

To be sure, there is a considerable amount of work being made that brings some of these imperatives into the public realm. In other words, it is perfectly possible to view the nature of public art’s criticism as driven by the work itself, which, in a great many cases, has internalized the journalistic terms applied to it. Often, it tells a story, creates outrage, enlists redress, identifies communities, speaks for their constituents, hails moments of triumph and rails against injustice. Like the news, it has no compunctions about the transience of its import. And, paradoxically, some of the best writing on the subject, the criticism that rises above journalism, not only applauds this work but has helped foster it.

Rosalyn Deutsche articulated this position with considerable force in 1988, writing about the Battery Park City art program, which she found complicit with the invidious public policy expressed in the development’s residential and corporate building program. Undertaken with a commitment to mixed-income housing, Battery Park City was temporarily undone by the urban economy of the 1970s. The form it ultimately took, a result of years of compromise, was a thoroughgoing betrayal of that promise. Deutsche was scathingly contemptuous of the kind of apologies for public art that argued the equal merits of social, practical, and aesthetic function, as for example Douglas Crimp’s memorable defense (at a public hearing) of Tilted Arc: “What makes me feel so manipulated is that I am forced to argue for art as against some other social function. I am asked to line up on the side of sculpture, against, say, those who are on the side of concerts, or perhaps picnic tables. But of course all of these things have social functions.” Deutsche condemned work that invoked such a rationale, including that commissioned for BPC’s riverside esplanade (which came to include projects by Mary Miss, Richard Artschwager, Ned Smyth, R.
M. Fischer, Martin Puryear, and Scott Burton working collaboratively with Siah Armajani and the architects of the World Financial Center) as merely an invitation “to reify as natural the conditions of the late capitalist city into which they hope to integrate us.”3 Instead, Deutsche wrote, responsible practitioners must “dislodge public art from its ghettoization within the parameters of aesthetic discourse, even critical aesthetic discourse, and resituate it, at least partially, within critical urban discourse.”3 As poster child, she offered Krzysztof Wodiczko, whose Homeless Vehicle Project (1988) was based on retrofitting shopping carts as enhanced receptacles for recyclable cans and bottles, and also as provisional shelters. Of dubious value, and perhaps worse, to New Yorkers without homes, Wodiczko’s prototypes (like subsequent models that would have enabled users to telecommunicate with each other, as well as sit and sleep, and navigate the streets) undeniably drew attention to their plight.

Deutsche’s essay, subsequently expanded into a book (Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics, MIT Press, 1996) heralded a small tsunami of public art that serves as political advocacy, or provides social services, or both. Relevant anthologies of essays and interviews include Arlene Raven’s Art in the Public Interest (U.M.I. Research Press,1989), Nina Felshin’s But Is It Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism (Bay Press, 1995), Suzanne Lacy’s Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art (Bay Press, 1995), and Tom Finkelpearl’s Dialogues in Public Art (MIT Press, 2001). The curator and public art administrator Mary Jane Jacob has been instrumental in promoting community-centered public projects, at Culture in Action in Chicago (1993), and in subsequent programs for the annual Spoleto Art Festival. As a rule, these projects address the public in the form of relatively discrete groups—tenants of a given housing project, for example, or local members of chocolate-manufacturers’ union, or residents of a nursing home. These “communities” grievances and unrealized hopes are solicited, and an expression for them found. Unfortunately, the reality that such community-centered public art has been, in no small measure, a Trojan horse for conservative values—for the kind of tightly constrained, decorative and didactic projects that can make the field unappealing to the venturesome—seldom merits critical note. Under cover of altruism, socially conscious public artists have advanced ground rules virtually (if unintentionally) prohibiting work that goes against the grain of prevailing local sentiments. The increasingly restrictive programs to which applicants for public projects must often submit, which specify medium, subject, and process, are in many ways descended from the paradigm of community involvement shaped by Group Material (inviting neighbors to exhibit their fondest tchotchkes as art) and Suzanne Lacy (working with victims of violence, or sexual discrimination, or old age). The protocols: listen to the constituents, determine their needs and dreams. Get a consensus. Be direct, and fleet; do the job and move on. At all costs, suppress your own inclinations.

Opposition to the community-based, public-service model is nonetheless gaining some credence, however oblique. Until recently, responsiveness to local conditions, expressed as fluidity, heterogeneity, and mobility, were promoted by some critics as useful portrayals of the global flow of money and power. Here, a revision is underway. Hal Foster writes, “As Deleuze and Guattari, let alone Marx, taught us long ago, this deterritorializing is the path of capital.”4 But, Foster worries, subversions that take the form of decentering and drift have lost their punch as parody: “Perhaps it is time to recapture a sense of the political situatedness of both autonomy and its transgressions,”5 he writes. Miwon Kwon, too sees the darker implications of the mutability and transience lately hailed as tactics of liberation from the depredations of the international marketplace: “While site-specific art once defied commodification by insisting on immobility, it now seems to espouse fluid mobility and nomadism for the same purpose. Curiously, however, the nomadic principle also defines capital and power in our times.”6

One surprising conclusion Foster draws is that the image of circulating capital and corporate branding is today best represented by art museums, which he further identifies as exemplars of public art. Discussing a recent split whereby the function of art as a repository of visual information (now perhaps “given over to the electronic archive”) is separated from its function as “visual experience” (which he believes to
have been ceded to “museum-building as spectacle—that is, as an image to be circulated in the media in the service of brand equity and cultural capital”), Foster writes, “This image may be the primary form of public art today.” This characterization executes a dizzying turn from the conventional understanding that departure from the museum, as social and physical institution, is the primary—the minimum, the essential—step on art’s path into the public realm. It is hard to imagine an argument that the “public,” by almost any definition, would find more puzzling.

Of course, the question of how the public for public art might be defined, much less understood, is the least tractable of all, and the tendency, over the last decade and more, to grant it ever greater prerogative in the creative process only makes the problem more pressing. Kwon’s interrogation of this problem, in its current expression, is acute: “Is the prevailing relegation of authorship to the conditions of the site, including collaborators and/or reader-viewers, a continuing Barthesian performance of the ‘death of the author,’ or a recasting of the centrality of the artist as a ‘silent’ manager/director?” she asks. In other words, who’s in charge? Or, if the analogy with theater (“manager/director”) is productive, what happened to the playwright?

Moreover, and perhaps more interesting, the constitution of the “community” in question may, in practice, often be an effect of the art created to articulate its concerns; its coherence is at best contingent, a result rather than a cause of institutionally supported cultural intervention. Kwon writes, “Community-based art, as we have seen, is typically understood as a descriptive practice in which the community functions as a referential social entity. It is an other to the artist and the art world, and its identity is understood to be immanent to itself, thus available to (self-) expression. . . . The mirage of this coherence . . . is consumed as authenticity.” She proposes an alternative in which these contradictions are made explicit: “In contrast, collective artistic praxis, I would suggest, is a projective enterprise. It involves a provisional group . . . performing its own coming together and coming apart as a necessarily incomplete modeling or working-out of a collective social process. Here, a coherent representation of the group’s identity is always out of grasp.”

With these important caveats about defining the “community” in mind, it is still worth hazarding some generalizations about the quality of reception that greets public art today—about how public art looks from the viewing end, and why. Along these lines, it seems relevant that the domestic public (and, by extension, US-sponsored global culture in the early 21st century) is in thrall to an entertainment commodity called “reality,” in which anyone—everyone—merits mass-media attention, with the full measure of both exaltation and brutality such publicity entails. To speculate even more recklessly, this thrall devolves from a libertarian society that is paradoxically enamored of fundamentalist religion (I answer only to my God, and you should too) and institutionalized sanctimony, with its profound disdain for collective solutions and (non-sectarian) mutual aid, reflects a tradition that runs straight from Jonathan Edwards to George W. Bush. Of contemporary culture, it demands no less—and no more—than testimony to individual righteousness. In Foster’s terms, it caters to niche markets of one, expressive communities of one. One significant corollary is the steady decline in tolerance for uncompensated pain. In every way, such social assumptions are inimical to the ideals, whether traditional or progressive, of public art. Nothing throws the problems into higher relief than the process by which memorials are made.

For many of these reasons, the breadth of interest in the WTC memorial is overwhelming. Thirteen thousand people registered to submit proposals; completed submissions were sent in by 5,200 applicants, from 62 nations and 49 states, making this (according to a press release issued by the sponsoring organization, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation), “the largest design competition in history.” At this writing, a winning design has been selected from among eight finalists, involving enormous reflecting pools at the towers’ footprints, though extensive changes to this proposal have been called for. Every aspect of the process has been the subject of well-attended public forums, many with Internet hook-ups. The proposals were reviewed by a panel composed largely of artists and administrators who have experience with public art; they include Susan Freedman (president of the Public Art Fund), Maya Lin, Nancy Rosen (a public art consultant), Martin Puryear (who has made a sculpture for...
the Battery Park City esplanade, Lowery Sims (director of the Studio Museum in Harlem), James Young (who has written on Holocaust memorials), and David Rockefeller. There is only one panel member who lost a family member in the destruction of the Trade Center towers, and represents victims’ families. Coordinating the panel’s work is Anita Contini, founding director of Creative Time, which organized annual art events in the late 1970s and early 1980s at the temporarily abandoned landfill site for what became Battery Park City, and who subsequently coordinated cultural programming for the Winter Garden at the World Financial Center. Perhaps inevitably, the panel seemed to arouse widespread resentment among families of the victims.

Hence, at one public forum held to review guidelines for submitting proposals, the fairly shocking degree of bad behavior. Representatives of the various constituencies—firefighters and other first responders; office workers; local residents—called for separate forms of recognition (particular passion was aroused by the demand that firefighters be designated as such, and identified by their engine companies). The roles, nearly two years after September 11, were clearly well rehearsed. Sometimes uniforms—sooty firefighters’ coats, for instance—helped make affiliations clear; speakers were loudly cheered, and booed; there was shouting, and tears. With varying degrees of explicitness, audience members spoke of the hapless and the brave, moneychangers and honest laborers, the culturally enfranchised and the dispossessed. Most insistently, heroes were distinguished from victims. These roles had been established, right at the outset, over the dispensation of money, and the two issues are not cleanly separated—both memorial and hard cash are perceived, powerfully, to be fully warranted forms of compensation. And that is the crux of the paradox: though ours is a massively pious society, virtue is not considered to be (sufficiently) its own reward.

What is art to do in the face of these irreducibly conflicting imperatives? The examples nearest to hand do not offer easy answers, but they are instructive nonetheless. Among the most beloved public art commissions in New York City is Tom Otterness’ family of sculptures at the park terminating the Battery Park City esplanade, just a few blocks from the Trade Center site. Fiendishly irresistible, Otterness’ trademark characters, plump cast-bronze hybrids of humans and animals, frolic throughout the park, twining around lampposts, perching on tables, guarding drinking fountains, and climbing a teetering structure surrounded by a moat. The motif is money—American currency, in the form of enlarged versions of small change embedded in pavements, chased by cartoon children, bagged by cartoon plutocrats. Otterness’ engagement with the global circulation of capital is far from what Deutsche and Foster have in mind, but it is indisputably effective, and hardly innocent. For anyone who cares to read closely, it tells a pointed story about power and affection, and about what really works as universal language.

Newest and nearest to the Trade Center site, and closer to the planned memorial in program as well, is Brian Tolle’s remarkable Irish Hunger Memorial, dedicated in 2002 to the victims and survivors of the Irish potato famine of 1845-52. On a raised and canted base, it transplants, stone for stone and including flora and sod, a typical 19th century Irish farmstead. Amidst the towering new buildings that surround it, this relic seems space-warpingly Lilliputian—to accept its dimensions (it is under an acre) is to briefly inhabit a kind of spatial quarantine. But Tolle’s project, too, like the great majority of current memorials, supplements its body language with text, in the form of quotes about the famine, its consequences, and its successors, by observers ranging from de Tocqueville to George Pataki.

Writing in the New York Times in January 2002, Michael Kimmelman advanced the idea that Minimalism has become public memorials’ lingua franca. In answer to the self-addressed question of what the Trade Center memorial might look like, Kimmelman wrote, “I have a guess. A memorial, as part of a mixed-used project, will in some way turn out to look Minimalist, Minimalism, of all improbable art movements of the last 50 years, having become the unofficial language of memorial art. . . . Once considered the most obstinate kind of modernism, Minimalism has gradually, almost sub rosa, made its way into the public’s heart.” His examples included not just the inevitable Maya Lin Vietnam
Involves, most prominently among many components, 168 glass and bronze chairs, one for each bombing victim. The lesson of these memorials' success is clear, but it is not Minimalist: they have gained acceptance because of their stunning literalism—a literalism more unyielding than any realist sculpture (which must after all depend on that chestnut of history painting, allegorical figuration). Though she used the language of abstract form abundantly and intelligently, Lin had no need for compression and condensation of meaning—indeed, the public need not deal with symbolism at all to read her monument. Every single name of those who died is given, and that's really all that counts. Lin's steadfast diffidence remains striking (when asked, "Would you call your work anti-heroic?" she answered, "I wouldn't say it is anti-heroic. I would say it is anti-monumental, intimate. . . . The way you read a book is a very intimate experience and my works are like books in public areas"[11]). As she herself notes, she didn't set out to topple precedents; listing the names of the dead was well-established practice in war memorials, but characterized monuments at the local rather than national level. That change made all the difference. It announced that widespread acceptability would be linked to making public the most local, and particular, of concerns. Followed ever since, it is the logic of cemeteries. It will almost certainly be adhered to at the WTC site, where the LMDC memorial "Mission Statement" lists first, under the heading "Program Elements," the specification that "The memorial should recognize each individual who was a victim of the attacks." In any event, many families do claim the towers' footprint as a cemetery, and sacred as such, since, horrifically, it abounds in unrecovered remains.

At a symposium about the memorial held in September 2002, Paul Goldberger spoke of the claims of the city, and of history: "The great test of a memorial is if it can transcend the immediate generation. . . . So while the members of the victims' families must play a large role here, I don't think that it is appropriate to turn the majority of the decision making power over to them." On the other hand, said Witold Rybczynski, "The life of a memorial is maybe one or two generations. . . . I think it is almost unfair to say that a memorial should be judged by whether it lasts, because most of them don't." WTC Memorial panelist James Young, who has studied Holocaust memorials around the world, is especially interested in those that articulate the perils of permanence. The opening chapter of his book The Texture of Memory features "Countermonuments," exemplary among which is the disappearing column made by Jochen and Esther Gerz in 1986; it was buried incrementally after receiving its invited measures of graffiti. Young worries that "once we assign monumental form to memory, we have to some degree divested ourselves of the obligation to remember"[12] and prefers impermanence because "in calling attention to its own fleeting presence, the countermonument mocks the traditional monument's certainty of history."[13] Young firmly believes, moreover, that memory has an ethical vector. "The question is not, 'how are people moved by these memorials? But rather, To what end have they been moved, to what historical conclusions, to what understanding and actions in their own lives?'"[14] he writes, concluding portentously that "the shape of memory cannot be divorced from the actions taken in its behalf, and . . . memory without consequences contains the seeds of its own destruction."[15]

A similar point has been made with respect to a different strain of public art by Thomas Crow, who—exploring some of the same issues later addressed by Kwon and others—ventures a distinction between the strong and the weak in site-specific art that hinges precisely on permanence. "The actual duration of the strong work is limited," Crow writes, "because its presence is in terminal contradiction to the nature of the space it occupies."[16] Discussing, by way of conclusion, the rise and fall of Tilted Arc, Crow applauds its destruction: "Large questions concerning the relations between public symbols and private ambitions, between political freedom, legal obligation and aesthetic choice, have been put vividly and productively into play by the work, engendering debates that might have remained abstract and ideal had it not existed—and which might have been complacently put aside had it gone on existing."[17]

But I think a good argument can be made that the ultimate value of public art, including memorials, lies most of all in
anachronism. An art object’s survival into a time (it may take a millennium, or less than a decade) when it acquires some degree of impenetrability is currently an unappreciated gift. Transparency is greatly overrated in our culture. Equally, the celebration of transience is a kind of contemporary hubris, as if all we can offer goes with us, and there is nothing our successors can learn from what we leave that we won’t have spelled out for them. The obligation—or, the privilege, or at the very least the opportunity—to contend with public art we no longer fully understand nor much like, whether it’s a soldier on a horse by Augustus Saint-Gaudens or a cube in a plaza by Isamu Noguchi, is not something we should discard lightly. The obdurate, the intractable, the willful: these stony features are virtues, too.

Blindness to the possibility of speaking for any experience but our own (a condition Jane Kramer described eloquently in an essay about the ill-fated life casts of three local teenagers commissioned from John Ahearn for the plaza in front of a police station in the South Bronx) has contributed to this paradoxically arrogant deference. And if art, by going public, is to take best advantage of the excursion from its own institutions, it isn’t by dwelling on questions of how power circulates in global culture. But the muscles of expressive heavy lifting necessary to the work of lasting public art have become so atrophied that it is difficult to imagine the job accomplished. Not just the small emotions (dismissed as sentimentality) but the big ones (deemed bombast) as well have so long been held in contempt that they have become almost unrecognizable. It may be time to give them a workout.

3 Deutsche, p. 16.
5 Foster, p. 25.

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7 Foster, p. 82.
8 Kwon, p 31.
9 Kwon, p. 154.
13 Young, p. 48.
14 Young, p. 13.
15 Young, p. 15.
17 Crow, p. 150.
What follows is statements, interspersed with a poetic response, to L’île a city-wide play which poet and playwright Fiona Templeton directed at the end of 2003 in Lille, France. On the facing pages of this piece are answers Templeton made to questions I posed, as well as samples from the script for L’île. The play uses the northeastern French border city as its stage, the actual dreamlife of its citizens as its script, and the audience members as participants in the performance.

L’île is staged in the streets, apartments, garages, clinics, and train stations of multiple neighborhoods in the city of Lille. By interviewing the inhabitants of the city on their dreams and dream life, and enacting these dreams in the city spaces (whether inside or outside), Templeton performs the interpenetration of public and private. This proves to be a relation of both fluidity and friction. The very words public and private are unresolved in the work, blend and intermingle in ways that are fascinating, disturbing, comic, banal. The work implicitly poses the question, as did her You, The City, staged in Manhattan, of who you are apart from, enmeshed in, the contexts of a city.

Private and public are often illusions—for example a department store seems public but is actually private, entry there predicated on behavior, that is, apparent possible spending. And situations where the degree of privacy or public-ness is governed by rules that are not yet discovered and are to be tested.

In L’île the officially inappropriate motive interested me very much in order to site the dreams as dreamt. Broadcast cameras were allowed into hospitals, etc, and the dreamers were very aware of both a sense of privilege and one of trespass, as, unlike in the prior work, they repeatedly had to cross thresholds alone.

The insertion of an artificial experience into a real one asks, what of the real is artificial anyway, and what is...
Dream Starting at 6:33 p.m.

You compose an audience

Follow a treasure map in an unknown city
slant rain, thickness of brick, voices under paint

You, an audience of one
Or have you just arrived at Canal X
what is the center of this?
(Paris is that way)

Nothing in the city is not dreamed or is not

A dream equals what you can’t see (admit to see) in the place you actually are

I do not mean that all representations can be touched but all are public

not rather a chosen or directed artifice to which we are simply accustomed. The formalities of behavior and configuration are literally child’s play to duplicate.

And vice versa. See my comments on the penetrability of the artifice below.

“Private” and “public” break down too in the notion of the archetype, or the type, owned communally. And the context of dream allowed an enormous vocabulary of the specific playing the role of type.

There are also many constraints of normative behavior operative in the real within which the work is placed—part of the controlled nature of the “public”—i.e. on entering a house, on being in the company of strangers. And even the intimate distance between actor and dreamer, or between dreamers, has mostly a kind of increased and also partially self-imposed control.

The multidirectional in theatre seems absolutely necessary to me. It is an architecture of theatre rather than that of a picture. For an audience to experi-

others as in 1001 nights. Finally all converge in a large space in the centre of town for the interwoven ends of the episodic dreams and a scene involving all hundred.

Individual Scenes Part I, One dreamer
Scène 14, dream 96

Escape from Hospital

Approach: —by appointment & ticket, or to the address
Templeton researched the city and history of Lille extensively in putting together the work. She is interested in the city's past as an island—"une île"—built on marsh and now filled-in canals, and on how there could be a submerged analogue to this watery past in the dreamlife of the city's inhabitants. She also tracked Lille's history as an industrial center of social revolution, and the city's ongoing focus on workers' rights and street protest.

Architecture and mapping are further examples of formal artifice become real (I'd like to coin the word "reals"). And of space married with movement, thus with content. In my city pieces the itinerary operates simultaneously with the map, the map being the simultaneity of the times of the itineraries.

Specifically, when you look at the map of Lille there is an enormous geometric form that stands out—the citadel of Vauban, the five pointed star multiplying almost fractally in wall within wall. This was originally a model for the map of my given in the preceding scene, with exact details for finding the room.

Place/Décor: —« an old hospital with a lot of iron. Also very austere » « It was a sad hospital... with things made of iron, iron beds, it was archaic. »

The Dental Hospital.
Rôle: —father
Costume: —pyjamas; and under the bed, police inspector's clothes, « yes, like you see in caricatures, a beige mac and a brown hat, it had a kind of detective effect »

Text / Action:
« So I went to see him in the evening... he was in his bed, and being an authoritarian man, he was complaining, he was making a fuss, and he was flirting with the nurses because he's also a flirt.»

When the dreamer enters, he hears: (to the nurse, visible or not):
« If I die, it doesn't matter, I'll keep the memory of your smile, my last image. »

And then:
« I'm not staying here. I never want to be shut in, not me! I'm an outdoor man, I'm a standing man. »

And to the dreamer:
« I don't want to stay here, you'll take me away, out of
Dream Eight

I thought it was a real place
but it was a place I did not know

(the island keeps filling itself in)
A city of revolt built on water

A subterranean feeling

(under a plank, a ramp, a bank)
They protest in their dreams

(a dream ends)=the size of a red floor
=the side of a canal

In the dream it was a real place

Submerged in moving feet
le 31 octobre children march for treats

Demands repeated out of hollows
MANIFESTATION DE BONBONS

By talking to the actual inhabitants of Lille, and interviewing them as to their dreams, Templeton culled a loose script from the recounted dreams. She attended to variations in dialect and gendered expression. In the interviews about their dreams, men were more likely to embellish on the cinematic or mediated qualities of their dreams. Women tended to recount their dreams directly.

piece, abstracted into the branching structure of the work across several quarters with the hundred points of departure gradually converging. Maybe I wanted an impregnable support structure with all the variables! There is a sense of expansion and contraction through layering. This was not the original island of Lille but is certainly self-isolating. The city has grown in typically European fashion in economic layers out from the center, and L’île takes this in the opposite direction. Anyway this was one of the parallels to the dream experience that I found physically in the city, the other being the existence of underground waterways once at the surface. The dreams themselves to some extent reflect the physical city because of the connection between the map and its content-frequency of occurring sites or site-types, or event-types (the demonstration, childbirth and animal/human hybrids being the most frequent!)

I kept as much of the original texts of the dream transcripts as possible, above all in site and in citation, words
"I was walking along a cliff edge, the coast of Brittany."

"I was with my daughter"

"A man ahead made as if to leap from the cliff"

"We ran after, grasped at his ankles, his torso"

"Then watched as he fell"

"Something that was falling"

"Not the man"

"heard" in dream. These 
givens (a word I also used 	often with the actors in 
distinguishing what could be 
improvised and what not) 
represented an interesting 
point of contact with the 
public (both dreamers and 
those who lent premises 
etc): they were generally 
accepted as a phenomenon 
not needing explanation, 
however outlandish, or more 
often, however unexplained 
or lacking closure. Their 
opposition to normative 
rationales, parallel in some 
ways to me to the experi­mental, needed no appeal on 
behalf of art, a strangely 
luxurious permission. 
(Though I've always found 
the proprietor of the dry 
cleaner's more likely to 
understand my work than 
the conservatory-trained in 
convention.) Moreover, this 
"other" real depended on its 
insertion into the specific 
real—the utterly unrecogniz­ 
able seldom appeared in the 
dreams.

When gathering the dreams 
I stated that I was not going 
to analyze the individual 
stories in their relation to 
individual realities. In fact I 
think that extracting the 
dream as a special case 
provided a permission to the

From Introduction for the 
actors—L'Ile

The spectator of this work is 
called the dreamer, whose 
participation is very different 
to the conventional distance 
between audience and play. 
The experience is as much 
lived as seen, and in fact 
includes a whole range of 
relationships between the 
rehearsed actor and the 
spectator.

In this work, as in dreams 
themselves, the witness of an 
act may suddenly become its 
protagonist, and then once 
again witness, this second time 
knowing that she sees herself. 
The subject is displaced from 
spectator to actor, or includes 
more than one of them. The 
subject does not necessarily 
correspond to the point of 
view.
Often the subject matter of the dreams in L’Île is provocative and psychologically tense. In one dream enacted in the waiting area of a hospital clinic, YOU (regardless of gender) are told repeatedly face-to-face that you are not pregnant. This motif is carried through in multiple dreams enacted in that neighborhood the same evening. Given the collapse of theatrical conventions of distance, and the need for YOU to respond (since even silence is a charged response in these face-to-face encounters), the possible psychological effects on you, the audience, are manifold and unpredictable.

The first important point for the actors in this relationship is to insure that once the dreamer has begun, she does not awaken until the play is over. She may pass from dream to dream, even dream of waking, but those moments too must be defined by the logic of dream.

Secondly, the actor’s job is not to offer the dreamer the image of a psychologically realistic character. It is the dreamer’s psychology that is in play. In every case, just as in dreams, the character the dreamer meets is a function, a reflection, a need of the dreamer, and his existence is limited to the encounter.
Corner of Dream, Clinic & La Gare

Traverse the words “not pregnant”
gauze under a plank

Speaking not talking

Something happened between us
is what she says

Something stronger now
(what is said between
close teeth trajectories)

You are being addressed
the nurse’s tunic an antiseptic blue

Joints, points of connection, threads
alive, loose, seen from afar

You talk to someone on a wood plank overpass

The script and the city confound

On pavement through dented wallboard
or frangible ramps and sullen plastic

You exit off an escalator

bleed towards what is not
circumscribed as part of the
written play. As in You—The City, the accidental becomes
framed too, and in L’Ile this is particularly important as one
of the goals of the work, because more of the trajectory is made alone. These
unaccompanied gaps should
come to belong to the
dream as a whole.

Dreams are to theatre as life
is to dreams. And rich, rich,
but wide open. But the more
I worked, too, the less I
wished to change—see my
discussion of the “givens”
above. The challenge was to
balance improvisation for the
sake of relation, with the
inviolable given of the dream.
The dream was not so much
theatrically rendered in the
sense of “shown” but rather
configured, so that entered
into. In some ways it was the
necessity of entering onto
that sustained the framing
through the interstices of
the dreams

Note for the following dream:
Jean-Pierre Raffarin is the
current (conservative and
globalist) Prime Minister of
France.

Thread 7, Dream 69
Part I - one dreamer

Raffarin

Approach:—by appointment,
or to the address given in the
preceding scene
Lieu:—house—interior—dark
(grandmother’s apartment,
Boulevard Victor Hugo)
Décor:—lived in, clean, but
the table is not yet completely
set for dinner
Rôle:—mom (of an adult), in a
housecoat

Text/Action:
Dreams make for elusive texts, are related to poetry in terms of their ambiguity. One of the achievements of L'Ile is the playing out of textual ambiguity onto geographical ambiguity. How do we read the outer signs? The dream personae in dreams do not ask for resolution. They participate and they witness. Which is also true of the participants in L'Ile. Dreams are comfortable with irresolution. The play ends in at least eight different ways.

Images from the real, they are not real, and as long as that was communicated to the audience, other "real" conventions were able to be suspended. Actors of course also played differently according to different degrees of perceived identification on the part of the audience. In rehearsal I always played the audience/dreamer of different kinds and tested this range. In fact the basic first scene of the dream you refer to insists that the (generally indeed not pregnant) dreamer is not pregnant in such a way that he or she thinks eventually—ah, in the dream I think I am pregnant. An actually pregnant woman, as a friend of mine very visibly was, for whom this would not be the psychological configuration, could then still experience the dream, being already in the dreamer's shoes. Or if the issue is sensitive (someone who would rather be pregnant but was not for example), the unreal elements of the scene—diagnosis from clearly nonsensical criteria etc, would make the element of play possible. The actress playing these scenes was, I think, very skilful in detecting and adapting the appropriate mode of play. Later, in the

Opens the door, has the dreamer come in, sits at the table, a little collapsed.

«I don't know what to give Mr. Raffarin to eat.»

«And your father, your father who never goes into bars, has to wait for him in a café. So, drinking with Raffarin.»

«Yes, I know, neither I nor your father like Raffarin, but . . . we absolutely have to find something to make for dinner.»

«You have to go to the butcher's. The one at Place Barthélemy Dorez.»

Transition: Gives the address of the next scene as if of the butcher's.

(This is from one of the episodic dreams. Later, the dreamer, accompanied by another dreamer, will meet the father in the bar; then with that dreamer and two further dreamers as voyeurs, will meet the butcher's wife in a store that is in fact a back entrance to a hospital, who gives a tiny piece of meat; then later in a group of 12 dreamers becomes one of the neighbors
Dream Croissant, L'inner-directed and Le folded-around

Un chien (a dog) runs behind a car (un chien)

you are in it

Something happens
(wasn't there) (was in french)
Le chien no longer runs behind the dog
It's your turn but you
you're not ready
(the dream enters)
they want to talk

Not to you

Nothing in the city is not dreamed any longer

You miss the train back to where you meant to go
the train the meaning the missing
dream tracking

what you can't admit to see (wake-up)

The chairs in the room as if appear

No arms
never not in public

baby factory, the absurd heights of the dream also mitigate its grotesqueness. Besides all the dreams experienced alone are deliberately very compressed, fast. Of course people inside the dream state also reacted in ways that did not make rational sense—being afraid of a theatrical situation, for example, but always with a slippage between the acted-experienced and another level of consciousness. I think it would have been uninteresting to avoid or sanitize these issues but they were certainly much discussed and tested.

In some of my most struc-tured work there's a point which must be won, or is the true climax, which is unwritten and unwriteable—Michael's aria in Recognition, the Moments of Glory in Against Agreement, the blank cell in Cells of Release, the meeting of 2 clients in You - The City. In the theatre of intimate encounters, in real places, it's the architecture of time and text that holds safe the absolutely unknown of the moment of meeting.

(led at that moment by a performer) teasing the mom in the street about her unpopular guest as she apparently searches the food stores. They keep this role through the denouement of the dream in the final theatre space, becoming, for the rest of the audience, the scene's chorus.)
A series of billboards were produced in response to the area along the Miami River. Now a more marginal residential and commercial corridor, the site has a rich ethnic history of control, ownership and succession—from Native American to Spanish to English and back to Spanish—which mirrors that of the city.

The subjects for the piece are the Haitians, Dominicans, and Salvadoreans that work on the ships that ply the shallow-draft port of the river. They haul piles of used mattresses, furniture, and cars and bicycles to the Caribbean and Central America. The crews were photographed in the style of class photos, and these group portraits are juxtaposed variously with images of Miami as might be seen in tourist brochures: the gleaming skyline, a pleasure cruiser berthed in the grand Port of Miami, or a gilded baroque interior from the 1920’s. The images set up comparisons between the wealth and mythology of Miami and the contemporary urban realities of the economy and rapid social flux. The photographic panels are presented in three variations in a series of twelve billboards. These have been distributed throughout the different neighborhoods that flank the river, which are made up of Cuban, African-American and Anglo residents.

Like the flow of goods on this working river, at the edge of the glossy modern city, the crews of these ships have a level of invisibility in the social life and economy of Miami. The Anglo colonial that continues to dominate images of America in media and other popular fiction is found on a local scale, in the Cuban-American presence in the city. Its dominance in business and culture is palpable beyond “Calle Ocho” and overshadows other emerging and more established cultural groups. The placement of the billboards introduces, or imports, these unheralded members into the expanding Miami community, reflecting the most recent cycle in this evolving American terrain. In terms of colonization, settlement and assimilation, Miami is the American condition in overdrive.

Participating artists: Carrie Mae Weems, Dan Graham, Mark Robbins, and Jack Pierson. Sponsored by the Miami Art Project.
Freshly gashed with the suppleness of persons we left Buda and Pest for Gorj; I entered Romania with a European passport in the surname of my father's father and exited American under the standard mistranscribed moniker, evincing displeasure from a pair of customs officers infiltrating the train—but having paid administration off for a half-night in the locked cuchette car en route made circumstances seem pliable. We had left to inhabit monumental failure. The coffee table syncretism of the art industry effaced the monument's constitutive discontinuities with photo montages melding its pieces for perusal by the single surveiller. The critical apparatus touted Targu-Jiu's iconic march from The Table of Silence through The Gate of the Baiser to The Endless Column, private to public, female to male, organic to inorganic, earth to intellectual and spiritual transcendence, though the living body can often walk the other way. My object had been to see modernism married or not to ambient life, the mere.

A women's league from Brancusi’s home province commissioned this favored native adoptee of Paris to turn back to Targu-Jiu in the 1930s; it was there and hardly elsewhere that modernism saw one of its colossal fantasies concretely built. Paradoxical, critics comment, stopping just short of the idiom of shame; for modernism—not to mention the eternal polis—is supposed to be homeless. A Mrs. Tatarascu solicited this memorial to those killed driving the German offensive back from the banks of the River Jiu in 1916. Brancusi's task was thus to reface the collateral damage of a conflict ambivalently indexed in Romanian history as "the First World War, or the War of Reunification" (consolidation of the nation-state coming of course at the cost of innumerable local corpses).

Womankind—the everlasting irony of the community—changes by intrigue the universal end of the government into a private end, transforms its universal activity into a work of some particular individual, and perverts the universal property of the state into a possession and ornament for the Family.

—G.W.F. Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit

The sculptural results are strewn along a town-long axis dominated by homes and interrupted by a church set into a street at cross-purposes. Heading from the railway station past brutalistic hotels and recent contest-winning sculptures, through the municipal park, the possibly directed person first encounters the Gate of the Baiser, decorously translated as of the Kiss: a triumphal arch of the Roman kind humbled, low, squared-off, sarcophagus-shaped, permitting a narrow stream of pedestrians to pass through. In carving the pockmarked limestone element, Brancusi subtracted the Roman, the arch, and the triumph, and inscribed the lintel with forty abstractions of naked couples identical, seamlessly if ambiguously merged: dashes migrating across their central schisms comprise mouths. The couple motif, truncated, is then replicated on all sides of each pillar, where twofold rectilinear columns are slowly taken for a pair of heads sharing only a split circle—the locus, one puzzles to realize, of confronting or communing eyes, bulbous and awkward as genitalia. Distinction between these bodies is less apparent than their fusion. Radical symmetry, or "absolute equity"—to cite the sculptor’s formula for the beautiful—invites you to read them again as single figures with one split Cyclopic eye, implying plurality in the whole as well as the annihilating fusion of disparities.

Past the gate, stools mark out a path toward the river, toward the so-called Table of Silence: a couple of circular limestone slabs surrounded by twelve seats at intervals unaccommodating to eaters as well as talkers. Excessively humble, the piece is nevertheless dysfunctional; it smothers mouth to mouth relations. Beyond it, the bare river, half-bridged post-battle, was framed by a low wall now graffitied "DON'T STEP ON THE ICE." A late-century railing above it reduplicates the Gate's antithetical Is with an error; they share a slit of spatial reprieve from each other.
One has to turn around and traverse the baiser threshold again to reach The Endless Column at a mile's distance, at the old hay market site. The most modern of the sculptures, in copper and cast iron, 29.33 meters high, supplies immensity of a thwarted kind. The column's pulse ceases at a stubby top, pointing not at an infinity of some sky but seeming to squat. Behind this equivocal climax, another abject table ignored by "enshrinement" but ringed with shrubbery and latently available to the meanderer further disturbs the domus-transcending trajectory.

Speech and wind-swift purpose,
these he has taught himself,
and the passion for civic law,
and how to escape the shafts
of the inhospitable frosty sky
and the harsh shafts of the rain—
all-resourceful! Resourceless
he meets nothing the future holds.
—Strophe B from The Ode on Man, Antigone, trans. Blundel

We persisted through the crisis of objective values for excruciating days punctuated by schnapps and pizzas with mayor and ministers of the body politic, oscillant from municipal park to market and back, along the Alley of Heroes, past weddings, disparate, facing houses with stubby gates whose porch structures echoed The Endless Column's laboriously undulated zigzag. None of it acts like sculpture nor like furniture; ungiven, it declines to receive but beckons and obstructs. Having encompassed great distances to know this, I took occasional snapshots of the half-scaffolded gate and entropic, snail-encrusted Banpotoc limestone to the noise of the trumpet.

School groups from rural Transylvania and from Bucharest filed through from time to time, slowing their pace for explanations as they circumvented the Gate, weakly interpellated, adopting apt dread and looking semilustfully in the direction of the small ferris wheel. An occasional couple would stop for a peck under the scaffolding. Trees above all cooled the concrete swelter. The Table of Silence's riverside setting must promise a finish of some kind and gazes groped for a photo opportunity. A park appendage—twelve ringed spouts spurting desultory streams of water onto a pile of rocks—supplemented the palpable modernist reticence. Group portraits were taken at last.

When we left for the EU, the first person plural was different as ever is.
Douglas and I went up to the Met yesterday afternoon, Sunday, April 19, 2003—I brought a sign—Alissa met us there—I stood w/sign on the sidewalk by steps near the central set of railings that leads to the entrance—text:

* Country built on plunder.

“Free” Markets DESTROY history.
people and their arts

$avery’s legacy Unspoken and Unpaid.

Native
512 Nations Obliterated.

Who Stole Iraq’s Past?

Whose is Next?

Enjoy the “Egyptian Wing”

* Some encounters:

* Well-heeled senior couple—he “agrees absolutely”—she’s furious, fixating on provenance of items in Japanese museums— they stay quite a while—Doug in long conversation with the guy—he, Egyptian-born Jewish—she, a WASP Brit—married 56 years—“He was probably fighting age as Rommel crossed the Libyan border,” Doug says later.

Af-Am kid ~ 15 on bicycle stops to read the sign. I say it’s a response to the sackings, describe a little of what happened—nods.

Two young guys from India—one notes “There are more Egyptian artifacts here than anywhere except Egypt”—gets into v. long conversation with Doug, other guy not wanting to talk.

Oldish white guy with slight Euro accent—“That’s what happens. War is Hell.”

Little crowds sort of form and dissipate of people reading—mostly not commenting but trying it out—talk to some, say it’s a response to the looting, which US force under Geneva convention was obliged to prevent—drawing links to earlier Empires’ plundering and, at v. least, enablement of the movement of such objects—objects landing here via robber baron collectors—compromise resolution of provenances only begun in recent years—(had looked up Dendur—apparently Nasser gave it to the US in 1965—I can’t imagine how that happened*)

Keep trying to focus on polit. consequences of this loss: on physical loss, on symbolic role it is likely to play, on how much it is congruent with this country’s actual history—just rolling over things in the way of doing business and getting at resources—

Careful to point out that de Montebello and others in “museum community” desperately trying to mop up (partly no doubt b/c of the remaining shaky standing of much of what they hold)—two US interior ministers have re-signed—need to communicate that citizenry cares about loss of life and culture even if govt determined to destroy and remove and make it look like benign neglect—
Alissa's interviewing people and taking pictures—three museum guards seemingly on break or recon. very enthusiastic—all young—one white, one mid east, one latino—then craggy hipster looking guy on bike—AQ later says he was an RTmark-er—many others.

*Douglas re: Dendur: "they build the aswan high dam . . . it was going to flood out this ancient valley filled (?) with antiquities—specifically the 'huge legs of stone' seen (?) & (or) reported by shelley in his poem . . . the reality is that the legs, unlike in the poem, are attached to the huge seated bodies of Ramses the great . . . anyway, they had to move these to higher ground.

"the international community sent tons of money to pay for the movement in return for the $ and help, 'we' negotiated the 'removal' of some of the antiquities that were not going to be moved . . . so as the waters of the new lake nasar were licking at the base of the stones, the temple (having been hand picked by the prezident's wifey) was dismantled & trucked away. Years later Jackie 0 was known to refer it as 'my temple.'

"most of the above can be read on the walls of the museum when you go into the temple room itself.

"(i don't know when the exhibit opened, but i'm pretty sure it was not on view till the 70s)"

Kid rock looking guy—small blue eyes—long, shiny thin mouse brown hair dyed appealingly and lightly blond—rangy guy, tall—very thin—maybe 30—little mounds and white opaque calluses on his white outstretched hand—says—

You see this hand [visibly shaking]?
This is a working man's hand.
Hands like this built this country.
Get a job.

Looks me in the eye threateningly. I'm in a bourgeois panic and have no response. I don't say: you're right: I don't have hands like that and hands like that built the country, but why shouldn't I point out that those who did the majority of the labor of industrializing the US were not given equal share, and that the neglect and destruction of the work of people over centuries in Iraq/Mesopot is just like the govt's neglect and destruction of working people here? He stalks off with girlfriend. Need to learn from this.

(I do think though this is the way to draw the link—plunder of the US labor and natural resources similar to artifact plunder or its enablement—need to be able to articulate this clearly.)

Hilarious touch—as we're walking a little about 10 minutes later, pass him going in the other direction—our eyes catch, and he immediately gives me a sign—his hand makes and "L"-like shape, and he bangs it into his forehead repeat-
edly—I'm completely freaked out and scared that it's some Nazi thing—Doug laughs and tells me it's “Loser” . . .

•
Two young British women and their silent male companion—middle classy but Yooj affected—plus a white UFT guy (old school, graying, base ball hat)—has glommed onto us and been yelling at people—challenges one woman as to why for the war—one says “I have my reasons” and the guys says—“What are they??”—and she just looks at him—and he repeats it, with maniacal glee—and she says, “I can't listen to this”—and turns quickly with other bird in tow—sentry looks at us sympathetically—and follows.

•
A white German-looking guy with professional-looking video equipment is filming us, sweeping the crowd of steps and back.

•
An Af-Am guy w/close cropped hair and wraparounds late 20s early 30s—w/two friends—he stops to talk and they keep going—specifics of the library and museum sackings—some back and forth over how it could have been prevented—I get to that I didn't know what else to do except make this sign—as he's leaving: “I'm with you, you keep doing your thing.”

•
Doug meanwhile in long, friendly but pointed exchange with white stocky Gulf War vet now TV news cameraman over whether the troops could have prevented plunder—chipping away at his story—but the yelling guy keeps interrupting, escalating.

Seems like debate, but Doug says not really:

“i know why i get angry when rich people go on and on about tax cuts, but what makes the pro war people so angry about people who are against it?

“it's like being mad at a fan of the losing team in a sporting event . . . oh, those people are angry too? i never figured out what made the winning fans so angry & mean either.

“probably not the same thing though.

“the WAR people don't act like winners, they act like you are really threatening them . . . ”

•
Woman in mid 30s with Spanish-speaker's accent—“Yes, and? They were going to come and kill us.”

•
Realizing standing there that “Who Stole . . . ” is a page right out of Baraka—

Ok—but wld. he see as another theft—

later recall Steve Burt remarking (remarking ironically, since was re: deep image or something) that when members get proprietary over techniques, literary movements fall apart—but yet, materialist analysis in a way yields allusions and (even unconscious) steals as stolen labor—art and market capital share this quality—the knock-off—the sellable parody—the incorporation—who gets to go home after this?

the sign as pressure valve

•
Sun setting behind museum—different little groups catching last warm patches—lots of eyes on the sign but no one wants to talk—lots of fatigue.

•
White woman 40-50—middle class brown hair loose shortish and a little frizzy—thick but not overdone lipstick—looking intently, looks up slow—“The whole time we were in there I was thinking: what if we came in here and stole everything? How would people here feel about that?” Pause. “We should do it.”

Eyes far off imagining it.
I don’t know if it is the same man as earlier, but as we are walking toward the park to leave, an older white man says “This is what happens in a war. It is a terrible thing.”

Doug:

“Thoughtful, pensive man, with very sad eyes—and what I thought to be a ‘slavic’ look & a strange unidentifiable accent. We talked of war a bit & it was discovered that he had fought in Europe in WW2. ‘I was happy to be in Europe, I was from Europe & I was glad not to be in the Pacific, I can’t take the heat. I like the cold, but I can’t stand the heat, & the humidity.’ & the bugs I sd.

“After a bit he told us a story from his childhood. He was born just before WW1 in a small farming community somewhere in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. (He referred to ‘the Emperor’ and ‘soldiers fighting in France & Russia & Italy.’ He didn’t seem too German, though he didn’t want to say exactly where he was from. I would think a German wouldn’t have sd. ‘Emperor’ for Kaiser . . . who knows?) [M: I think he was Hungarian.]

“So he told us this story, from his village of 2,000 people—half men, half women, 1/3 too young, 1/3 too old—so maybe of about 340 men, 86 were killed at the front. & when the war ended & the soldiers were going home (presumably the German soldiers, finding their way back to Germany) they stopped in this town which had a distillery that made liquor from sugar beets:

“The smell from the beet factory was terrible & the soldiers [sic] got drunk. & they opened all the taps in the distillery & the fermented beet juice & the distilled beet juice liquor ran all through the streets & the priests went to the soldiers to beg them to close the taps on the vats of alcohol, because they were afraid that if someone threw a match into the street, the whole town would burn down. & the soldiers sd. no.

“& somehow he seems to have ended up in America? & returned to Europe at what? the age of 36 or even 40 to fight some other war? Though my suspicion of him was {as I am a suspicious man} that he had been in the Wehrmacht & given his age, pressed into the Volksgrenadier toward the end of the war . . . who knows . . .

“He walked with us a bit, musing on what life brings. Chatting slowly—giving space in the conversation, he would think of something and quietly brush away the silent pause.”
KENNETH SHERWOOD  
Forms of Egalitarian Desire

warp and woof of everyday life.  
The prophet had overrun his

1. First Form

The public poem places itself outside of lyric space.

Subjection, subjugation, under foot.

Concrete, a block poem. Chalk walk wearing weather and traffic.

If high poetry eschews the pedestrian, a public poem must risk being

Walked upon,

Worn.

Lines emerge and risk erasure.

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Academy of Philosophy
Adler: automobile
Architects’ Collaborative, The
Art Nouveau
Baghdad, Iraq: University of Baghdad
(Gropius and the Architects’ Collaborative)

administrator [2003-01-05 21:03]
Architect: Rifaaat Chadirji
Picture information
Filename: Jaderchi-03.jpg
Album: Iraqi Architecture from the Mid 20th Century
Filesize: 52 Kbytes
Dimensions: 432 x 506 pixels
Displayed: 473 times

Mohammed Ahmed [2003-04-12 07:00] This beauty was bombed in 1991 and 2003, still standing with pride, like Iraq and Iraqis. We as Iraqi Architects will go back, stand together, shoulder to shoulder, and build hundreds of these masterpieces for a better future for our children.
P.R. Bibeau [2003-05-01 11:36] I stand in utter amazement at the sight of this Building. The aspects of Unity and Modernity meet with such grace.
Ahmed A.Hussain [2003-05-23 03:27] Master minded by "Rumsfeld" and the "hawks," one of hundreds of beautiful Iraqi buildings that were bombed and demolished, as a revenge for the "11.sep." attack, thus American terrorism against Al-Qaeda terrorism ... what have Iraqis got to do with that?! I think the answer will be at the revenues to be made by "Bechtel" and "Haliburton" and the others.
Mahmoud Al-Alusi [2003-09-15 14:54] So?! We lost a building and gained our freedom! Thank you Rumsfeld and the hawks.

Add your comment

---
disasters of modern history have played a large role
... sharply dividing

2. Second Form

Broadcast achieves one form of language ambience registered (nonregistered) as noise the gray matte of our consciousness of others, their voices.

Improvisatory form *du jour*, the blog public in its tentacular reach coherently centripetal in its controls.

Turning from engagement, accident of communal traffic outwards from the privilege of a sound-proof room.

---

Constructivist Painting
Cubism

Eclecticism
Einstein, Albert
Eleven Story Slab Apartment Block
Exhibition Hall

---

Administrator [2003-01-05 21:10]
Architect: Rifaat Chadirji
Liberty Monument–Baghdad, Iraq 1959.

Picture information
Filename: Jaderchi-01.jpg
Album: Iraqi Architecture from the Mid 20th Century
Filesize: 71 Kbytes
Dimensions: 561 x 384 pixels
Displayed: 470 times

Mohammed Ahmed [2003-04-12 07:05] Liberty and Freedom is not resembled in artwork, marble, stone, etc. It is a monument carved in each Iraqi’s heart. Nobody can take it away from us unless they rip all our 25,000,000 hearts out... or apart.

Ayouda [2003-08-25 00:09] God Bless Iraq

Add your comment

---
the dangers to design inherent in
the separation of head and hand

3. Third Form

High-fidelity chatter after rapt.

Silence compensated.

Voices cluster, sightless digitized sound replicates a spatial illusion vertiginous to the stationary, stereo simulation.

Shifts, tensions, patterns as invisible migrations across a transparent sky, or the settling into order of tracks across a blank field. Breaking the crust

(20 minute postlude)

Model factory, Cologne Werkbund Exhibition; see pavilion for Deutz Factory, Cologne Werkbund Exhibition
Modernismo
Moholy-Nagy, L.
Mondrian, P.
Moscow, USSR.: Palace of the Soviets, theater
Munich, Germany: University of Munich
Municipal Employment Office, Dessau
Municipal Theater, Jena

#Baghdad University Administration Building, Jadriya, Baghdad

Picture information

**Filename:** University of Baghdad.jpg
**Album:** Iraqi Architecture from the Mid 20th Century
**Filesize:** 194 Kbytes
**Dimensions:** 1240 x 1857 pixels
**Displayed:** 742 times

Mohammed Ahmed [2003-03-14 21:55]
The image shows the administration building of the University of Baghdad, Al Jadriyah Campus was designed by Walter Gropius (1961) working with TAC. Walter Gropius was a very famous Bauhaus designer. The photo was taken February 2000.

Sarmed Alqaisi [2003-03-16 11:51] Too many memories . . . nice to see that building again ...

Mohammed Ahmed [2003-04-13 01:48] I doubt university administration buildings have been bombed. Soon enough you'll be free to visit and check for yourself.

maad [2003-06-19 04:56] I miss it

Aouss [2003-07-09 06:23] No brothers . . . It's still standing there without damages

Mohammed [2003-09-02 16:15] This building doesn't contain your culture. Your rich culture!

Dunia [2003-09-17 23:02] I Hope we can all go back there someday . . . Good to see it after all those years

Mohammed [2003-09-24 22:15] It is interesting what Muhsen is saying, indeed this building does not represent our "old" culture but it is certainly part of it. Culture evolves and even the Arch of 2 swords, the Unknown Soldier, the 8 sided star, the Central Bank, etc. all became part of our Culture whether we like it or not.

jankeez [2003-10-03 08:53] I will go back to reconstruction

Add your comment

Album List :: Upload Picture :: Login

#Baghdad University Administration Building, Jadriya, Baghdad
4. Fourth Form

Planned design envisions a structure, its uses, the potentials of habitation.

Gates open as to a performance and the space is filled, or rather persons perform its dimensions. Predictability has limits, gratefully.

Hence desire-lines, traces of clustering habit that undercut design and carve new signs at cross purposes to

A man stands, it’s true, on a knoll. Theology stutters, neither compelling nor beautiful. An aural space of aversion, as if sight-lines consummate. This risk of deaf eyes and blind ears.

Says the Village Voice: free speech not a mall, but a square where one endures language challenge as public passage.

A square transected by desire-lines.

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Eshaiker, Muhannad. Iraqi Architects @ the Cyberspace. <http://www.iraqiarchitects.com/>


Thinking about “public forms” and poetry brings to mind contrasts between the lyric and forms traditionally considered public, such as architecture or broadcasting. The functionality often demanded of public art interests me less than the risks and threats entailed in being “out there.” It seems crucial that public forms may be walked upon, sprayed with graffiti, bombed.

I’d once heard the phrase “desire lines” used, in landscape design, for the wear produced by pedestrians stepping off the planned paths. Chancing to learn that Gropius and Mies Van der Rohe designed buildings for Baghdad University provided another layer, intersecting not only with speculations that an old Frank Lloyd Wright commission based on The Arabian Nights might be part of the reconstruction of Iraq but also with news coverage of the bombing and destruction of antiquities.
How the Project Got Started . . .

Spring of 1996, The New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI), a non-profit legal advocacy group, approaches REPOhistory with an unusual proposal. Would REPOhistory be interested in producing a public art project about the history of public interest law? The aim of this yet unnamed project would be to raise social awareness about the work of public law at a time when conservative lawmakers actively sought to block such advocacy. In addition the project would inform the public about the impact and ongoing legal challenges aimed at extending and protecting the rights of the politically or economically disenfranchised. REPOhistory agreed provided that the contents of the project would not be open to major revision by NYLPI. With this understanding work began on the project which would later be entitled CIVIL DISTURBANCES: Battles for Justice in New York City. Mark O'Brian became the project coordinator for REPOhistory's new undertaking.

May 21, 1996, NYLPI began the process by canvassing dozens of public interest lawyers and organizations in the city requesting a list of cases they considered to be most worthy of commemoration. NYLPI then presented REPOhistory with a compilation of 30 cases to consider. Eventually nine of these cases were taken up by various members of REPOhistory. Eleven additional cases or legal issues were chosen by artists bringing the total number of potential signs to 20. However six more months would pass before the first designs and texts would be ready for review.

November 1997, most of the project's twenty signs were being finalized designed and written by the various artists and activists working with relevant lawyers assigned to them by NYLPI at REPOhistory's request.
January and February 1998, the individual sign designs & texts are critiqued by group.

March 1998, the signs are printed on adhesive vinyl and one by one laminated to aluminum panels in preparation for street installation.

April, March, and early May 1998, REPOhistory proceeds with procurement of the Department of Transportation Permit in the usual fashion with no sign of problem.

On May 1st (know in the legal profession as “Law Day”) several of the signs are displayed at a public gathering that includes speeches by Mayor Giuliani and several city judges.

May 12-15th, our contact at the Department of Transportation (DOT) lets us know that he has not yet received approval on the project by his superiors, but expects it any day. We plan an installation and press conference for May 19th.

The Installation that Almost Wasn’t . . .

May 19th, 1:00 PM 1998, on the hour of our press release the DOT faxes us stating we have been denied a permit. We go to press with this information. The next day David Gonzales of the New York Times Metro section reports on the situation as does Time Out New York a few days later. The law firm Debevoise & Plimpton offers to represent us against the City pro bono. After several months of negotiation the DOT backs down and we get our permit. Civil Disturbances is installed and opens on August 4th, 1998, however, because of construction work at some key sign locations, a large number of the signs meant for Foley Square are re-located a few hundred feet south at St. Andrews Plaza, a pedestrian walkway near the Municipal Building. As planned, a second copy of each of the twenty signs is installed at a specific location relevant to the case or issue described, primarily in Manhattan but also in Brooklyn and the Bronx.
Signs of Antagonism . . .

Shortly after its installation Marina Gutierrez’s artwork in Williamsburg Brooklyn is taken down by the local DOT after complaints by the local Hasidic community, criticized by Gutierrez’s text. Gutierrez, a Williamsburg resident herself, designed her REPOhistory sign to graphically depict the twenty year battle to end housing discrimination by New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) in that ethnically diverse neighborhood. For years the City had a discriminatory quota system in place that favored Hasidic families over Latino or African American ones. After recovering and re-installing the work in mid August, it was removed a second time. The story winds up on the cover of El Diario, with cable news station New York One and the New York Post also picking it up as well. The work is recovered once again but it is re-installed a third time on October 14th with more press coverage and amidst a planned public demonstration by housing activists. As of today the sign remains in place.

Another Sign is Taken Down . . .

REPOhistory artist Janet Koenig’s sign, Disabled in Action v. Empire State Building, was installed at 33rd Street and Fifth Avenue just outside the historic building named in this landmark case which marks the lawsuit that forced the skyscraper to comply with Federal Laws making all public buildings accessible to the handicapped. The Empire State Buildings world known observation deck remained inaccessible to the disabled tourist. Following successful prosecution the building complied. However soon after CIVIL DISTURBANCES opened, the sign commemorating this battle was found to be missing. Delays prevented re-installation for several months but at 2PM on Sunday, October 25th a REPOhistory re-installation team arrived at the Empire State Building to replace the missing artwork. While hanging the new sign a security guard emerged from the building who, despite being shown the group’s Department of Transportation permit for the project, stated: “if you put it up I will take it [the sign] down.” By the next morning the sign was gone. The location of the sign happens to have been directly in

"Brown v. Board of Education, NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund" by Laurie Ourlicht. 20West 40th Street (Manhattan), former headquarters of the NAACP.
front of an Empire State Building surveillance camera. The video tapes have been requested by Ed Copeland, council for the New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI). However discussions with the building management have failed to produce the missing art work REPOhistory and NYLPI are preparing a third replacement sign for the site before the start of the new year.

Opposition Continues . . .

In early November a REPOhistory sign by artist William Menking that was installed just outside of the Millennium Hotel on West 44th Street was discovered missing. Menking’s Sign uses a collage of news clippings and text to remark on the infamous and illegal destruction of four SRO hotels that once stood where the Millennium is now located. The incident took place several years ago when Harry Macklowe, real estate speculator, art collector, and owner of the SROs, demolished the buildings overnight with people still in them who were forced to flee into the street. Macklowe himself was never prosecuted or fined. The management of the Millennium removed the sign on October 28th of this year claiming it made finding the entrance of the building confusing (see New York Times Nov. 15, 1998: “Some Legal History Still Being Overturned” in the City Section p. 6).

On Wednesday November 25th, the day before the Thanksgiving holiday, REPOhistory and NYLPI receive letters from the management of the Millennium Hotel stating that the sign is bad for their business and cautioning us that they will seek damages if the sign outside the hotel is re-hung or even if the sign downtown on St. Andrews Plaza remains on public view! Despite this threat the sign was replaced and the project with most of the images intact continued till the end of the permit period.

Nicolas Lampert interviews Gregory Sholette

NL REPOhistory had a very interesting history of its own. Could you briefly explain the work and concepts behind REPOhistory to someone unfamiliar with the project.

GS REPOhistory was founded in 1989 in New York City by a heterogeneous group of visual artists, performers, activists and educators. Between 1992 and 2000 the group produced over a dozen collaborative art projects primarily in public locations in New York City and Atlanta, Georgia. The group’s mission consisted of “repossessing” the unknown or forgotten histories of working class men and women, of minorities and children, at specific urban sites. REPOhistory’s primary means of doing this involved three components. First, we installed a series of artist-designed, street signs at or near the location of each “lost” history to be “recovered.” Second, we created maps of the entire region of the city undergoing one of REPOhistory’s historical revisions and then printed and distributed these for free. And finally, we made certain to publicize these critical re-mapping projects and not in the art press only, but in mass media publications including The New York Times and the Village Voice.

However from my perspective at least, REPOhistory’s mission was not merely a making visible of “other” histories, other peoples, other cultures in order to “steal back” this or that lost history or curios or antiquated historical detail, but an attempt to initiate a public dialogue about present day concerns. I understood the group’s practice as a salvaging of some version of a public sphere, to retrieve a critical space for discourse and dissent from the hegemony of mass consumerism and corporate culture that dominates modern life. But why the focus on history?

Every REPOhistory alumni will have their own take on this but mine is based on the somewhat utopian politics of redemption embedded in the work of Walter Benjamin and
Fredric Jameson among others. History or better yet, collective memory stands in relation to the present like the Id or the “it” does to consciousness. At once fascinating and monstrous it is the very “otherness” of history that posits both hope and danger. The hope is that of past generations for a “better” world tomorrow. The danger is, as Marx pointed out, the very weight of the past pressing upon the lives of the living . . . so that is my sense of what fueled our mission: a practice that is activist, didactic, liberatory and not without risk. Curiously, when you consider the fact that on more than a few occasions our “salvaging” of specific histories actually caused a ruckus, for example our 1998-99 project Civil Disturbances in particular, there exists strong indication that recalling the past can indeed redeem this residual utopian potential.

NL What originally inspired the idea for REPOhistory?

GS There is no simple answer to this question of proper origins, nor for REPOistory or perhaps any group. But I can say with certainty that REPOhistory’s inaugural meeting took place in May of 1989 when a dozen people gathered in response to a three-page proposal that I wrote and distributed initially to a group of colleagues. My proposal outlined what I informally called a “history project” and was itself based loosely on another public art project from 1988 called Points of Reference in which invited artists installed site specific work about the veiled Nazi past in Graz Austria. My retailored proposal called on artists to “retrieve and relocate absent historical narratives at specific locations in New York City through counter-monuments, actions, and events.” What emerged from the first meeting was a public art intervention that instead of exposing a hidden fascist past would offer a critical counterpoint to the then upcoming celebration of the Columbus Quin-centenary planned for 1992. The Lower Manhattan Sign Project, the group’s first public installation, was the eventual outcome of the direction taken at this first meeting. We then spent almost two years formulating the first public art project while reading books including Howard Zinn’s People’s History of the United States. One could almost say that our inaugural project was a graphic tribute to Zinn’s revisionist project.
Another strong contributing factor to the group’s formation was a 1988 organizing effort to produce an illustrated booklet called “How To ‘92” that offered artistic ways of countering the Columbus celebration planned several years hence. Of the future members of REPOhistory Mark O’Brien, Todd Ayoung, Lisa Maya Knauer, Jayne Pagnucco, Tom Klem, Jim Costanzo, Neill Bogan, Janet Koenig, Betti Sue Hertz, Megan Pugh, and Lise Prown all played key roles in the formation and collective management of the group.

NL Looking at the art shown in museums, galleries, periodicals and art schools in the United States, one would probably come to the conclusion that political art is close to nonexistent. What do you think are some of the reasons behind this lack of political art in our society? Is it simply a case of it being created and not shown? Or are artists in general not interested in the subject?

GS I think both your hypotheses have validity. As you suggest, artists in general are disinclined towards explicit political commentary in their work by the circumscribed nature of the art world. By the term art world I mean the integrated, transnational economy of auction houses, dealers, collectors, international biennials and trade publications that, together with curators, artists and critics, reproduce the market, as well as the discourse that influences the appreciation and demand for highly valuable artworks. And while a certain dalliance in political content moves in and out of fashion within the art world, few artists seriously interested in pursuing a career attempt any sustained engagement with worldly concerns not directly impinging on the narrow self-interest of the art world itself. The result is too often a neutralizing form of irony whenever politics does make an appearance in galleries, museums and so forth. Having stated this, there is a great deal of creative work being produced with social and political intent most of which is simply not seen. This work, some of it naïve in content and/or form but always impassioned can be found on display in community centers, union halls and churches. It has also recently become visible over the internet and in the carnivalesque street demonstrations that have marked the counter-globalization movement of recent years. There are also a few exhibition spaces where such work is...
occasionally still exhibited including college and university art galleries and alternative spaces such as Exit Art. But this raises another impediment to political engagement on the part of artists and that is money. In a profession where most people work two or three jobs simply to make ends meet it is a hard sell suggesting that artists should handicap themselves still more by making work that is of limited interest to the few sources of financial support that do exist.

NL I was interested in a quote of yours from a recent interview that you did with “Groups and Spaces” (http://www.groupsandspaces.net/e_zine1.html)

What happened in my opinion by the end of the 80s was this: the art world selected a few, individual artists making “political art” or “art with social content” and set about legitimating them within the museum and within the art historical canon. Meanwhile, the broad base of such activity that had led to the very possibility of this recognition was thrust back into darkness, a darkness I should add that made us invisible not just to the institutional center but also each other.

Could you expand upon this topic, in particular those who are legitimized. I sense that artists that rise from the underground to fame in established art circles, in a sense become what they once rebelled against. A “Rage Against the Machine” scenario where the message is diluted by the carrier.

GS The entire history of middle class notions of art rest on a controlled self-criticism and at times even lampoonery of high art itself. At certain times political art fits that bill nicely. At other times it is formally extreme works and still other times it is sexually explicit imagery and so forth and so on. That is not to invalidate the importance of these moments of rupture such as brought about by early Conceptual Art any more than one should simply dismiss socially critical work that ends up in museums. But the problem that seems to repeat itself each time politicized art “has its day” is the way recognition within the legitimating institutions of the art world evacuates the critical punch of the art itself. Why is
that? In my view one reason is that no political art practice can succeed at truly challenging the status quo beyond a certain aesthetic reformism if it is not linked in a meaningful way to real-world (not art world) movements aimed at progressive social change. Short of this, political art that situates itself primarily as a critique of bourgeois institutions largely exists as a sort of rehearsal at best. Besides, this leaning into the wind of history, a “history” that is formulated by the limited horizon of capitalist imagination to boot, is not that different from other kinds of avant-garde and neo-avant-garde art practices. Nevertheless it is vital to illuminate this process both within and outside the mechanisms of art high art that is. For example the history of collective art practice, most of it linked to left culture, remains to be excavated. I believe that were such a history to be written it would overturn a great deal of what museums present as the genealogy of art. The same is true of the entire range of creative work produced within society. I recently have called this the Dark Matter of the art world and theorize that its increasing visibility via ever more affordable digital and web-based technologies in particular is not only affecting art world practices, but is threatening the very foundation of value production within these elitist institutions and discourses.

NL: In the same interview, you stated.

It is apparent that today a similar kind of cross-over phenomenon in which artists move away from a strictly art world context and into an activist or autonomous mode, is taking place. This new activism is most visible in the WTO counter-actions in various international cities. Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt have even described these new activists as “Nomadic Revolutionaries.” What one finds is the participation of academically trained artists working beside “non” professionals and political activists all involved in transforming collective dissent into an energetic and pleasurable carnival. Let me repeat that it is invigorating to see this crossover activity happening and perhaps this time, thanks to the self-awareness and cleverness . . . as well as the increased visibility and networking.
potential afforded by new technologies, things will go differently.

Could you give some examples of this cross over of artists to activist that inspire you.

GS Certainly. The range of cross-over art activism is quite amazing. The groups I like to cite in this regard include RTmark, Ultra-Red, Temporary Services, Wolkenklausure, Las Agencias, Critical Art Ensemble, Reclaim the Streets, The Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping, The Center for Land Use Interpretation, Ne Pas Plier. To one extent or another each of these organizations involves or has included in specific projects both trained artists as well as non-art activists. Some of the work is so “borderline” in between art and activism that it is does not even register on the art world’s radar screen. And that may be a very good thing if not indefinitely at least for the moment. Admittedly my observations are largely anecdotal, but while there is as yet no effort yet to conceive of or let alone produce an over arching networking structure or political agenda, the existence of this growing interest in such collaborative practices among younger artists is encouraging.

NL Many of the new tools available to artist and activists revolve around computer technology and the Internet. One could say that we are playing into the hands of the very technology that the power structure (the military/industrial complex) has developed and uses to their full capacity. Why not instead focus on a more ecological path, one based on true survival techniques such as learning how to grow your own food and getting back to more land based/community based forms of living. What are your thoughts on these opposing paths?

GS At the risk of reductivism I must say that this is in many respects a very old debate. You can see remnants of it in the historic battles between Anarchists and Marxists, between the Soviet “left” artists of the Proletcult and the avant-garde Constructivists (now that was a real culture war!) and again in the Cultural Revolution of China or even lesbian separatism in the 70s. In many respects each revolves around a similar question of developing independent and autonomous social structures versus a “stealing back” of the means of production and therefore the very wealth and control of society. My thoughts, for what they are worth, are to rethink the entire metaphor of divergent paths itself. Consider first that given the apparent incompetence of the intelligence and military prior to the horrific events of September 11, 2001 one should not monumentalize these institutions any more than museums or universities. The creative potential of the masses, as Antonio Negri refers to the contemporary public, is not likely to be fully circumvented by even the most sophisticated technologies. I say use them for progressive ends, while remaining cautious about their limits, as well as one’s own limits both historically and politically. The other side of your equation is in need of an equal deconstruction. While imagining and attempting to produce a provisional autonomy is important, one can not be seduced into believing there is such a thing as a “clean slate” or a safe place from which to build a new and sovereign culture. Derrida writes about this desire to ‘start from scratch’ in his essay, “The Ends of Man: Reading Us,” first published in France in 1969 and warns that,

To decide to change terrain, in a discontinuous and irruptive fashion, by brutally placing oneself outside [is risking a form of] trompe-l’oeil perspective in which such a displacement can be caught, thereby inhabiting more naively and more strictly than ever the inside one declares one has deserted. . . .

The solution he proposes is one I offer you now: to weave aspects of each of these “paths” you refer to, as well as other strategies both old and new, into a hybrid, progressive theory and practice. This emerging framework may at first seem improbable, even monstrous but who said that making a revolution would be a walk in the woods?

(Entire interview available at: http://www.drawingresistance.org)
This is public art; I found it. Art made by the public in a stairwell where it would be seen passing between floors, an interspace installation, and maybe, even probably, made by more than one person. Near as I can tell, there was no funding from any direct source. Rather, this was spontaneous possession signified by art not unlike astronauts planting the flag on the moon. I found it—in a building under renovation—not just any building—but at 25 Science Park at Yale. It used to serve as the corporate headquarters of Olin and was at the head of the former mighty Olin-Winchester arms park that, incidentally, supplied both sides during the early phases of World War I before we entered the conflict ourselves. At the time of installation, #25 looked cratered; there was water and mud inside, strange markings and odd detritus, even a few .22 caliber bullets on the second floor floor. This art stood out for being more organized than the place itself.
Perhaps it was inevitable that the phone booth would disappear. As the city grew ever more conscious of misappropriation of public street furniture—the comforts of benches and bus shelters gave way to fears of perches for vagrants. Maybe it was sooner, a more nefarious plot hatched sometime after Superman disrobed in the booth, an attempt to prevent others from doing the same. Before everyone had telephones in their pockets, the public phone was a city necessity. A nuisance and a convenience—

"Are you through?"

"How much longer do you think you are going to be?"

"Spare change, spare change, spare change . . ."

Trying to find an apartment and a job without the infrastructure of office support, the half booths were my only tools aside the copy shop fax. In an attempt to offer a modicum of privacy, this Private Office for Public Phones provided temporary support for the seeking. Cut on one face to enclose a public pedestal phone, and with a door latch, seat and writing surface on the inside, The Office spent nearly one month rolling from phone to phone in the East Village, NYC, April, 1996. One day, like the enclosed booths that preceded it, the Office vanished.
Accompanied by the gentle whirr of a generator, the crystal cut refractions of the solitary cyclist's slow passage illuminates dark and sleepy streets.

falling
between buildings
a catalogue of street furniture
(bone china made bone)
(porcelain more than gold)

I
commission

the object to be seen, must use more sensate wisdom"
without
consensus on the soft curve of bicep, monument, thought
or fountain,
absence or tomb—public before death (intimacy of
lovers in a willow garden)
an ugly man carrying a rose; every entrance through
advertising added before—prior—
and after—(two people eating)
I throw only a shadow on space/non-space I date I sell
too often  ah, lost
we pray for the dominican community (she mistaken
seems)
“make it there”  shouting music fills the empty chair

II
make it there

the fabric of an act synonymous with the content of an act
what is the proportion of a square
the proportion of curtilage measured in forearms
numbers sight-line—I, you, he, she, we . . . (for disguise
read art)—
the form of things separated from matter

the rational order and harmony expressed by him
language, mathematics, mausoleum ask:
  is the aspiration to music only choice of red
or purple
man is [p.17] the mode and measure of all things, all acci-
dents of things are known through comparison to the acci-
dents of man"
(originally no bridge with people crossing over)

III
installation

(domestic ware for export )
Like other members of the family he transferred his activities
to a city with an important branch of the Alberti banks”—
the renaissance and double entry bookkeeping
columns of mediations true invention—I throw only our
shadow (adjusted for export order)
what is the proportion of outputs and on to outcomes
fearing song and paper (what will become you and I?)

III
 ceremony

intone clap—birth of a with a celebratory poem.
look at the stairs, betrayed in the nuances will betray
is always the test
a habit of living among furniture that I didn’t relish, and in
false positions”
but still there are people who don’t get snow  without
consensus on the soft curve of bicep, monument, thought
or fountain,
collection rejoices in the strikingly civic and
corporate
investing in creativity can pay dividends
many buildings inverting—it’s the buildings, stupid
standing in front of statues
plinths bereft of day, night, in, out,
it’s only need for beauty = depression
randomly numbered it’s about
maintenance

moving lines in first and fourth place, epigones apply
(the "apple-tree" or the two doves
these being added later) every entrance through
advertising owned by or
for
empty falling between buildings
echo to board against wheel, ephemeral signature texts
and local styles of survival

polyurethane or terethene agents prevent adhesion, facilitate
removal of
spray paints, inks, crayons, markers and"
coatings, permanent and sacrificial
risk assessment risk disclaimer against most harms claims
(as am man as am woman is desperate leaving)

directions

without the interposition of other agencies or conditions ten
large granito Rosa Porrino stone pieces set in a constellation
of locations: one column marks each of the two main en-
trances to the central group, seven four metre tall slabs are
installed on a flat plateau surrounded by trees; the largest slab
of eight metres high marks where the former railtrack meets
with three other paths. The stones are split horizontally and/
or vertically into several parts, then reassembled into their
original forms, the first section of which is set into the earth
to act as a base.

By car: leave M60 at junction 17 (sign posted to Whitefield).
Travel north to Bury. Turn left at traffic lights on to higher
lane (A665). Turn left at second lights on to Ringley Road
West (A667). The site is on the right, bounded by Elm
Avenue and Wood Street.

While writing, I asked the following questions:

How do the economics, ideology or process of commissioning
public art inform/deform the social experience of public space?

How do the languages of public art—aesthetic, commercial,
architectural, community, public, private, technical, project
management, and location (the latter an unmediated conclu-
sion)—function together?

What is the relationship between public art and (parenthesized)
domestic art?

To what extent are Renaissance ideas of public space, architecture
and accountancy (the epoch's least recognized "achievement")
more influential than modernism or modern capitalism on
current public art commissioning?

What are the distortions of capital on the artistic creation and
public need?

How have corporate/state concepts of public space overwhelmed
human experience and Smithson's analysis of site and non-site?

What is the fate of the artwork after it is installed?
The exploitation of Sodium Nitrate in the Peruvian province of Tarapacá was linked early on to the Chilean economy. Already in 1842, Valparaiso was the business center of the emerging saltpeter industry: this was the port through which the ships sailed from Tarapacá en route to the Atlantic. In the early days of 1870 three fourths of all saltpeter transactions were negotiated in Valparaiso. Local, foreign and national companies negotiated this substance actively, giving credit to the producers in Tarapacá and supplying the saltpeter companies with food mostly.

Business links were reinforced by the presence of Chilean workers and businessmen in the region. The Chilean census of 1875 calculated that there was 15 thousand Chileans in Tarapacá, to which must be added another 4,800 in the saltpeter activities in Antofagasta. Also, there were pioneers, such as Pedro Gamboni, a native of Valparaiso who promoted the application of indirect steam in the saltpeter industry as well as the capital contributions of various corporations established in Valparaiso. In fact, between 1871 and 1873, 11 saltpeter companies were established in this port city.

London’s Permanent Committee on Nitrate, established in 1889 by the representatives of all British companies and Asociación Salitrera de Propaganda, was created in 1894 and based in Iquique, where trade organizations linking the producers worked together to promote the use of saltpeter in agriculture.

The restructuring of Asociación Salitrera de Propaganda in 1911, in the context of a debate between the producers as to the role of the State in the promotion of the fertilizer, weakened the position of the saltpeter producers of Iquique. Upon amending their bylaws, they considered the possibility of moving their main offices to Valparaiso in order to be closer to the government offices, which was done two years later. On the other hand, and as a result of these changes, London’s Permanent Committee, which only included British Companies, was replaced by the Chilean Nitrate Committee, where there was an equal number of delegates appointed in Chile and London, as well as two Government representatives. It was the government authorities who—concerned about the uncertain future of the saltpeter industry in face of competition from other nitrogenous substances—
promoted the organization and rationalization of the saltpeter industry. The result of this was the establishment in 1919 of the Asociación de Productores de Salitre de Chile, based in Valparaíso. Besides taking over the functions of Asociación Salitrera de Propaganda, its aim was to establish production quotas and centralize sales. The vast majority of producers joined this organization with the sole exception of the North American companies who couldn’t do it because of legal restrictions in their own country.

The world economic crisis that had such a devastating impact on the Chilean economy had grave consequences for Valparaíso’s financial life. The dramatic fall of Chile’s foreign trade had a massive impact on the large Valparaíso companies. Although most of these companies managed to survive the crisis and adapt to the new circumstances, they lost importance in relation to the country’s economy as a whole.

More important still, the old saltpeter industry, integrated into the commercial world of Valparaíso, was reorganized in a vain attempt to maintain its importance in the world market. In the new structure, the main actors were the Chilean state and the American company Guggenheim Bros. Valparaíso had little or nothing to say in this. Also, saltpeter was soon displaced by what became known as “the greater copper mining industry” as the main source of income from exports. The companies operating in Chile were subsidiaries of great American companies that did not require the services of Valparaíso’s business community to sell their product. Moreover, the volume of capital investment in both areas of saltpeter and copper—just the investment in Chuquicamata was estimated at US $150 million in 1925—was way beyond the financial capacity of the large companies which, as we have seen, operated with relatively modest amounts of capital.

In "Blanco de la Minada," Vélasco focuses on the “archaeology of knowledge” of the site of her intervention. In the curatorial exercise titled “A Escala (scale version),” she recites the history and memory of the place by spreading around the saltpeter, deploying a scriptural gesture on the traces of the city in a layout that is a discontinuation of place and which inscribes, with minimal calligraphy, a sign that brings to mind other resonances; such as the splendor of the architecture during the period of the bonanza of the exploitation of saltpeter in Chile’s north, when British entrepreneurs built in that sector of Valparaíso a scaled-down version of European architectural models.

Vélasco examined all these associations in situ, having first produced the work. Therefore, within the curatorial exercise “A
Escala," "Blanco de la Mirada" re-signifies the memory of the place, generating a new spatial condition where the viewer abandons the passive role of museum visitor. Here, the "outside of the picture" of real and mental space is put in a critical relationship with the perception of the city's boundaries.

As a transitory museographic operation, it functions as an "imaginary museum." What remains, as evidence of the deployment of the work, is the photographic record. The existence of Velasco's work is embodied by that evidence, given that as a supporting surface for the traces of saltpeter, "Blanco de la Mirada" evaporates in the illusionism of the drizzle of evening rain that falls over the re-imagined city.

—Alberto Madrid Letelier
"Other Spaces" consists of a series of performative interventions in outdoor urban spaces. In the specific context of New York City, a place in which so-called public spaces are thoroughly administered, there are many spaces that are not completely subjected to control. Some are temporary and circumstantial; others are the result of prolonged decay. "Other Spaces" is part of "de-tour," a long-term investigation and articulation of potential spaces of dissent in the urban landscape, which has often taken the form of an exploration of negative spaces in architecture.
ANNEWALDMAN
Foxes in the Hen House

Connaughton Holmstead Raley Myers Sansonetti Bernhardt Smith
Foxes in the henhouse You’d better act quick

Timbers going down in Tongass National Woods
Giant Sequoia turned to roof shingles, someone gets the goods

Man in charge says we’ve got paper to burn
Zealots in charge boost Paper Industry’s scorn

Foxes in the henhouse, Industry Moles on Capitol Hill
What will it take to save the Clean Air Clean Water Rights Bill

Climate change—ignore it!
Superfund cleanup—shove it, shrink it, destroy it
Air quality rules are relaxin’
Let’s have some more broken taxin’

What does it take to admit the North Pole’s melting down
“Clear Skies” another euphemism from the Evil Doer Clown

USA accounts for quarter of carbon monoxide worldwide
Armageddon pundits pray for planet suicide

Censor global warning reports go into deep denial
Heh What the fuck? It’s Bush-Cheney fundamentalist style

Foxes in the henhouse Foxes in the henhouse
It’s totally out of hand
When you gonna wake up, take your environmental stand?

They loosen pollution standards
Overhaul every sane protective Act
Salmon massively die in Oregon River Klamath

Coal industry’s doing fine while wetlands & wilderness come to grief
Let the cattle graze on public lands
National Cattlemen’s Association sells more beef

Foxes in the henhouse the situation’s dire
Oil drilling on the move
Iraq a huge quagmire

Arsenic, mercury, vinyl chloride, lead
not to mention 9/11 dust you gonna soon be dead

Not one species added to the Endangered Species list
Get out there all you environmentalists with collective raised fist!

Foxes in the henhouse it’s getting out of hand
You can’t be idle while
Stealth tactics assault precious motherland

Griles Rey Connaughton Holmstead Raley Myers
Foxes in the henhouse, they’re pathological liars.

Connaughton Holmstead Sansonetti Berhnardt Smith
Foxes in the henhouse you’d better act quick!

Foxes in the henhouse it’s totally out of hand
When you gonna wake up take your environmental stand?
"Foxes in the Henhouse," a political action pop song was written specifically for Poets for Peace readings in front of New York Public Library, St Mark's Church In-the-Bowery, and Bowery Poetry Club. It calls out the villains appointed by current terrorist junta in DC to "protect our environment" as enemies to planet earth. Ironies obvious here. This song is available to anyone and all are invited to invent their own music to further the "message."

ALLAN WEXLER

In the Shadow of the Wind

In the Shadow of the Wind is a permanent sculpture installed at the base of a wind turbine. The sculpture's shape is based on the shadow cast by the wind turbine at the moment of the summer solstice. The ephemeral shape of the graceful turbine's shadow has been made permanent. The 240 feet long artwork is constructed in concrete. Its surface is embedded with chunks of coal mined from a local, now defunct, coal mine. Through the incorporation of coal and tree trunks, the artwork explores the environmental issues of clean wind energy versus previously used fossil fuels.

In the Shadow of the Wind, located in a farm field near a residential area, functions as a community park. Because the landscaping is hilly some portions of the artwork are at ground level while others are three feet off the ground. These areas, complete with tree trunk stools, create picnic table surfaces and community gathering spaces.
... flowered wreaths pay homage to the statue of the surfer, his muscular figure beside a tall board—lord of the lighthouse, the perfect waves, and the fog creeping through the fallen cypress, pines and feathered grasses.


Even karaoke can open up a haunted-mirror space of banality and trans-Pacific dreaming: whenever Rob Wilson was in a karaoke club with cultural studies friends, say, in Seoul, Taipei, or (even) Honolulu during the transnationalizing 1990s he was asked to sing (compelled to enjoy as Zizek might put this) lyrics to that Mommas and Pappas ode to US west coast bliss, “California Dreaming.”

_California dreaming, on a winter’s day:_ It's a hymn to beatnik wanderlust and global homesickness (for west coast New Age church) which for aging-hipster me was only slightly less cloying than Jack Kerouac being forced to croon that other John Phillips-penned anthem to California-as-space-of-global-redemption, “If You’re Going to San Francisco, Be Sure to Wear Some Flowers in Your Hair.” Hippie-era lyrics embarrassingly close to the historical becoming-dharma-bum trajectories of this born-in Connect/1 cut life of Rob Wilson who had re-located his trope-quest life to Berkeley in 1967.

After some twenty two years of working in Hawai’i and year-long forays to teach in Korea, Massachusetts, Japan, and Taiwan, he did end up living again in California, dwelling in Santa Cruz beside the spectacular Pacific coast at Monterey Bay in Northern California, where the Pacific Ocean turbulence abides as a sublime space of transnational becoming and mongrel otherness even as mimed to the bad karaoke music of transnational/local surf culture.
The public statue honoring this local art and music here in Santa Cruz is not that of Duke Kahanamoku with his Hawaiian back turned un-indigenously to the breakwater Pacific surf in Waikiki Beach: but this anonymous white surfer dude gazing, chock-a-block, like some oceanic astronaut launching heavenward along the millionaire terraces, joggers, and companionable dogs of West Cliff Drive in Santa Cruz. He (whatever his history of prior possession or will to embody a Santa Cruz local-poetics) holds his wooden long-board proudly erect, he dwells near eternity by this Pacific Ocean walkway and bike paths.1 Maybe he looks small and humble by now, haunted in his frail muscles and languagelessness by cultural lack, localness, secondary status:

white man becoming-Hawaiian along California dirt paths, becoming water being, born-again water-baby of Pacific Man immensity and CA dog-town X coastal survival. Anonymous, alone, a local surf-poet claiming as his/her this tagged and boarded space of stylistic renewal and the makings of a counter-cultural contado on the Pacific Rim, detourning suburban mission towns like Santa Cruz, Santa Barbara, Venice Beach.2 Turning the Pacific coastal space into youth culture, worlded world of oceanic poetry and home-grown sport.3

It is a lot easier to dwell with him/this Wes Reed icon, go with the flowing lines of this modest poetics and frail macho-claim upon eternity here, dwelling with/as this “white surfer dude” statue, than I did with the Native Hawaiian godhead statue of Duke Kahanamoku with his huge wooden long-board in Waikiki, to whom the white sand and lava beaches in Hawai‘i belonged for centuries before Captain Cook or Jack London with his James-Michener-becoming-US-statehood writing crew) got here to take American landfall, to take dominion over the language and beachhead at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel and Outrigger Canoe Club.3

Space and time shrunk into trans-global karaoke dialogue of half-forgotten show tunes and rock lyrics like “Sukiyaki” or “Jailhouse Rock,” there abides “on the beach” at Waikiki a statue of the Duke beckoning aloha before a white-immigrant settler citizen of Honolulu statehood to whom this tourist icon of surfing culture (or irony) stood as a white-colonial rebuke on King Kaulakau Avenue that was not mine/his to name. This statue of the Duke suggested a way of commemrating the Hawaiian native culture and surf art that was, in effect, an artful American way of simulating/displacing the indigenous into an ex-primitive bronzed icon of the global-tourist service industry in its movement from luxury liner days of the SS Lurline to mass jet travel to Friendly Skies of United.

This statue of the Duke at Waikiki (dedicated in Honolulu in 1990 to honor the centennial of his birth) became a way of phasing out the native, honoring its disappearing presence, his ‘defeated sovereignty’ as a duke (or as a king or queen), tourists cruising into Hulas Bar on Kuhi Street ... say brah who invented these karaoke tunes and bars to lap-top sex back alleys of Waikiki, as if the Duke was forever disappearing into some kind of Duty Free zone for Elvis and Dennis Wilson and a host of surf-and-sex haunted tourists to flow in and out of the indigenous spaces and local pours of Bamboo Ridge with infinite yen and recycled zen and lost-in-translation Suntory ads to the surf.
To put ten thousand flower leis upon the heavy bronze shoulders of the Duke, to strangle him with honor and sadness, like the statue of King Kamehameha getting strangled with a trillion rings of Hawaiian flowers on Lei Day or Aloha Day at the Honolulu courthouse across from Iolani Palace, his one Hawaiian hand welcoming, his one royal Hawaiian hand holding out a spear to rebuke the plotting white citizens overthrowing the Hawaiian nation, to no avail.6

But this statue of the Duke, it was not what I would take to be an icon of authentic Hawaiian art or monument to an abiding native form or cultural-survival tactic coming down from haunted days of King Ka-lani-opu-u on the Big Island (for whom surfing the ocean waves into land was a way of taking possession, showing mana as an entitlement and mele worthy of the place and the community and the gods).7 The Duke was a belated warrior-king poet of his own days an Olympic swimming global/local hero rumored to have mated with Doris Duke, to have lived on salmon tuna and onion sandwiches.

The diet of the white surfer dude: he moves from Twinkies, peanut butter, and Diet Cokes to alfalfa sprout sandwiches and power bars, ginseng ginger ale from Odawalla. “This beach for locals only!” Signs are put up to enforce surfing protocols and brochures made to promote codes of politeness (“the Aloha Spirit”) on the waves of Santa Cruz beaches, to protect the waters from macho threat of “surf turf nazis.”8

His presence as white-surfer dude statue standing watch over the sea is a way of signing and possessing, a quiet way of claiming this beach for local possession via bronze veneration, not too far from the Surf Museum at the Mark Abbott Memorial Lighthouse which commemorates the long durée of transpacific surfing as history of criss-crossing customs moving across ocean from Hawai‘i to Santa Cruz, North Shore to Mavericks and Monterey Bay.

The white native is not so much on the beach but above it on the dirt, evoking his quiet gaze like an eternal lifeguard, as if one of awestruck semi-goofy non-dominion.9

Here the skinny surfer evinces a low-key worship of natural sublimity, admiring the transpacific godhead of oceanic consciousness which is worthy of honoring, feeling native and humble, more at home in this town planted by the sea. (At least he is not Leland Stanford grinning over his railroad ranch lands or a mission padre named Hidalgo with his foot on the neck of an Indio native at the SF Civic Center or the Union Square Monument to Admiral Dewey in 1898 taming ex-colonial natives in the Philippines for US imperial splendor.)10

White surfer dude, gazing off into his own karaoke surf music, shutting off the war-machine heroics and elevator music at least for the oceanic nonce where sky meets the sea in Santa Cruz, this place of holy crossings.

1 This traveling-at-home piece on Santa Cruz was written by Yamashita for Ryuta Inafuku’s trans-PacifiC Café Creole web journal: see http://www.cafecreole.net/travelogue/karen/circleK2.html#september1998
2 The song was given uncanny Pacific Rim shelf-life in the Wang Kar-wai 1994 HK film Chungking Express wherein a lunch-counter girl dreams her way out of entrapped misery and poverty in back alley slums of Hong Kong by dreaming of starting a new life as an airline stewardess and flying to California, which she sings and dreams about each day until she really does fly off from Hong Kong to CA. She leaves a local cop far behind, lost in local materiality and male misery.
3 Some locals here would connect this anonymous surfer statue to an implicit mode of honoring Wes Reed, so-called Mayor of surfing in icy waters at Cowell’s Beach and Steamer’s Lane in Santa Cruz who started surfing daily in the depression-era when local boards were made out of surplus balsa wood and wetsuits did not exist. One website even misrecognizes the anonymous White Surfer Dude Statue as a Santa Cruz statue “honoring the legendary Hawaiian surfer and Olympian, Duke
people are being displaced from their homeland or made into homeless and water to public space anyway, that was the joke, that he was the model. actually the resemblance was uncanny.

the erection of this statue in 1905 was not as bad, putting up in santa cruz in 1905 it was him.

on the surfer-based hawaiian poetic-of-place of this big island chief, "terrifying" uncle of king kamehameha i, who was held hostage by british during the slaying of captain cook, see rob wilson, "shark god on trial," tamkang review xxiv (1995): 219-234.

the city of santa cruz has funded a "surfing way" brochure to protect against localism intensifying along ocean breaks: see paul mcHugh, "surfing's scary wave," san francisco chronicle, may 15, 2003: C11. what is needed, the sc brochure claims, is more "aloha spirit," letting others have their share of the waves and giving respect to get respect. on the postcolonial ironies of such claims to bespeak (a tourist-industry version) of the aloha spirit of native hawaiians even as these indigenous people are being displaced from their homeland or made into an american ethnic minority, see juliana spaiht, fuck you-aloha-i love you (middletown, ct: wesleyan up, 2001).

in an email to me on january 4, 2004, karen tei yamashita (who has written about the toji-becoming-multicultural whiteness of santa cruz) muses upon the missing-referent for mr. white surfer dude: "the white surfer dude. i'm so happy you've made this connection. when ronald was at the agro-ecology farm program back in 95 or so, there was a guy who looked like the sc surfer statue doing farming with him. anyway, that was the joke, that he was the model. actually the resemblance was uncanny. so not only could he be white, but vegetarian, a beekeeper and organic farmer, who got his training at ucsc. one other thing, i think he got the organic bug in europe, maybe scandinavia, where his brother lives. but hey, i'll buy it that's it's you: rob wilson. but in your research, who was the model anyway?" (i was later told by old-time surfers and museum-guides from the santa cruz surfing club which had funded the erection of this statue in 1992, that "we wanted the statue to be anonymous, so that anyone could think it was him." in quest of this homegrown everyman function, a professional male model from san francisco was used as a model for this white surfer statue cast in bronze by thomas marsh and brian curtis.) most people i asked about the statue felt ok with its humble local presence.

on the imperial splendor of public art works like these and the will to evoke the greco-roman sublimity of civic spaces and heroic statues in san francisco, which became a way of linking this global city to the material resources of a vast asia/pacific and latin american "contado" ( hinterlands), see gray brechin, imperial san francisco: urban power, earthly ruin (berkeley: university of california press, 1999), for example on the naval or admiral dewey monument erected in union square in 1903 to watch over "zones unromanized," pp. 147-152. the james lick pioneer monument in sf civic center depicts an indian fallen at the feet of a franciscan missionary and a spanish vaquero: see rand richards, historic walks in san francisco (san francisco: heritage house, 2002), p. 52. this 1000 ton monument of granite and bronze was given to the city by the pioneer become wealthy oligarch james lick to depict california's early settler history, which it does as indigenous grimmace: imperial symptom incarnating the will to dominate and demean by means of christian pioneer mythology. the white surfer dude of santa cruz is a beat franciscan of the lowlands compared to this kind of public art...
No triumph of peace is quite so great as the supreme triumph of war.
—Theodore Roosevelt

For our Native people, Asian success proves to be but the latest elaboration of foreign hegemony. The history of our colonization becomes a twice-told tale, first of discovery and settlement by European and American businessmen and missionaries, then of the plantation Japanese, Chinese, and eventually Filipino rise to dominance in the islands.
—Haunani-Kay Trask

Puowaina, the Native Hawaiian name for what American settlers in O'ahu call Punchbowl crater, is the site of the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. The official literature on “Punchbowl cemetery” says that over 38,000 US veterans of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War lie buried within the caldera's grassy grounds.

I grew up partly in Pauoa, a small suburban community nestled in the valley bordering Punchbowl. From a large picture window in the living room of my maternal grandparents' house, my brother and I would watch the sharp, olive-and-gray profile of the crater change colors during dawn and dusk. My mother, a Honolulu-born-and-bred townie of Japanese ancestry, had told us that this was a popular tourist attraction, second only to Diamond Head among Honolulu's famous craters. “People from all over the states—I mean, the mainland—know Punchbowl,” she'd say.

Punchbowl is one of two permanent, American cemeteries for World War II soldiers whose families did not request the return of the soldiers' remains to the continental United States. The other location is the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial in the Philippines. Punchbowl is also one of two sites for America's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of World War II, where the United States government buried a total of six unidentified US “candidates” who had fought in the war's Pacific and European battles. The other site is the Fort McKinley American Cemetery and Memorial, also in the Philippines.

My maternal grandfather, a second-generation Yamaguchi Prefecture man raised on Hilo Plantation, had moved to Pauoa valley in the 1960s, after his fishing business in urban Kaka'ako accumulated enough money for him to buy a house in the suburbs.

From the onset of Hawai'i's Statehood in 1959, a growing middle class of East Asian settlers and their descendants had purchased property, often with cash, in rural valleys located close to Hawai'i's center of institutional power in downtown Honolulu. As the state's powerful new wave of elected politicians, government bureaucrats, white-collar professionals, and small businessmen, these “local” East Asian settlers had re-zoned generous chunks of countryside from conservation and agricultural lands into marketable property for commercial and residential development. Moving into communities like Pauoa, the settlers would transform what was once Native land into housing tracts for the settlers' now-Americanized, nuclear families.

My grandfather had bought mid-way into the valley, a large lot with banana and mango trees. He had enjoyed the view of Punchbowl, the gentle breezes at night, the coolness of the valley in the early morning.

The United States of America annexed the nations of Hawai'i and the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century during an expansionist period marked by America's colonization of other island countries: Puerto Rico, Cuba, Samoa, Guam. Though the Philippines later gained independence, both it and Hawai'i have, over the last hundred years, been heavily militarized by US forces, which built bases on the prime mountain and ocean-side lands of the islands' indigenous peoples. One marker of colonization is the construction of American national cemeteries on the soil of these peoples, patriotic plots mapping out official versions of the empire's history.
But I have fashioned my family memories within an iron cage of imperial nostalgia, requiring me to ignore the living record of what had been on the land before and what still struggles to remain and resist. Some Native Hawaiian families that had farmed and subsisted in Pauoa for thousands of years were displaced by this orchestrated violence of US economy and law, as East Asian settlers deployed the rules of American commerce to acquire the larger, more desirable lots. As their lands were taken over by the US colonial state and its Asian settler citizens, Native families moved to the lower, more crowded parts of the valley. To neighboring Papakōlea, a working-class, Hawaiian Homestead community, a type of increasingly limited land that had been officially designated for Hawaiians only, ostensibly free from the capitalistic development plans of white, and now Asian, settlers. Other Hawaiian families were pushed to areas above and adjacent to Pauoa on Punchbowl crater's slopes, which were hotter, drier, and less lush than the valley.

Part of the United States' colonization of these island countries, of Hawai'i and other nations, has been the militarization of indigenous lands, their transformation into "public" (colonial state) and "community" (colonial settler) mourning spaces, in patriotic ways that justify the importance of US military presence in the Pacific, Asia, and the Caribbean.

After World War II, for example, the American Battle Monuments Commission erected fourteen permanent military cemeteries (with their own chapels) dedicated to that war, as well as four separate memorials, on foreign soil.

The transformation of Native territory (like Punchbowl) into National Cemeteries and other US servicemen's memorials also helps encourage more working-class and poor Americans to join the US military, seeking exotic overseas adventure and a better life for themselves. The Americans in turn become part of a new colonizing force in other foreign countries. When the soldiers expire in battle or military service, some bodies get shipped back to places like Punchbowl cemetery, helping reinforce and naturalize the encroachment of the American state onto more Native lands. The patriotic romance weaving through the memorials, war maps, mass graves, tombstones, plaques, and other displays at Punchbowl inspires more young men—and now, in the Middle Eastern campaigns of the two President Bushes, young women—to chance turning into dead bodies for glory of the United States.

Public burials of US veterans are a political act of the state. The rituals and displays encourage visitors to recast the lives of their loved ones within a larger national narrative, erasing any contradictions, including that of the often-unnecessary, real deaths of these veterans. The colonial imagination sees no desecration in one last, symbolic use of cannon fodder.

Native Hawaiian nationalist, activist, and scholar, Haunani-Kay Trask writes about the contemporary meaning of this Hawaiian crater for the families of Native veterans in her poem, "Pūowaina: Flag Day":¹

Bring ginger, yellow and white, broken stalks with glossy leaves.

Bring lei hulu,² palapalai,³ pikake.⁴ Bring kapa,⁵ beaten fine as skin. Bring the children to chant for our dead, then stand with the lahui⁶ and burn their American flag.

On the other side if Pūowaina lies Roosevelt High School, named after President Theodore Roosevelt. In my mother's time, it was a public institution called an English standard school. Some East Asian kids from the suburbs had once joined the ranks of children of haole (white) settlers here, training in American Standard English, American history, American science, American business. The parents of these Asian children had often savored the fact that this was not a common school, that their children would intermingle with real Americans, not the dark-skinned masses.
My mom, a regular public school graduate who had been brought up in a working-class, semi-industrial area near downtown, used to say that Roosevelt kids were snobby and "haolefied." 7

In Punchbowl cemetery, beginning at the base of the stairs to the Memorial building and the Court of Honor, ten sets of vertically placed rows of wide granite slabs called the Courts of the Missing list the names of US soldiers lost in action, buried, or drowned at sea in the Pacific from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. The dead bodies of these 29,000 or so Americans, lives violently extinguished, had not returned to their homes and families, nor had they been retrieved for burial in this cemetery. In many cases, the people waiting at home had not even known the real reasons behind these wars, why the United States military command and Commander-in-Chief had sent their young off to die.

My first image of Teddy Roosevelt, Roosevelt High School's namesake, came from an illustrated biography that my Japanese grandparents had given me, based on advice from my parents. The American children's story, which emphasized the man's lovable, teddy-bear-like toughness and spirited passion for independence, went that Roosevelt had served as Assistant Secretary of the US Navy before the American populace elected him President. The original expansionist rough rider, he had led American troops, and worked behind the scenes, to "liberate" Puerto Rico and Cuba from the Spanish . . . and into US hands. Later in graduate school, I learned that Roosevelt had been a firm believer that "dominant" nations possessed the right to take over "inferior" ones for the latter's own good. Brown people from brown nations had to be civilized. As an English standard school, Roosevelt High School had reflected this philosophy.

My uncle, my mother's younger brother, had married a Roosevelt girl, a Japanese American career woman from a family of doctors. It was a mixed-class marriage, since my uncle came from rough wharfside Kaka'ako and had attended the common schools. But he later made good: as a Korean War veteran with the G.I. bill, he entered New York University for graduate business school, just in time to accompany her on her way to earning a Masters degree in home economics at Columbia University. They returned to the islands and served as minor players in local Asian society: she in the world of media homemaking, becoming a sort of Japanese Martha Stewart, teaching cohorts of nisei9 and sansei9 housewives to properly cook casseroles and chicken hekka for their nuclear families; he in the realm of tourism, selling packaged "paradise" dinner shows to white visitors from the US continent. Japanese settlers of this generation played a major part in the prostitution and assimilation of Native Hawaiian culture and people, through the expansion of the tourist industry and through the cultural homogenization of "local" communities, transformations which my family believed in profoundly.

Many Western scholars of global history and politics argue that the United States had entered the Pacific theatre of World War II not to fight for democracy, but rather, to expand its territory into Asia and the Pacific. Even conservative writers admit that after Japan fell, America's official and actual takeover of diverse island nations in the Pacific Rim had been a pragmatic step towards this goal. Some critics of the United States' involvement in Korea, Vietnam, and southeast Asia also see these actions as neo-colonial wars, as part of the Cold War, as a struggle between two dominant world powers.

Inscribed along the top edge of Punchbowl's Memorial building is a list of World War II battles—actually, battles named after island cities, nations, locations, and societies—in which American and Japanese forces had clashed in the Pacific. On the left of the entrance: "Pearl Harbor * Wake * Coral Sea * Midway * Attu * Solomons * Gilberts." On the right: "Marshalls * Marianas * Leyte * Iwo Jima * Okinawa * Tokyo * Korea." This list reads like a mapping of US
military presence and colonial possessions over the last century, especially in the five-plus decades since Japan's defeat.

Today, the English standard school v. common school system replaced with the more modern American institutions of private v. public education, Roosevelt is what my young cousins call a state "ghetto school." Its urban populations include Native Hawaiian youths from Papakōlea and Punchbowl, and the children of newly settled wage-earners from Southeast Asia, Polynesia, and Micronesia who rent cheap apartments in Makiki. The middle and upper-middle class East Asian and haole settlers who live in the nicer parts of Pauoa and Makiki tend not to send their children to Roosevelt. They pay for private, college-preparatory schools.

Punchbowl today is a living testimony to American imperialism in the Pacific and Asia. It houses the violently extinguished ghosts of twentieth-century Manifest Destiny. All around the crater lie the living traces of the indigenous civilization of the islands, a civilization whose people struggle to survive amidst (post)modern forms of economic colonization by new “locals” from the American continent and from Asia.

Perhaps the tens of thousands of spirits in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, no longer bound by the fears and illusions of patriotism, would like to return home. Perhaps they already have.

Some descriptions of Punchbowl in pre-colonial Hawai‘i exist in written English. I do not know if these accounts are true, as they emphasize some things that Americans expect to hear about Native peoples. European and Asian American settlers often translate Powaina as “sacrifice hill,” drawing on Western, racist stereotypes of island rituals.

To Americans, when the peoples of other nations “sacrifice” an individual to uphold the group's or community's norms, this is barbaric, this is murder, not a spiritual, moral, or public practice. US veterans, however, are said to make only “necessary” sacrifices for the nation.

Since I live in Makiki, I often walk up to Punchbowl cemetery for exercise. I take the scenic route around the base of the crater, following a road overlooking Pauoa valley. I think of my family, of our time in the islands, of what it means to be American and Asian American and "local" Japanese. And I have questions. What are we all doing here? What purpose do we serve in Hawai‘i?

At the feet of a thirty foot, female-shaped marble relief next to the front entrance of Punchbowl cemetery's Memorial building, an inscription proclaims:

The solemn pride
That must be yours
To have laid
So costly a sacrifice
On the altar of freedom.

When settlers read other settlers’ narratives of Hawaiian history, these accounts have already been filtered through the lenses of empire. Inundated by US media and mass culture, American(ized) settlers interpret the stories through quick Western equivalents of complex Native concepts, one-image translations that plug into the commonsensical knowledge of "the Hawaiian." Perhaps for thirty-something settlers from the nearby continent, “the Hawaiian” comes from recalling the three “evil tabu” Brady Bunch episodes set in Hawai‘i back in 1972. Or, for mainlanders in their twenties, from
ogling a wild and drunken Ruthie in MTV’s 1998-1999 hit, Real World Hawai‘i. Earlier waves of haoles from the continent might have reflected on the savage or noble pagans in the “Pacific” narratives of Mark Twain, James Michener, Jack London, Robert Louis Stevenson.

New Japanese settlers and other visitors from East Asia read “the Hawaiian” through Asian versions of the paradise myth. For Japanese travelers, for example, such narratives resemble their ideological counterparts in the United States, offering up iconic images of coconuts, palm trees, sandy beaches, brown “natives” (frequently resembling tanned people of Asian, not Hawaiian, descent, in the tourist literature), timelessly “lazy” cultures and lifestyles, and so on. Other common descriptions differ from American narratives: Hawai‘i is often portrayed as “friendly” to Japanese tourists because of its large Asian American, and specifically Japanese-descended, population, who seem closer culturally and linguistically to the Japanese than do Americans in other parts of the States (say, Louisiana or Maine). The de facto Standard English/Standard Japanese bilingualism policy of the Hawai‘i tourism industry, evident throughout Waikiki and other major retail districts in the islands, confirms this expectation. In Hawai‘i, a moderately curious but risk-averse Japanese national can go abroad, it is said, without feeling as if s/he has left Japan.

These days, the American and Japanese empires are on relatively friendly grounds, sharing more commonalities—as world economic powers and political and military allies—than differences.

What right have I to be here?

In my high school sociology class, I learned about the sacrifices of second-generation Japanese settlers from Hawai‘i and the US continent, sacrifices made to America’s wars for “freedom” and “justice,” especially during World War II, where Japanese Americans were said to have displayed great heroism in the European theatre, proving their citizenship valid and equal to that of whites. We are rarely taught, however, to question the very ground upon which this citizenship rests.

Near the bottom of the stairs, a wide green strip of graves starts, extending for the length of the cemetery away from the Memorial building. At this end of the strip, a bronze book and its bookmark in the form of a bronze torch-bearing hand stick out from a small memorial in the ground. “In October 1944 the 442nd wrote the word ‘liberty’ with their blood,” the memorial’s inscription says, referring to a European battle of the celebrated, Japanese-settler-dominated, US Regimental Combat Team.

The displays in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific tell me that I belong in Punchbowl, in Pauoa, in Hawai‘i, because of the blood sacrifices my paternal uncles in the 442nd made during World War II. From impressive feats of loyalty such as theirs, the story goes, Japanese settlers as a community earned their place in Hawai‘i’s political-economic structure and in American history.

“Local” Japanese of my generation can access a ready-made ideological package which locates our group’s place in island history, not as settlers of an American colony, but as model-minority success stories saving the free world on the behalf of the United States, and then constructing Hawai‘i’s current tourism- and military-driven, service economy for the good of everyone.

“We Japanese,” my nisei father is fond of saying, “built this place”—as if only the empty, sterilized space of the cosmos had existed before the imin had arrived on Hawai‘i’s shores.

A few English-language sources say that in the late 1700s or early 1800s, Punchbowl became the location of battles between several Native chiefs, battles that were said to lead eventually to one ruler’s unification of the islands.

Bodies are buried upon bodies in Punchbowl.

My male cousins, raised in Pauoa, did not attend R.L. Stevenson Intermediate or Roosevelt High, both on the slopes of Punchbowl. Instead, they enrolled in Iolani School, a preparatory academy for the mostly East Asian-descended sons and daughters of executives, professionals, and higher-paid government workers. If they choose to stay in the islands rather than become part of a transnational elite of American professionals, these children will someday administer state
and private institutions and oversee the future workers, largely public school attendees or graduates. Iolani competes with Punahou School in training the new ruling class of the islands.

My female cousin, the boys’ half-sister, attended Punahou, which sits a few blocks away from Roosevelt, well in sight of Punchbowl crater. A prestigious school originally founded for the children of white missionaries and sugar planters, Punahou today is regarded the top private school on an island where enrollment rates in private K-12 institutions rank among the highest in the country.

Punahou’s alumni newsletter often brags about its illustrious graduates, many of whom, such as the founder of America Online, have made it in the continental United States. The local newspapers celebrate these graduates as role models for people raised in the islands, especially for the middle-class, white and Asian settlers that the American national media calls “Hawaiians.” But despite its Hawaiian-sounding name, Punahou, for all intents and purposes, is not a Native-serving institution.

Place names and narratives are layered atop older place names and narratives in and around Punchbowl.

There are no tombs for the missing or unknown among these Hawaiian warriors from two centuries ago. The bulk of the tourist literature on Punchbowl cemetery does not mention these battles.

Beyond the Memorial’s front entrance, inside the building itself, run the Pacific War Galleries, a series of fifteen colorful maps covering wall to wall, with illustrations, arrows, and stories. Most of the maps depict the movements of American and Japanese military forces throughout different parts of the Pacific during World War II. In some of these narratives, US and Japanese casualties of the campaigns are tallied up to see which nation won each round.

As the first map, “Operations in the Pacific 1942-1945,” summarizes in a small “scroll” at its lower edges, these battles were not viewed primarily as political, economic, imperial, or even strategic, but as conflicts of essential moral and spiritual character.

Weaned on the tenets of social Darwinism, Americans use this ideology today to excuse and embrace some of the most aggressive, virulent forms of monopoly/oligopoly capitalism in all of world history. We are quite big on victories and “victors.”

Local newspapers also laud the achievements of Iolani kids, largely of Japanese or Chinese descent. Today, there has been some mixing among the upper-middle and upper classes: cliques of Japanese and Chinese kids attend Punahou and groups of haole kids go to Iolani. This racial accounting is perceived as diversity, as multiculturalism, as progress.

In the early 1980s, at my public high school on Maui, the honors and college/professional tracks had been overwhelmingly dominated by Japanese and Chinese settlers, with some haole students also included. In our American school system, few Native Hawaiians had rated highly under the assessment techniques for “cognitive” skills; class and culture biased “ability grouping” methods, such as standardized tests, commonly shunted Native youth off to the vocational (automotive, shop), (lower-level) office work, or “special education” tracks. When I was growing up, the public schools were said to be mostly taught by Japanese women and administered by Japanese men, a pattern I had witnessed throughout my adolescence. Now some of those Japanese men have been replaced by Japanese female or white male administrators, and there exist more haole and Filipinos among the still-Japanese-heavy, teaching rank and file.
It is the diversity of the settler colony: public, as well as private, education, remains dominated by American settlers in Hawai‘i.

Today, though I am a half-generation older than my male cousins, we can still drive together through O‘ahu’s government and commercial districts and count the numerous medium and small businesses, American and global corporations, and state institutions managed or owned by people who had once been our high school classmates. We see bank and real estate advertisements in the media, and the target audience in these commercials—upper-middle class, East-Asian-descended Americans—look astonishingly like us or our peers.

The stories of hundreds of thousands of indigenous islanders who died in the Pacific at the hands of American and Japanese soldiers are nearly completely excluded from the Pacific War Galleries. From their maps and narratives, it seems as if the two opposing imperial forces had fought on empty land, as if only the political interests of America and Japan lay at stake in the Great War.

Near the far end of the Galleries gleams a large, blue diagram of the southwestern Pacific Ocean. A huge eagle with sharp talons perches near the bottom of the illustration, denoting America’s “benevolent” influence over this wide body of water and over the peninsulas, islands, and continents it touches.

I am compelled to think about my political coordinates in Hawai‘i. I am making a map of my own, one of unclaiming nation, in order to release my ancestors’ spirits—and mine—from the terrible illusions of this world.

My uncle, the American Korean War veteran, will sleep here in Punchbowl someday.

My father, drafted into the US Army at the end of World War II, will rest in a smaller American veterans’ cemetery on the slopes of Haleakalā on Maui, another colonized crater of deep historical and spiritual significance to Native Hawaiians. Haleakalā has been claimed by the American military’s space industry as part of its research to expand the eagle’s talons towards the stars.

When I was younger, trying to find my own roots while living in Yokohama, I traveled through northern Honshu with a Japanese co-worker. “Americans have a very cute sense of the historical,” she had said.

Cute?

“A friend from the United States once took me to his state and said I had to see this stone well—one of the most ancient in the Confederate South. When I asked how long it’s been there, he said, ‘It’s 100 years old!’ An historical site just 100 years old; it was so adorable.”

Even young Japanese nationals like my co-worker are aware enough of their own history to know that, in the grand scale of things, 100 years means nothing. For the Native Hawaiian civilization, thriving for millennia, what is a century?

I wonder about Japanese settlers in Hawai‘i, who have lived in the islands for little over a hundred years, sprouting the roots of four to five generations. To many in my community, socialized in this colonial state, this seems like a long time. Long enough to be called “locals,” to stake ownership of the land as ours historically and morally, beyond even the considerable legal, political, and financial claims we’ve already driven into these waters and earth.
We have become very American in a mere century, demanding our share of the spoils of war, invasion, colonization. Like the settlers buried in Punchbowl, we have become imperial soldiers in a brutal and unending battle against the Native “enemy.” We fight our Pacific War for the maintenance of a colonial empire, a war that is daily, ubiquitous, predatory, and neither pacific nor pacifistic.

The remains of my grandparents and other “local” Japanese American and Japanese-national ancestors—who had come to settle in the islands but who had not served with the US military—lie in lower Pauoa on the slopes of Punchbowl. I visit this memorial on Mother’s Day, O-Bon (the summer festival of ancestral spirits), Christmas, and sometimes, as the New Year opens.

As I offer chrysanthemums and incense, chanting a nenbutsu uniquely my own, I like to imagine that the spirits of these ancestors have all traveled back to Yamaguchi Prefecture. Back to Oshima Island, our hometown.

We do not belong here.

The author thanks Eiko Kosasa and Candace Fujikane, on whose written work and thoughtful feedback this essay heavily draws, particularly their analyses in the following articles from Whose Vision? Asian Settler Colonialism in Hawai‘i, a special issue of Amerasia (Vol. 26, No. 2, 2000): “Introduction” (Fujikane) and “Ideological Images: US Nationalism in Japanese Settler Photographs” (Kosasa). Juliana Spahr’s writing about Honolulu’s social geography provided ideas about method and format: 2199 Kalia Road at http://www2.hawaii.edu/~spahr/waikiki.pdf and Dole Street at http://www2.hawaii.edu/~spahr/dolestreet.pdf. Joy Harjo’s comments on my earlier, clunkier, blues-based aubade inspired a scrapping of the poem and a keeping of its messy liner notes, from which this narrative grew.

A 1997 article by Kathy E. Ferguson and Phyllis Turnbull in Women in Hawai‘i: Sites, Identities, & Voices, Social Process in Hawai‘i Vol. 38, helped me re-vision “family” landscapes into militarized and nationalistic ones. The article expanded into a 1998 book by the same authors through the University of Minnesota Press, Oh, Say, Can You See? The Semiotics of the Military in Hawai‘i. Mahalo also to Kathie Kane for noticing what has been hidden in plain sight and for the helpful suggestions. Kenrick Yoshida took most of the photos.
For a commission for a public artwork at a new technology center in Santa Fe, New Mexico, I wrote a text-generating program that activates a mechanical sign. I wanted to make a work that would let students think about the artistic possibilities of computer programming and that was not sited on the web or the computer monitor, which have been the conventional sites for computer art.

I have always loved the mechanical flip signs that announce trains in Europe. I researched the manufacturers of these signs and finally located one that I could work with. The sign itself is a marvel of engineering. Each location has a "rolodex" unit of 40 flaps with characters and punctuation. All the units are connected to a computer within the sign that receives our code and makes the individual letters change accordingly.

The sign works this way: whenever someone enters the main doorway, a contact in the door is triggered and sends a signal to a "hacked mouse." The mouse then simulates a mouse click that tells the computer program to generate a brand new sentence randomly from the software. It then sends this sentence to the flip sign via an ethernet cable. All this happens instantly so that the person entering the door sees and hears the sign flip to a new sentence made especially for the occasion.

To make the sentence generating program, I worked with programmer Jonathan Meyer. Jon knew that I wanted to write the language components and structures myself so he developed software in Java language within which I could program the content.

There have been a number of computer-generated language programs, but they often generate mostly nonsense or uninteresting texts. I decided that, instead of teaching the com-
puter to know all about language, I would instead give it a large lexicon and then give it some prototypical syntactical structures to plug that vocabulary into. Right now, there are over forty syntactical structures and thousands of words in the lexicon. This means that every sentence will be unique. Over the four months I worked on the programming, I never saw the same sentence twice, except in cases where I specifically created some sentences that I thought would be useful for repetition. For instance, one structure always begins with: “ASK ME TO TELL YOU ABOUT” and then is completed from a large database of words that refer to the history of computing, cognitive science, or language play. For instance, it might say: “ASK ME TO TELL YOU ABOUT NEURAL NETWORKS.” or “ASK ME TO TELL YOU ABOUT LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN.” The other sentences, however, are vastly variable, so that, depending on the specific structure, there might be nothing at all familiar about them.

I found the prototypical sentence structures in a variety of places. Some just popped into my head, e.g., “Welcome to the wonderful world of Disney” came to me one morning and I built a structure around that. I found others in novels or poetry, e.g., “This poem is sad because it wants to be yours” came from a John Ashbery poem. Then friends would drop by and work on one or two with me, so I have structures made with Jena Osman, Johanna Drucker, Ellen Zweig, and Holly Anderson.

Here are some of the sentences the sign generated during the first few days we ran it in Santa Fe:

YOU WILL AESTHETICALLY EMBRACE THIS PAGAN ODDITY.
WAS OUR SLEEP NOURISHED BY DELUSION OR DESPAIR?
CASH TURNS AROUND BECAUSE THEY HAVE ABANDONED WORDS.
YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE SUPERMARKET OF TOLERANCE.
THING THREATENS GIRLFRIEND. A NARRATIVE OF PRIDE.
WHAT IF FORENSIC EXPERTS WERE TO RISK EVERYTHING?
HYSTERIA, HONEY, IS SO GENUINELY TRANSPARENT.
IT'S PERKY THIS DIPSTICK, YES OR NO?
I REFUSE TO BE ALIVE IN SPITE OF YOUR PATIENCE.
ARE WE ALL THINKING OF SELF-DESTRUCTIVE NYMPHS?
WHERE TO LOOK NEXT ...

DENNIS ADAMS was represented in the 2000 Whitney Biennial and more recent projects include a children's playroom for the Witte de With in Rotterdam, a climbing wall on the façade of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, and a series of stadium bleachers scattered across the Leidsche Rijn, a new city under construction in The Netherlands. In 2004, he will exhibit at the Villanueva Pavilion in the Royal Botanical Garden in Madrid and produce public projects for Mies van der Rohe's German Pavilion in Barcelona and the Staten Island Ferry Terminal in New York. • ANTONY ADOLF's current projects include a scholarly book entitled Trouble Typography: Essays in the Cultural Rhetorics of Scripts, a long poem, The Corpus Hermeticum: A Neo-Poundian Trans-Substantiation, and a book on Plotinus, which he is writing with his father. He is currently Editor-in-Chief of the c/art-el collective language group, a global language services and publishing enterprise. • DOUGLAS BASFORD has a poem, "Reverie of the Wedge," in Can We Have Our Ball Back? 16.0 and an essay, "An Overheated Farmhand's Literature: Sexual Desire and Cultural Memory," forthcoming in Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States. • MEI-MEI BERSSENBRUGGE'S Nest was published by Kelsey Street Press in 2003. "Hear" by is part of an ongoing collaboration with Kiki Smith. A life size indigo papier maché Kuan Yin contained a tape-loop of Mei-mei speaking this text and was first shown in the Poetry Plastique show at Marianne Boesky gallery in 2001. • JIM BOORSTEIN lives and works in NYC. A chapter of his forthcoming book Perimeter about walking at the very edge of the island of Manhattan can be found in the spring/summer 2004 issue of Hotel America. Box 3 Productions, his publishing arm, intermittently sends out essays in envelopes. B3P @ 143 West 21st Street, New York, NY 10011. • DEVIN BOOTH grew up in the Pacific Northwest and now lives in Astoria, Queens. In addition to "The New Disease" he is working on a collection of short stories. This is his first publication. • JULES BOYKOFF co-edits the Tangent, a zine of politics and the arts, www.thetangentpress.org, and co-curates the In Your Ear reading series at the District of Columbia Arts Center. His work can be found on the web at the new online journal based in Switzerland, d u s i e : www.dusie.org and the DC Poetry Anthology for 2003, http://www.dcpoetry.com/anth2003.htm. His multi-media chapbook, Philosophical Investigations Inna Neo-Con Roots-Dub Styley, was just published by The Interrupting Cow Press (www.theinterruptingcow,dcpoetry.com). • JANA BRANCHE is an industrial designer with roots in Sanok, Poland. With her American partner, James Stickley, she has co-founded the company, Branch Office. • REBECCA BROWN is writing an opera libretto with Michael Katell and Better Biscuit Dance Company. She also works with the Seattle Research Institute that recently published the anthology Experimental Theology and is currently making a series of little essays and stories called Bookmarks. The website is www.seattleresearchinstitute.org • STEPHEN BURT'S website is www.accommodatingly.com. His book of poems, Parallel Play will be available in early 2006. The lines in italic in his poem are from Yeats. • DAVID BUUCK lives in Oakland where he edits Tripwire, www.durationpress.com/tripwire • GERMÁN CARRASCO's books include the insidiousness of the sun over things, Calas, and Clavados. • LENORA CHAMPAGNE's most recent solo text, Mother's Little Helper, will be published in the "Generation" issue of Performance Research, in September 2004. Look for her at www.lenorachampagne.com or at the Purchase College website (www.purchase.edu), where she is Associate Professor of Drama Studies. • For more information about GAYE CHAN see http://www.downwindproductions.com/gaye_chan. • CHE QIANZI's poetry collections include Paper Ladders (Shanghai, 1989) and various "unofficially" published volumes, as well as ten collections of essays. Translations into English include Original: Chinese Language-Poetry Group (Parataxis Editions, 1995), Old Cultural Work (CCCP Translation Series, 2002) and Vegetarian Hugging a Rooster (Barque Press, 2003). Further information on these and other translations can be found at www.barquepress.com. • BRENT CUNNINGHAM's poetry, fiction, and reviews have appeared in Radical Society, Commonweal, 580 Split, Rain Taxi, and elsewhere. He is currently working on a novel and a collection of prose pieces. • JANE DALYRMPLE-HOLLO's artwork is featured on the covers of several books.
of poetry, including Notes on the Possibilities and Attractions of Existence, selected poems by her husband, Anselm Hollo, published by Coffee House Press. Views from her 2003 installation, "Who is Innocent?" can be found at http://siri.naropa.edu/lib/innocent.html, and an essay on Lee Bontecou, "A Life in Art," at http://www.laalamedapress.com/janeessay.html. "Go Figure," a collaboration with Anne Waldman, is included in Chain, vol. 8. • SAMUEL R. DELANY is a novelist and critic, who lives in NYC and teaches at Temple University. His short novel Phallos recently appeared from Bamberger Books. Fiction Collective-2 has just re-released Hogg. The University of Minnesota Press has just returned his autobiography The Motion of Life in Water to print. Forthcoming from Wesleyan University Press is a new non-fiction collection About Writing. • PATRICK JAMES DUNAGAN’s published works include Fess Parker, put out by Red Ant Press of Portland, and a collection of sonnets, After the Sineus, due out in 2004 by Augustine Press of San Francisco. His poem “A City Defended” originally appeared in Of Stone put out in 2003 by The Snap Press currently of San Francisco. • RACHEL BLAU DUPLESSIS’new book, Drafts 39-57, Pledge, with Draft, unnumbered: Precis, is forthcoming from Salt Publishing in Cambridge, England. • ALEC FINLAY is working on a series of archival and anthological artist projects; Wind Blown Cloud, a publication and archive; Bynames, an anthology of invented names for real people; and the forthcoming inter-connected anthologies and artist projects Circle Poems and worldwiderubberstampletterboxcirclepoem and Mesostic herbarium and Word garden. Details of his various participative art and poetry projects are on the websites, www.balticmill.com, www.YSPl.co.uk, www.renga-platform.co.uk. • ALICE FLIGHT’s website is http://hometown.aol.com/aliflight/AflightPublicArtworks.html. • GLORIA FRYM most recently is the author of Homeless at Home, Creative Arts Book Company, 2001 and Distance No Object, City Lights Books, 1999. • DAVID GARDNER is co-editor of One Less . . . Magazine. His most recent book, Fantezmo: A Modern Romance, a novel collaboration with fellow poet, Matthew Langley, is the third book in a series published by autonomous earth books (autonomousearthbooks@yahoo.com). He is currently working on a collaborative book of poems with poet, Lisa Birman, tentatively titled, ge/graphe. David can be reached at unsungl_98@yahoo.com. • MAXIMILIAN GOLDFARB will install a project at the SculptureCenter in Long Island City, New York, January 2005. He will soon be working in the Boston area in affiliation with the A.R.G.O.T. Public Works Agency. • TONY GRAJEDA’s work on lo-fi appears in the recent cultural studies collections Hop on Pop and Rock over the Edge (both with Duke University Press). He is at work on a cultural history of listening, and co-editing with Jay Beck a new collection of essays on film sound. • LAUREN GUDATH lives in San Francisco. Several of her chapbooks are available through Small Press Distribution. • GORDON HADFIELD is a poet, translator, and co-editor of the journal Kiosk (http://wings.buffalo.edu/epc/mags/ kiosk.html). Recent and forthcoming poetry is in P-queue and Blaze Vox. Recent translations of Abdellatif Laâbi have appeared in Circumference. • HEWITT + JORDAN. See also www.jordan-hewitt.demon.co.uk. Hewitt + Jordan write: “We work collaboratively. Our practice is defined by its political and social engagement and the fact that it is frequently process-based. Working within particular institutions, structures and contexts, we arrive at artworks through research, discussion and problematising situations and conventions. Forthcoming projects include: Futurology; The Black Country 2024 New Art Gallery Walsall.UK No Respect Dublin Eire (www.geocities.com/norespect4/norespect.htm) Floating I-P, Solo Exhibition, Manchester, UK. Recent projects include The Americas are Coming ArtsTranspennine03. SHOWFLAT @ArtSheffield 03; I Won an Artist in a Raffle, Public Art Forum Conference, WINNER a commission for The Independent, Liverpool Biennial; WHISTLER, a public work in West Bromwich High Street.” • ERIKA HOWSARE has previously appeared in Fourteen Hills, FIELD and Skein and is forthcoming in The New Orleans Review. • MARISA JAHN’s current body of art integrates traditional art media (bookmarking, performance, drawing, photography, mural painting) with Conceptual-Minimalist strategies to explore the relationship between mark-making and place-making. As a co-curator for Pond (www.mucketymuck.org), a nonprofit art organization dedicated to experimental art, and as a freelance writer, she is particularly interested in experimental public art. Marisa also works as an arts educator with various public and private organizations throughout the Bay.
Alina Akilah was born in Mendoza Argentina in 1973. Her articles and essays on the built environment can be found in Planning, Metropolis, and elsewhere. Her poems can be found in or on Xoxial Ed. She has exhibited collectively in more than 207 expositions and in more than 1,500 Mail Art Shows, from 1969 to 2002. See the online version of “Spams Trashes” at http://www.escaner.cl/padin/spam.

Kristen Palm lived in Detroit for 11 years and now lives in San Francisco. Her poems can be found in or on Spinning Jenny, LVNG, Bird-Dog, can we have our ball back? and VERT. Her articles and essays on the built environment can be found in Metropolis, Planning, and elsewhere.

Cecilia Pávón was born in Mendoza Argentina in 1973. She is a poet and a study of Faust and the Phallus. Several of her articles in English have been anthologized, most recently in Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture (2003, University of Pennsylvania Press). She is currently finishing her new book, tentatively titled Reproduction: A Media History of Fertility. Michael McCaffery is a media artist and graphic designer. He is the founder of Theorem Design www.theoremdesign.com.

Charles Moleski is the New-Land-Marks Program Manager for the Fairmount Park Art Association in Philadelphia, the nation’s oldest public art organization. He contributed project descriptions for the New-Land-Marks catalog (2001, Grayson Publishing) which describes how the program works with artists and communities to create new works of public art. Previously, his interest in creating access to the arts led him to found a non-profit organization, YuHul that provided arts programs to children living in homeless shelters. Moleski is a practicing artist and has contributed exhibition reviews and essays to Art Papers and Art Matters.

Akilah Oliver is the author of the she said dialogues: flesh memory (Smokeproof/Erudite Fangs, 1999), a book of experimental prose poetry. Oliver is adjunct faculty at The Naropa University and is a lecturer at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Oliver is currently working on trace, aura, graffiti writing and elegy.

Clemente Padin is a poet, graphic artist, performer, videomaker, multimedia, networker and art critic. He edited the magazines Los Huesos del Plata (The Silver’s Eggs), 1965-1969; OVUM 10 and OVUM, 1969-1975, Participación (Participation) 1984-1986 and Correo del Sur (Southern Post), 2000. He has published books and booklets in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Venezuela, United States, Holland and Uruguay including : Los Horizontes Abiertos, two editions, 1969-1989; Visual Poems, four editions: the first OVUM,1969 , the last Xoxial Ed. He has exhibited collectively in more than 207 expositions and in more than 1,500 Mail Art Shows, from 1969 to 2002. See the online version of “Spams Trashes” at http://www.escaner.cl/padin/spam.
journalist. Her books of poems include *Does Love Exist Among Animals* (2001), *Pink Punk* (2003), *a hotel with my name* (2001), and *Virgin* (2001). She is a co-founder of the independent art space “Belleza y Felicidad” (beauty and happiness), and collaborates regularly with the newspapers *Pagina 12 Buenos Aires* and *jungle world* of Berlin. • RENATA PEDROSA was born in Tremembé, Brazil, in 1967. She is a visual artist and has been exhibiting her work since 1994. In 2002 she started to put works outside, in public spaces: *Maior do que um* (2002, São Paulo, Brazil), *Quando o Sul encontra o Norte* (2002, Brande, Denmark), *Roda de ribana* (2003, Blumenau, Brazil) and *No corredor* (2003, São Paulo, Brazil). You can see these works and others at her website: www.renatapedrosa.pro.br. • Upcoming PIPA activities include The Blue Marble Project and the mobilization of poets everywhere to defeat George Bush in ’04. • RACHEL POLLACK is the author of twenty seven books, two of which have won awards. Her most recent book, *The Kabbalah Tree*, was published by Llewellyn in June of 2004. The following month the Omega Institute in upstate New York featured an art show of prints from Rachel’s *Shining Tribe Tarot*. You can find out more about Rachel’s writing and art at www.rachelpollack.com as well as www.metaarts.com, a webzine for which Rachel writes a monthly column. • NANCY PRINCENTHAL is a Contributing Editor to *Art in America*, and has written for many other publications as well, including *The New York Times*, *Parket*, *Art on Paper*, *Sculpture*, *Artforum*, *Bookforum*, and the *Village Voice*. Forthcoming publications include catalogue essays on work by Maria Elena Gonzalez, Petah Coyne, and Heide Fasnacht. • SARAH RIGGS grew up in New York and currently organizes bilingual cross-genre events in Paris. The author of *Word Sightings: Poetry and Visual Media* (Routledge, 2002), her current poetry, visual work, and translations appear or are forthcoming in *American Letters and Commentary*, *Aufgabe*, *Conjunctions*, *1913 A Journal of Forms*, *Verse*, and the web journal/reading series *Double Change* (www.doublechange.com). • MARK ROBBINS is working on a photographic series, *Households*, which pairs individual portraits with domestic interiors. This was most recently shown at the Atlanta Contemporary and appears in *AV* and *I.D.* magazines. He will begin a project in the Netherlands this fall focusing on current views of the heroic modern housing complexes of the 20s. • DOUGLAS ROTHSCCHILD (DglsN.Rothschild) is the author of *The Minor Arena*, scheduled to be added to the billionairesforbush site. His *A Trip to X-Towers* was recently issued as an e-chapbook by Faux press (www.fauxpress.com/e/indexa.html). • KAIA SAND’s first book of poetry, *interval*, was just published by Edge Books. Her poetry can also be found in *eco-poetics, www.4dpoetry.com*, and *d u s i e : www.dusie.org*. A poetry collaboration with Jules Boykoff is in *Lungful! Magazine*. A recent conversation with Carol Mirakove appears in *Banjo: www.chanpoets.blogspot.com*. Jules and Kaia also edit the tangent press www.thetangentpress.org, and Kaia’s web page of poetry projects is located at www.thetangentpress.org/ksand.html. • JENNIFER SCAPPETTONE’s writing appears or is forthcoming in 26, 580 Split, *Aufgabe*, *The Poetry Project Newsletter*, *The Poker, Tripwire, Xantippe, War and Peace*, and other places. She co-curates the Holloway Poetry Series with Lynn Hejinian in Berkeley. • MICHAEL SCHARF’s second book, *Vérité*, was published by /ubu editions in late 2002 as a free PDF (www.ubu.com/ubu). His first, *Telemachiad*, has been reissued by sugerhigh! (sugargb. abstractdynamics.org). • NANDITA SHARMA’s “Travel Agency: A Critique of Anti-Trafficking Campaigns” on view at http://www.yorku.ca/crs/Refuge/ Abstracts%20and%20Articles/Vol%2021%20No%203/sharma.pdf. “One part of an anti-racist feminist political standpoint against biopiracy” can be seen at www.cwln.ca/groups/biotech/availdocs/16-sharma.pdf. “Border Panic: White Imperialism and Illegality” at http://squat.net/cia/gp/greenpepper.htm (go to 2002-12-02 issue on the topic of borders). “Open The Borders! Nandita Sharma interviewed by Cynthia Wright” at http://www.newsocialist.org/magazine/37/article02.html. Gaye Chan and Nandita Sharma also collaborate as a part of Downwind Productions, http://www.downwindproductions.com. • KENNETH SHERWOOD is a poet and critic of 20th-century poetry currently living and teaching in Indiana, Pennsylvania. He recently edited Louis Zukofsky’s *A Useful Art* (Wesleyan 2003) and edits www.audibleword.org. • GREGORY SHOLETTES REPOhistory CIRCULATION has been exhibited at various locations NYC and online (2000). For more on REPOhistory see http://www.rephistory.org/ • AMIE SIEGEL is a poet, video and film artist. Her first book of poems, *The Waking Life*, was published by North Atlantic Books (1999, Berkeley, CA). Her films, videos and installa-
tions have shown at the Whitney Museum of American Art, Anthology Film Archives, Kino Arsenal Berlin, Frankfurt Film Museum, Cinematheque Ontario and the San Francisco Cinematheque. Her latest film, *Empathy*, premiered at the 2003 Berlin Film Festival and opened in 2004 at Film Forum NYC. She is currently a DAAD Berliner-Kunsterleprogramm Artist-in-Residence in Berlin. • ELENI SIKELIANOS's most recent books of poetry include *The Monster Lives of Boys & Girls* (Green Integer, National Poetry Series award) and *Earliest Worlds* (Coffee House). Forthcoming are a hybrid memoir, *The Book of Jon* (City Lights) and a book-length poem, *The California Poem* (Coffee House), both due out in October 2004. Web address: www.eLENIsikelianos.com. • DENNIS M. SOMERA has poetry published in *Tinfish* #14. • SASHA STEENSEN's first book of poems, *A Magic Book*, is forthcoming from Fence Books. She co-edits the journal *Kiosk: A Journal of Poetry, Poetics and Experimental Prose* (http://wings.buffalo.edu/epc/mags/kiosk.html). Recent work has appeared in *Enough* and *P-queue*. A chapbook, *Correspondence*, written in collaboration with Gordon Hadfield, is forthcoming from Handwritten Press. *Correspondence* is in dialogue with "____, La Paz." • CHRISTINA SPIESEL is a painter who has been taking photographs since 9/11. She is a writer who has been publishing since 1996. She teaches visual persuasion to law students. Other information is available at: http://islandia.law.yale.edu/lawmediaproject. • RUSSELL SWITZER became interested in photography while in high school in western Kansas. His photographs have appeared on the cover of the Poetry Project Newsletter and on two artist books by Eléna Rivera: *Fugitive* (1992), and *The Artist as a Young Woman* (1993). He lives and works in New York City. • FIONA TEMPLETON received the 2003 Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts award for Theater. Her most recent book is *Delirium of Interpretations* (Green Integer). She is working on *The Medeaed*, a performance epic. See www.fionatempleton.org. • NICK TOBIER first wandered in New York City, and currently scour the streets of Ann Arbor and Detroit for new scenarios to concoct. For more images, ideas and written matter, visit http://www.everydayplaces.com. • TONY TREHY is the Head of Arts & Museums in Bury, Manchester, England; a poet/curator (see www.tonytrehy.com) and director of the Text Festival (www.textfestival.com). •

ROSA VELASCO is a visual artist and curator who lives and works in Santiago de Chile. Her next project will be the devolement of an authentic moai of my property" where she will transfer a moai from a private home in Buenos Aires to its original location on Easter Island while making a documentary of this "devolutionary" move. For more information see www.rosavelasco.com. • To see more of ALEX VILLAR's work see http://www.iniva.org/archive/person/524, http://www.nyfa.org/nyfa_artists_detail.asp?pid=4953, http://www.de-tour.org. • ANNE WALDMAN is the author most recently of *In the Room of Never Grieve: New and Selected Poems* (with CD), Coffe House Press, 2003, and *Structure of The World Compared to a Bubble* (Penguin Poets, 2004). She is also co-editor with Lisa Birman of *Civil Disobediences: Poetics and Politics in Action*, a collection of talks, essays, interviews, panels, documents from the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at Naropa University (Coffee House, 2004). *Jacket* will soon feature an issue focusing on her work. Her extensive literary/infrastructure/activist archive resides at the Hatcher Graduate Library in Ann Arbor. • ALLAN WEXLER was educated at the Rhode Island School of Design and Pratt Institute. He teaches environmental design at Parsons School of Design. Recent solo exhibitions of his work have been held at the San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art; the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; and the University Gallery, University of Massachusetts, Amherst. • KIM WHITE is a writer and media artist. Her hypermedia poem, *The Minotaur Project* at www.home.earthlink.net/~themino1a11pr10ject, was short listed for a 2001 Electronic Literature Award. She published a book of prose poems, *Scratching for Something*, in 1998. Her most recent project is a narrative experiment entitled *The New Disease*, www.columbia.edu/~kw96. • ROB WILSON has re-located to Santa Cruz where he is working on editing a collection of cultural criticism for New Pacific Press called *Worldings* and a work of poetry and poetics called *Automat: Un/American Poetics*. • JANET ZWEIG's work can be seen at www.janetzweig.com. In 2004 she will be installing a frieze at the Prince Street N/R station of the New York Subway and an interactive project at eleven stations of the new Minneapolis Light Rail.
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"Welcome to a Writer’s Manual on how to Detonate the Master-Axis of Big Brother Narratives..."
I came to Mills College looking for inspiration and discipline in my writing. What I found was a supportive community of peers, a safe place to experiment with my writing, and professors who not only raised my standards for my writing, but taught me how to reach my goals.
— Cassandra Dunn Harris, MFA01

Once at Mills, I was given more or less free reign. I learned about the small press through my efforts at 580 Split, worked with Manifest Press (currently run by two alums), and started my own journal. I interacted heavily with the music and arts departments and learned as much from them as from my professors and classmates. I took over the intermedia series BorderBend. This series fostered interdisciplinary collaborations and events were held in Bay Area galleries with pretty good results. At Mills, many communities were formed that I am still active in today. I worked with attentive teachers and amazing students and was able to bounce my ideas, both sound and half-baked, off of them.
— David Harrison Horton, MFA01

Set in the San Francisco Bay Area, one of the most vital literary and artistic regions in the country, the Mills College English Department provides MFA students the opportunity to work closely with distinguished faculty in a liberal arts setting devoted to mutual respect and cooperation. Workshops are regularly offered in poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, journalism, and young adult fiction. Students are encouraged to experiment, innovate, and study in more than one genre. Many students receive funding, ranging from half to full-tuition waivers, in the form of teaching assistantships and scholarships. The writing community at Mills is supportive and challenging. It is also conducive to building life-long friendships. Admitted students are nationally competitive, international in origin, and diverse in interests and identities.
In conjunction with the publication of Chain 11: Public Forms, we will be sponsoring the following public events . . .

EAST COAST . . .

September 30, 2004 in Philadelphia
*Site-Specific*
Poet/playwright Fiona Templeton, sculptor/public artist Janet Zweig, and dancer/choreographer Leah Stein will present and discuss their site-specific art works.

October 28, 2004 in Philadelphia
*Poetry Actions: A Pre-Election Event*
A discussion of political poetry and poetry activism. Participants will include Alan Gilbert, Tracie Morris, Kristin Prevallet, Kaia Sand, Anne Waldman, and more. This event will be prefaced by a web-log discussion in order to brainstorm particular poetry actions and to discuss the possibilities for poetry to politicize public spaces.

Please refer to *Chain’s* website for more details on these events, www.temple.edu/chain

PACIFIC BASIN . . .

November 8, 9, 10, 12, 2004 in Honolulu
*Moving Islands*
A conference to explore ties between writers from Oceania and the Caribbean. Invited guests include Michelle Cliff, Nalo Hopkinson, Witi Ihimaera, George Lamming, Jully Makini, Rodney Morales, Noenoe Silva, and Albert Wendt. Co-sponsored with The Center for Pacific Island Studies, the Distinguished Lecture Series, the UH Diversity and Lecture Fund, Juniora Productions, the East-West Center, Islands of Globalization Project, the College of Languages, Linguistics, and Literature-UHM, and the Department of English-UHM. See http://www.english.hawaii.edu/events/celeb04.html for more information.

WEST COAST . . .

Various dates, fall of 2004, in Oakland
*Borderbend*
Borderbend is a collective that recognizes artistic collaboration as a way to create relevant and resonant art, providing new visions, and fostering community among artists of diverse genres. The programming includes Bay Area musicians, dancers, visual artists, filmmakers and writers who, while working together, create an aesthetic which weaves together their various genres and develops relationships while nurturing their art through collaboration. Exact dates and locations to be announced on *Chain* website in the early fall.

Previously held events under the *Public Forms* rubric . . .

Various dates, spring of 2004 in Oakland
*Public Poeties*
A reading/discussion/workshop series that featured Oakland associated writers who write about and from Oakland. Among those invited were David Buuck, Yedda Morrison, Elizabeth Treadwell, Catalina Cariaga, Truong Tran, Chris Chen, Tisa Bryant, Eileen Tabios and Michelle Batista, Rodrigo Toscano, and Renee Gladman.

April 17, 2004 in Santa Cruz
*Poetry in a Time of Crisis*
A conference that featured talks by Taylor Brady, David Buuck, Judith Goldman, Joanne Kyger, Walter Lew, Nathaniel Mackey, Eileen Myles, Jennifer Scappetone, Rob Wilson, and Heriberto Yepez. Cosponsored with the Porter College Hitchcock Poetry Fund and the IHR/Center for Cultural Studies.
CHAIN 12: FACTS

Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction.
—Dick Cheney August 26, 2002

We know for a fact that there are weapons there.
—Ari Fleischer January 9, 2003

McKenzie: Mr Perkins, what took place there yesterday is a total/disgrace and/or Mr Perkins, there is no way you can pinpoint a soldier to say dat dis is de soldier dat did it because the soldiers doan carry numbers! The soldiers doan carry anything dat you can identify dem to say dat dis is de man oou/did it! M/M Mr Perkins, what I am saying to you is not fictitious, it is not done to score political points, it is something dat took place, I am speaking about REALITY, something dat took place yesterday.
—Kamau Brathwaite, Trench Town Rock

My problem presupposed that I couldn't judge because I didn't know what the facts were. All I had, or could have, was a series of different perspectives, and so nothing that would count as an authoritative source on which moral judgments could be based. But, as I have just shown, I did judge, and that is because, as I now think, I did have some facts.
—Jane Tompkins, "'Indians': Textualism, Morality, and the Problem of History"

If you are a reader of Chain, we would be pleased to read your work for Chain 12: FACTS.

We are interested in work that begins from fact. Numbers. Testimonies. Litanies of various gross domestic products. Scientific formulas. Art that addresses pesticide load in corporate farming. The poetry of charts and resource usage comparison. Maps of colonization. The prosody of statistics. We will welcome all genre and disciplinary considerations of hard data: visual art, writing, new media, non-fiction, essays, actions, debates. In this time of contradictory information, how do we know facts, how do we circle around them, how do we act on them?

Please be aware that we can only print visual images in black and white.

Submissions will be read by Jena Osman and Juliana Spahr. We welcome cover letters or notes where you discuss how your work relates to the topic. If your work begins from a certain fact, perhaps explain this to us in your letter.

Send two copies of your submission and two copies of your cover letter to CHAIN (c/o Jena Osman) English Department Temple University Anderson Hall (022-29) 1114 W. Berks St. Philadelphia, PA 19122-6090.

Deadline: December 1, 2004

If you have questions, send them to josman@temple.edu and spahr@hawaii.edu.

But please, NO email submissions (we tend to lose them).

Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you would like your work returned. Do not send us originals.

We read work in December and then reply in early February at the latest.
EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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Since 1993, Chain has been publishing a yearly issue of work gathered loosely around a topic. The topic allows us to switch the editorial question that we ask each piece of work submitted from “is this a great piece of art” to “does this piece of art tell us something about the topic that we didn’t already know.” This makes Chain a little rougher around the edges, a little less aesthetically predictable. Within the frame of the topic, we tend to privilege mixed media and collaborative work and work by emerging or younger artists. We welcome submissions from readers. Please see our call for work in this issue.

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