



WORK

WORK

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University Art Museum
University at Albany
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The exhibition *WORK* had its genesis in a conversation I had last year with the museum’s designer Zheng Hu. I suggested he curate an exhibition at the museum that would encompass his own interest in art-making activities, particularly those which utilize new technologies and non-traditional methodologies, and that would also be integral to the new course offerings by Danny Goodwin, a recent addition to the art department faculty. Early on in the discussion we agreed that Professor Goodwin should be invited to co-curate the exhibition, bringing his considerable knowledge and talent to the project, and we were delighted when he readily accepted the offer.

The stimulating collaboration between the co-curators regarding the exhibit’s focus and the process used for selection of the artists, along with welcome insights from catalog essayist Corinna Ripps, has resulted in an exhibition of work by artists who possess a creative passion unfettered by the limitations of traditional subject matter and art-making tools. The influence of recent digital and interactive art practices, and the weaving together of newer strategies for making art, teases to the surface an animated visual language which is intelligent, compelling, and at times even rapturous.

I congratulate the artists, curators, and essayist on this engaging exhibition, one that we are proud to host in the University Art Museum.

Marijo Dougherty
Director

Daniel Goodwin
Assistant Professor of Art
Photography and Digital Media
University at Albany
State University of New York
Fine Arts 116
Albany, NY 12222
tel 518-437-4420
fax 518-442-4807
<http://www.albanv.edu/faculty/dooodwin>

Hi,
I am Zheng, the exhibition designer at the museum. Here is my first question to all the artists. You can easily view and respond my question following this link:

<http://www.albany.edu/~zh736/wwwboard.html>

The way this exhibition is shaping up is extraordinary. By running this discussion forum, we are actually providing the contents the exhibition catalog! So please participate.
Zheng

Zheng Hu
Exhibition Designer
University Art Museum
University at Albany
State University of New York
1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12222

Telephone: 518-442-4040
Fax: 518-442-5075

Danny;

to post a response, simply reply to this e-mail.
Also, in effort to keep this rather unconventional interview format as simple as possible, Zheng Hu has developed a threaded discussion page in web format that many of you may find easier to deal with. Point your browser to <http://www.albany.edu/~zh736/wwwboard.html>. The interface is pretty self-explanatory. I will keep the current e-mail list active, since it is pretty direct and is a good way for me to reach out and grab your attention. Don't be put off by the long explanatory e-mail the university sends out to notify you of subscription. It is really simple to use the list—it is just an e-mail address to which you send messages that are distributed to us all. All correspondence over the list will appear in the threaded web discussion page. We'll try to update it at least weekly.

I know Sheng and Corinna have questions for you all, but I just wanted to get the ball rolling.
dg

The following is an unedited transcript of an e-mail listserv forum entitled WORK . The conversations reproduced here took place between November 17, 2000 and February 27, 2001. Participants included: Dexter Buell, James Cullinane, Marijo Dougherty, Lee Etheredge IV, Tara Fracalossi, Meighan Griffin, Danny Goodwin, Amy Griffin, David Kasdorf, John Menick, Corinna Ripps, Jeffrey Wright-Sedam, Josh Singer, Richard Wager, and Clara Williams. The sequence of responses has been changed from a strict chronology to a more threaded discussion, in order to more accurately reflect the actual threads of conversations that took place.

Date: Thu, g Nov 2000 17:50:47 -0500 Reply-To: "Online discussion forum for 'WORK\' exhibition, Jan. - Feb.2000" ~WORK@LISTSERV.ALBANY.EDU> Sender: "Onilne discussion forum for V'WORK\' exhibition, Jan. - Feb.2000" ~WORK@LISTSERV.ALBANY.EDU, From: DannY Goodwin ~dooodwin~albanv.edu> Organization: SUNY Albany Fine Arts/Digital Media Subject 1st auestion Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii

Here's my first very simple question for you all: where do you work?

INTRO DUCTION

Danny Goodwin

Zheng Hu and I are referred to in this catalog as the “co-curators” of this exhibition. This is an assertion that is a bit deceptive, for it implies that there were but two curators. Depending on one’s experience with curators generally or specifically, any notion of curating by committee may invoke various uneasy responses. Rather than wax philosophical about the curatorial process, I feel compelled to simply state the less-than-obvious: this exhibition was curated by more than a dozen individuals, not the least of whom were the artists themselves. More on this later.

In one of our earliest conversations on the topic, Zheng Hu indicated that he longed to see a show in the somewhat rarified space of a university art museum that had what he loosely defined as an “edge.” Wouldn’t an exhibition that foregrounded the artists—one whose beginning and end, top, middle and bottom, were determined by the artists themselves—have such an edge? Further (we were on a roll at this point), wouldn’t such a show be especially useful to students returning from the break between semesters? Returning, as they do, to a mindset required to support the work that will soon be demanded of them for another four months? No reason not to plug in a pedagogical component, we thought. We speculated about the possibility of including work that would not merely hang from the walls or sit politely on a pedestal, but that might evolve over the course of the exhibition, work that would be in progress when the show opened to the public—work that would even be, perhaps, unresolved by the show’s closing. A studio/museum experiment, if you will. I was interested in the

opportunity to bring an exhibition to the space that invited viewers to reflect not only on the static art object and/or the process by which it was produced (although I readily admit to a penchant for process-oriented work), but also on the very nature of such a vocation and its role in contemporary culture. I also felt strongly that I did not want to be involved in an “over-curated” exhibition, wherein the work served primarily to illustrate the ideological trajectory of the curators’ whimsy. This dual agenda, with seemingly diametrically opposed terms, was at first a bit of a bugaboo. How to simultaneously celebrate and interrogate the role of studio practice without resorting to familiar, stilted, and stultifying curatorial sleight-of-hand? As an artist who has participated in several such exhibitions, I thought it would be refreshing to allow the artists themselves to determine the shape and trajectory of the show. It was to this complex end that we invited ten artists whose work dealt or intersected (often quite obliquely) with these issues to participate in the experiment.

Work that is self-conscious or self-aware, or work that refers directly to the moment or process of its creation, is ubiquitous in the art world. Robert Morris’s *Box with the Sound of Its Own Making* (1961) is, perhaps, a perfect poster-child for this condition. Or Janine Antoni’s *Gnaw* (1992), in which the artist chewed the edges of Robert Morris-like cubes, one made of lard, the other of chocolate, and then recycled the gnawed mouthfuls into lipsticks and heart-shaped chocolate boxes; or Oliver Herring’s knit bed linens of Scotch tape, Mylar, and plastic shopping bags; or Tom Friedman’s *1000 Hours of Staring* (1992–1997), consisting of a blank piece of paper at which, we are assured, the artist stared, on and off, over the course of five years (and, perhaps, a dozen others), also come quickly to mind as current defenders of this most Duchampian sensibility. It was our aim, however, to allow for more varied and complicated reflections by including artists whose work did not so directly address work or (in the above-mentioned cases) labor. The concept of work—especially the work of making art—is complicated. To simplify a complicated issue is, usually, to dumb it down. Sometimes an idea with a lot of moving parts is best left that way and merely examined in all its complex detail, rather than streamlined and simplified. In several cases, the artists chose not to show the work that led us to select them for inclusion in the exhibition, but work that either preceded or followed it—work that challenged rather than supported what they saw as the curatorial assumptions we had made. Some made the decision to show work that was either unresolved because it was so new, or early, formative work that had never been shown but that clearly informs their current work. In other cases, we requested certain pieces from an artist’s body of work as representative of salient aspects of contemporary studio practice. Still others

First, I just wanted to say thanks for the chance to come build a piece on site for this show. Secondly, I wanted to say how much I like the malleable and political nature of your work.

But back to your question of where do I work. I work in a studio space, but in building a piece there I discovered a way of working anywhere. I have also worked out of a suitcase for several years due to travel demands in my job at a museum. I learned to set up quickly in hotel rooms, and begin working on small pieces that I could easily pack and travel with. Some of these smaller works also formed the basis for the type of work that I have proposed for this project. In the current work, I am building wall reliefs based on the room this is to be shown in. In other words, I can build these wall pieces based on the specific response to the space it exists in. When the exhibition is over the work disappears....

James Cullinane
I work in a 1950’s storefront in Brooklyn. It’s the nicest studio I’ve ever had but it’s often filled with baby strollers, easels, and bicycles. My studio functions as a business office, viewing room, and storage room. Most of my work happens outside the studio –

in Vermont, on vacation, at residencies.
Meighan Gale

Hey all – sorry to jump in late – I was away not working, though wishing I were. I work in a studio in upstate New York that’s adjacent to but separate from my living space. I also have a studio in Brooklyn that sees more sleeping/living than work—mostly because even after 7 yrs of having the space I still find it confusing to work in two locations. I’ve always been impressed by James’ ability to find and create a workable environment for himself wherever he may be. I’m always hoping to manage that
Tara Fracalossi

What do you mean by “work”? My 9 to 5 job? Or the other parts of the day when my brain really works? My brain works everywhere but my favorite place is inside my car when I am driving alone. This is where I do most of my thinking, creative or otherwise.
Zheng Hu

I guess my interest is in all of the manifestations of work you mention, plus many more. I’m interested not only in where the physical means of production take place for artwork, but where and how one earns a living, and how one manages and juggles the multitude of tasks involved in the day-to-day existence as an artist. You indicate that your brain “really works” when you are thinking about those things that interest you outside your job, and I think most of us would say something similar. I am especially interested in the idea that your favorite work space is a car traveling at 70 MPH (I don’t see you driving the speed limit, for some reason).

On a side note, I’m a little concerned that there are sort of two lists going here. Do you think that will be a hassle for people to keep track of?
dg

Another belated answer to Danny’s first question. I apologize for not responding earlier; sometimes I just can’t turn on the computer. My wife and I recently moved to Bellefonte Pa. She got the great teaching job (she’s a poet) at Penn State Univ, 2-2 load, graduate seminars, etc. As the trailing spouse I find myself dividing time looking

for teaching jobs, home improvement, lots of that, and art making. We bought a giant old house (1870), large rooms, high ceilings and a hird floor consisting of nearly 1000 square feet of uninterrupted space. I’ve never had such a great studio, making do with cramped quarters in NY. Its quiet, peaceful, small town life; I’m much more relaxed. I hope I don’t blow it.

I have a question as well. The category “Work” seems very large and open-ended. It would be interesting to hear from the other participants in the show how they situate their work in this context.

I did a series of paintings a few years ago called “Handwork.” They were based on knitting patterns and I suppose that this series would have the most direct connection, even if the most flat-footed, to “work.” The series of drawings that came after the “Patiomaster” series, had overt connections to “work” as well. They were made after moving to the suburbs of Harrisburg about 4 yrs ago and had to do with stereotypical gendered divisions of labor. (all too real in “America”) The work I’m doing now is less sure-footed in this context, more open to various interpretations. I’ve been making LightJet prints, a digital medium, of models I build, then photograph, scan, manipulate

produced works expressly for this exhibition. One thing they all had in common, though, was a nearly obsessive devotion to the various processes (more or less of their own invention) by which they realized the work. Without exception, each artist brought an astounding passion and rigorousness to this oddly quiet, even somber, show. It was a humbling experience to work with them.

As a way of laying bare the curatorial process and hopefully rendering it more inclusive and participatory, we created an Internet listserv to which all artists and museum staff were subscribed. It was through this forum that we asked the artists questions to help illuminate some of the issues at hand. The conversations were at once philosophical and pragmatic, esoteric and—well—conversational, and continued sporadically throughout the preparation, installation, opening, and, in fact, the entire run of the exhibition. They have been reproduced in their entirety in this catalog in order to retain the informal vibe. I feel especially fortunate to have been privy to the discussions that occurred online, and I begin my laundry list of thank-yous by expressing my deep gratitude to the artists not only for producing such incredible work, but for their generosity on this particular score. In addition to the sheer athleticism involved (in many cases) in first traveling to the museum to plan an installation and then again to install it, the added burden of participating in an ongoing online forum was, at times, taxing. I appreciate everyone's team spirit.

I am also indebted to Joe Amrhein at Pierogi in Williamsburg, Brooklyn for his patience with me and for his unflagging advocacy for artists. Likewise, I must acknowledge and underline essayist Corinna Ripps' de-facto curatorial role. Corinna brought several of the artists to our attention, as well as much-needed daily professionalism and aplomb that kept me motivated through the occasional mire of rote, administrative chores. Speaking of same, I also want to thank Amy Griffin—my wife and the registrar for this show—for handling all of those rote, administrative chores as if they were fun and interesting, and for holding my hand as always. Additional thanks go to Jeffrey Wright-Sedam and his staff of plucky work-study preparators for their skill and stamina throughout the lengthy and grueling installation process. I am very grateful to museum director Marijo Dougherty for inviting me to work with Zheng and Corinna on this project and for looking the other way when I demanded the impossible of her staff. She has remained steadfastly supportive throughout every phase of this project. Finally, I offer my sincere thanks to my co-curator and exhibit designer Zheng Hu. I have come to realize that Zheng's title is insufficient to describe the mountain of responsibilities he cheerfully accepts in the interest of producing show after show. He wears so many hats he needs a neck brace.

In our administered world, rubber-stamping and pencil-pushing rub up against their flip side: theme park leisure, ball-punting, hip-shaking to soulless tunes. Work is the ever-present reality that frames our existence, contrived play is the stopgap, and anything outside the status quo is suspect. Why buck the inevitable? The answer is as simple as a rhetorical *why not* and as complex as the meaning of resistance itself. Following the trajectory of thoughts and actions that fuel the work of Dexter Buell, James Cullinane, Lee Etheredge IV, Tara Fracalossi, Meighan Gale, David Kasdorf, Mark Lombardi, John Menick, Josh Singer, and Richard Wager is like traveling on a one-way ticket through the pitfalls of our culture. Forget about tangible resolve on this tour of duty; it is neither a choice nor an option.

Although a sense of instability and melancholy underscores most of the work in question, a fluidity between poetics, aesthetics, and pure information saves it from art world insularity. By merging the practices of art with real-life experience, these artists succeed in giving visual form to their resistance; under their restless watch relatively simple gestures become poetic points of reckoning. Bending, stretching, running, crying, napping, tapping, sorting, folding, dipping, cutting, pasting, slacking off, connecting the dots: child's play for those who accept life in an adult world not of their making. For this group, the promise of a better world rests in the power of working it out on individual terms.

in Photoshop and print. The "mattress rooms," ("Tenderfoot 1, 2, and 3") the pictures I consider to be the best of the first group, and the ones most appealing to the curators is, I suppose, institutional in nature (those striped mattresses) and have been seen as comments on homeless shelters and even interpreted by one critic/curator (not involved with the "Work" show) as having to do with the holocaust. I can admit, now that I have shown these pieces twice, and they are in some small way "out there," that the original impetus was church camp. My new pieces have much more to do with fantasy, purer products of my imagination perhaps having to do with sex, but not in any overt way I don't think. I suppose sex can be work too, especially if one is trying to conceive. Or maybe they can be seen as falling into the realm of the "emotions"; in this day and age there is always room for that. All in all, I'm not sure. I don't make it with "Work" specifically in mind, but it will be amusing to fit the pictures under the rubric of a specific, or in this case, general narrative. I'll avoid doing that myself, I think, until they are finished, if at all. It reminds me of my thesis statement at Hunter College. David Kasdorf

I know what you mean about not being able to face the computer. I teach digital media

all day and come home to work on a video project and experience a very Clockwork Orange reaction to touching the keyboard. I apologize for my sabbatical from the list, but I've been overwhelmed with administrative work for SUNY these last two weeks.

When I first thought of you for this show, I was thinking more about your paintings. Not only the reference to repetitive, obsessive labor (knitting/quilting/weaving), but the incredibly time-consuming process by which the paintings were made. Those pictures address the stereotypical gender divisions of labor as much as the paper bag Patiomaster drawings. Weaving and interior design. I think that process has informed your new photographs in a big way, too. You're right in assuming that I respond most to the mattress pictures. They intimate of a sordid game—the rules of which are unclear. They also remind me of all the awkward socialization of communal activities like summer (or church) camp (or life on a kibbutz, no?). I'm anxious to see the new work, too. I find the idea of asserting that dream and fantasy constitute a form of work particularly appealing, as I find myself increasingly incapable of giving myself permission to relax. Leisure is, in fact, just another thing to schedule and stress over and becomes, thus, work.

DG well it brings up the question what do you mean by work? my work is a process. it begins as a thought/idea and at some point it is the execution of that thought/idea. that first part is done throughout the passing of my days. the latter, the execution, is also done throughout the day (video-taping things at various times and in various places) and then at a computer. i say "a" computer because it doesn't really matter which one. the one i use at work is the only one available to me that is fast enough to do the sorts of things i want to do, but i also use my computer at home for putting together audio samples, still images, etc. i guess what i'm driving at is that where doesn't really matter. i like my desk at work and i like working on my own stuff late at night when i can be alone. but where is the course of my life, the place has simply become where ever the tools happen to be. it is the nature of this new technology. even where the art can be seen is contingent only on where there is a tool for viewing it, ie. a computer and internet connection. this forum is an example of that. where are we meeting? where are we having this discussion? i'm in san francisco at my desk at work having my morning coffee. Josh Singer

The old saying goes like "Ends justify means". But it seems to me that the world – technologically or politically – is becoming more and more "All means without ends". The contemporary issues of "Life and Death" almost exclusively hinges on technicality.

While many of your works seem to reveal a process (or means) in its pure form, is it your intention to create a social allegory so the audience has a glimpse into the process in its original unspoiled form and a chance to re-evaluate the all-pervading processes with which we carry on with our life? Or am I reading too much into your work?

The question is mainly for Dexter Buell, but everyone is also welcome to comment. Zheng Hu

Functionally, I spend most of time in a Brooklyn storefront doing freelance computer work, printing my work in the darkroom when I am involved in a photo project, editing video on Final Cut Pro, and practicing the piano. I started studying in July as a fortieth birthday present to myself, but i am bogged down by a new teacher and less time than

Dexter Buell and David Kasdorf share an affinity for things that are, in Kasdorf’s words, “quintessentially masculine in a fucked-up way.” *Treadmill/Zootrope*, 1997, a lumbering eleven-foot wooden wheel hand-built by Buell, merges the theatrics of contemporary athleticism with the gentility of Victorian parlor games. The constraints inherent in both pursuits are exposed under Buell’s patient direction. Whether viewing the wheel in a stationary position or watching it activated on videotape as Buell takes it for a spin (eventually the wheel spirals out of control under its own momentum and unceremoniously ejects him), one is left with a sense of big plans run amuck. The same gnawing sense of failure riddles earlier pieces like *Snapline*, 1995, in which Buell documents repeated attempts to inscribe his naked back with a carpenter’s snapline; or *Red Maple Cube*, 1988, where he and a collaborator count all 99,284 leaves of an average-size maple tree and box them in a cube made from the tree’s trunk and limbs. The documented traces of Buell’s exertions reveal a comic treachery: the fantasy of prowess repeatedly butts up against the reality of limitation. This is as it should be for Buell, since the ultimate poignancy of his efforts lies not in the results but in the efforts themselves.

In *Cowboy*, 2000, Kasdorf videotapes himself crying—red puffy eyes, quivering lips, a chintz backdrop. Is this a young man getting in touch with his feelings? Maybe, but why is he rubbing his eyes so hard? And with what? Is it soap, cowboy? In a series of digital prints, Kasdorf’s depiction of divergent sleeping quarters is faked, too: some are meant for group sleep, sparse rooms with mattresses lined up against the wall, while others are more intimate, glowing rooms designed with pleasure in mind. They look convincing enough, but scrutiny reveals crooked seams and awkward proportions, not real beds but little fabric pads hand-sewn by Kasdorf; the oozy drips that look like beaded glass curtains in a Hefneresque love den are done with syrup. Through digital manipulation, Kasdorf simultaneously enhances and subverts the painstaking deliberations of boyhood model-making. His seductive yet confining fictional realms provide metaphoric retreat from the demands of male expectations—in Kasdorf’s world, cowboys need not shed crocodile tears (but if they want to, they can).

James Cullinane’s gargantuan wall drawings loom over the spaces they temporarily inhabit. Using thousands of pushpins, Cullinane metaphorically tattoos the walls with vignettes of children engaged in regimented play. Borrowed from a sixty year-old illustrated manual, the original drawings are rendered in a bold linear hand as they depict familiar activities like wrestling, dancing, and marching. Cullinane removes the heavy-handed didacticism by liberating its imprint from the printed page; with each

pinprick, he pokes a hole into moribund notions about rearing healthy little minds and bodies. As each pushpin builds upon the next, each descriptive twist of the original illustrator’s pen is transformed into a twinkling arabesque. Writ large upon the wall, his freshly charged subjects project a hypnotic visual power and an oddly tender grace. Long before Cullinane’s labor-intensive process is complete, the big picture emerges: kids rule. Unfortunately, their seemingly impenetrable world and unbridled spirit will be modified. Time dictates the parameters of childhood just as it does the duration of Cullinane’s efforts; eventually his drawings must be erased to make room for the next hang. The pins are removed, the wall is spackled, the game is played out; what sticks is the visionary reminder of how childhood transgressions indelibly mark the contours of adult perception.

Operating on different terrain than Cullinane but sharing similar concerns, John Menick navigates social space in search of gestures that resist social conditioning. While Cullinane toys with the divide that separates illustration from fine art and finds untapped poignancy by merging the two, John Menick resists hierarchical divides altogether. In an effort to understand the cultural ramifications of unexamined living, Menick investigates ways to renegotiate the demands of daily life. In *9 to 5, 5 to 9*, Menick offers a group of college students cash to pursue a leisure activity instead of going to their work-study jobs. He follows up with a series of questions in which the students reveal their thoughts about work, leisure, and laziness. Their answers reflect an acute awareness of the pressures and limitations inherent in a system that values product over possibility. Through a seemingly benign intervention, Menick illustrates how simple diversion in the space of a day “turns time’s function on its head.”

The work methods of Lee Etheredge IV and Richard Wager have a pre-digital rhythm. Working against conventional time constraints, Etheredge uses a manual typewriter to make minimalist drawings: letter after letter, row after row, his accumulated marks become squares on edge, circles in a void, gray bands adrift. It takes over a million hits at the typewriter to make one drawing. For Etheredge, “typing is a process of making time visible.” Under his methodical hand and clinical eye, margins and spaces gain equal footing with letters; in combination, their quantifiable presence gains meaning through effort, not context.

In the same vein, Richard Wager directs his energies toward self-contained and repetitive actions. In contemplating ignored spaces and things he assigns a higher purpose to menial tasks. Why hand-scrub a three-foot section of subway platform until it sparkles? Why take a toothbrush, spoon, or light bulb and dip it repeatedly in

I had in July. But this studio set up is new to me. My last studio was like an airplane hangar, and I built some big work there. (I will be showing “Treadmill/Zootrope” in WORK which is human size hampster wheel). I haven’t fabricated anything that large since, and if I do I will have to go find a shop space again.

So when it comes down to making new images, all studio bets are off. I make photos and videos of “exertions in nature” I suppose. Film myself jumping, or turning a screw (also in Work), wading across a stream, etc. So that’s why I felt alright about giving up the big macho sculpture studio. I wasn’t using it that much anyway, though I miss it sometimes.

In response to Zheng’s question I have to say I never believed that old saying. I don’t have a Machiavellian bone in my body. I came to my current mode of working after realizing that a finished work was always less interesting to me than experience of getting there (Cliche I know). My own skills as a fabricator slipped too often into design.

Once I undertook to build a piece on site that was too large for me and at 3 am the morning of the opening I had to call it finished, a gaping hole in the side of a 13’ plywood globe. So all that effort was revealed in the incomplete object rather than concealed in a well made one.

The thing about effort that interests me is that it has substance even without the end result. That is to say it has substance for me. It validates my experience as living body. As for social commentary, perhaps, but I don’t work from that or toward that. Dexter Buell I have AOL and, as everyone knows, it has a terrible web browser. I just tried going to Zheng’s link 5 times and it was unable to load. Is it possible to send all questions through the e-mail system? Thanks so much. Meighan

Could you explain in one or two sentences (if possible) why your proposed works have anything to do with the “Work” the exhibition? ZH

Since I have not decided what piece(s) I will show in ‘Work’, I will opt out of answering this question. Clara Williams

Does anyone in this group make art full time??? Corinna Rippes

No. I have a day job....Good thing, too! James Cullinane

Not me, at least not at the moment. I did have a run of about a year on foandation money but I spent a lot of that dough on a lemon volvo I had the misfortune to buy. DB

I don’t and I don’t know anyone who does except for maybe Chuck Close.

Meighan no. never have.

and as well, for various reasons, art making has not been a priority in my life for the past few years. it is only recently that i have been able to apply myself to art projects: able to produce more and be more mentally engaged with it. this has a lot to do with the fact that I am now in the fortunate position of having my day job be particularly relevant and connected to my art. i hope to have them merge and integrate even more. JS

I haven’t had a full time job since 1996, and even then I only worked them for several months at a time. In 1997 I worked for an artist four days a week (There’s a big topic), and since then have had an occasional teaching job, and a fairly successful real estate project that allows me to work out of my studio. Add freelance mechanical drawing (CAD) to this and I’m OK.

beeswax or plaster until it is unrecognizable? Wager's singularly focused efforts produce new hybrid forms that resist classification: neither functional nor necessary, they call to question the very nature of work. Why does anybody do what they do? In both Etheredge's and Wager's work, meaning is derived through the working process. Subtle displacements and simple gestures translate into new visual forms as both artists forge a continuum between their choice of materials and the everyday world.

Tara Fracalossi surrounds herself with the vestiges of everyday experience. She finds discarded snapshots and takes them back to her studio where she catalogs them. An assumed familiarity with archival practice dictates her studio practice, but beneath strategic mimicry lies a critical attempt at wresting open unreflective acts of preservation. Fracalossi sorts her photos by categories, blows them up on a photocopier, or packs them away in archival envelopes. Her site-specific installations are thus an extension of her studio practices: found and collected photographs are writ large on the wall or hidden away in museum cases. The photos in cases are wrapped, laid out in grids, and labeled by category: plants, Niagara Falls, power station, Christmas lights. The photocopied blowups depict a further range of innocuous information: graduation picture, torn curtain, girl with braces. A vast index emerges—but of what? There is neither historical linearity here, nor any immediate poetry, nor unsuspected correspondence between photographs. An endless proliferation of information is presented with detached neutrality, yet there are clues that Fracalossi cares about her sources and her materials. The snapshots are methodically catalogued, the archival envelopes are delicately folded, precisely laid out, and specifically labeled—perhaps Fracalossi's assumed role is more undertaker than archivist. All this work translates into an elegiac reminder that, despite their failure to stand in for real experience, photographic images are repositories for memory and catalysts for reverie. Only under heavy-handed archival procedure are they rendered meaningless.

Meighan Gale uses her body to develop gestures that evoke inherited social conditioning. Her invented lexicon documents the moves that make up her day: lifting, bending, soothing, waiting. Whether learned, repeated, or assumed, these movements define the parameters of domestic activity; by studying them and then choreographing a sequence of postures based on their expressive potential, Gale invests familiar actions with newfound weight and purpose. Wearing a formless white shift, Gale takes to the woods to document her efforts: she butts up against a tree, and using a rope she attempts to pull, pivot, and hang from its trunk. Each action is photographed in black and white or videotaped in real time; the resulting images are tightly composed, the

action is compressed. Gale is free to work out her configurations in any way she chooses; still, an air of frustration pervades her solitary rituals. Perhaps at the core of her proposals is the realization that it takes shared effort to change prescribed moves. As such, each twist and turn of Gale's body becomes a proposition to reshape the standard cant on women's work, or be destined to live within its boundaries.

In his recent work, Josh Singer takes a stab at collaboration by sharing his process and visual vocabulary with strangers. His videos combine disparate elements of text, music, image, and spoken word. In an effort to disrupt conventional ways of seeing, digital edits reframe information; Singer eliminates poetic flourish and lets cinematic fracture reign supreme. In a recent online presentation of unedited work, he asks the viewer to assist in helping him sift through his raw material and make further edits. Working out his artistic process through mediation rather than first-hand creation, Singer walks a fine line between effort and exhaustion. In the end, the final call (and cut) remain his.

Mark Lombardi offers no consensual windows in his work. He goes it alone as he researches, dissects, and gives visual form to newspaper stories that leave most of us suspicious but complacent. Drawing on the major political and financial scandals of the day, he creates large-scale linear diagrams that at first glance look like celestial maps; a closer reading reveals the intricate web of connections that lurk beneath current headlines. From Whitewater to the Vatican Bank, he uses dotted lines and broken arrows to chart the paths of illicit deals and laundered money, keeping track of it all in a handwritten database of 12,000 index cards. By scrutinizing the mutable boundaries that separate artistic practice from everyday experience, Lombardi wrings visual poetry out of dirty secrets. The results are a chillingly beautiful guide to the facts of life.

There is something anti-heroic about the efforts of the artists discussed in this essay. A shared resistance to prescribed art practices gives them the freedom to inscribe their presence beyond the art world. Charting their own course in uncertain terrain, they know that the context in which they operate is ultimately too vast to control or escape, yet working it out is more important than working to get ahead or working to get by. For them, an artistic process with false starts and unresolved contingencies beats an unreflective product with predictable and diminished returns anytime.

March 2001

But the fact that I'm in my studio all week doesn't mean I'm always making art. I do a lot of child care on Mondays and Fridays, and weekends are mostly family time too. So where does that leave me? I'd say it's a pretty satisfying quilt of obligations; my time is mostly my own, and making new work just has to come in surges.

But that explanation sort of begs the question of what motivates the work, or keeps motivating the work after years in New York? I may have found an equation that seems to support the habit, (i mean how many people in NY have this kind of space devoted to the way their own particular mind works), but is it necessary?

In the area of this question, I like the way our own Danny Goodwin thinks about the usefulness of art, or rather, that it is the uselessness of art that is important. The practice differentiates my life from the sludge of ordinary mature capitalism. (Convenient that I don't make a living at it, eh?). In other words, I feel fortunate to have made these choices because it affords me some degree of mental independence.

I know you marxists out there are going to point out that one is never outside of an

exploitative economy, but I've made an uneasy peace. I recently heard this comment "that you cannot resolve the conflict in the middle east, but you can manage it." That's sort of how I feel. Dexter

Dear Al- I'm sorry for not responding to each of the questions individually in this email, but I haven't had the time recently to answer them as they are asked; so here are just some thoughts on what I've read so far. Of course, as is maybe the case with many of you, I haven't had the time mostly because of the thing we are discussing: work. However, the extra labor of responding to this listserve is (at least for me) done appreciatively. Rarely is there any form of meaningful contact between artists while they work in a group show. It's usually 'do your thing and go home. I guess this can also be part of my response to questions involving the web/spy cam, an idea I'm not too fond of, most of all because this discursive forum has the potential of showing and explaining more about our working methods. There's a longer response to why I don't like the idea, but I'll save that for another email.

The situation of not being able to participate in a discussion because of work, to be removed from a social setting because your time is demanded elsewhere, is in my mind meaningfully related to the general conditions of wage labor. To sum up a very long discussion, I think that labor markets tend to isolate us, and artists are no exception to this. A long email can be written about how market competition has produced individual styles, personalities, egos, and movements within the art world, or what I would more perhaps call the culture industry.

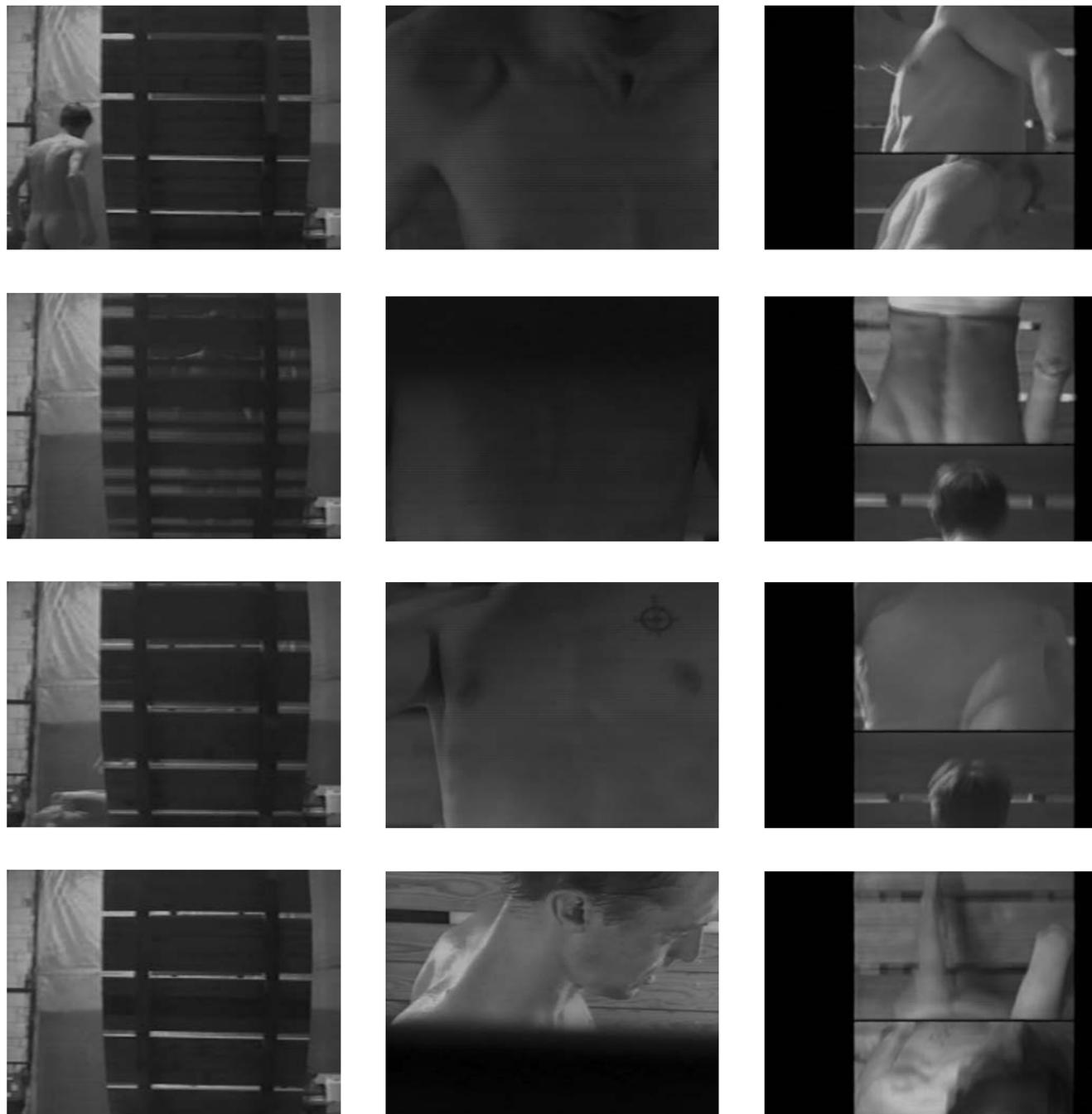
I've tried in the past several years to develop a collaborative form of working as an alternative to what I see as an atomizing art market. I've always worked in this way alongside my individual practice, but recently that way of working has also affected my own work, making it over time something other than 'my own work'. Many of the things I am proposing for the exhibition and for other projects recently need other people in order to make the projects happen. The idea itself may be quite banal, but realization of the situation has really very little to do with me per se. I may be needed in order to organize it and get approval, but the life of the work is with others. Sorry for

such a long winded email... I should probably just answer the questions a little more directly: I don't use a studio for my work as a choice - not because of money, I'm writing this on a laptop in Brooklyn, it's rather late, and I've been working way too much lately as a freelance web designer. And yes I would stop my day job and move to Rome if I ever got a ton of cash dumped on me.

Hope to read more from you all soon. John

PS. Just wanted to mention a few exhibitions/events in New York coincidentally having to do with the subject of work:

At the Swiss Institute Renée Green has a project called 'Platform'. The whole exhibition (it is a group show) is about the general subject of 'Work' and Renee's project in particular concerns collective forms of working. Along with videos she has made with different groups in Europe (radical architects from Switzerland, electronic musicians



LEFT
Treadmill/Zootrope, 1997 (INSTALLATION VIEW)
Wood, steel, mixed media sculpture
129 x 67 x 132 inches

FAR LEFT
Treadmill/Zootrope #1 (Wipe Out), 1997
Video (LEFT COLUMN OF IMAGES)
5 minutes, 40 seconds

Treadmill/Zootrope #2 (Eggbeater), 1997
Video (CENTER COLUMN OF IMAGES)
2 minutes, 30 seconds

Treadmill/Zootrope #3 (Running West), 1997
Video (RIGHT COLUMN OF IMAGES)
6 minutes, 40 seconds

from Barcelona) she is having various groups in New York give talks and organize discussions. I and many other collaboratively oriented artist have participated in the last couple of weeks. Check it out if you can.

The Museum of Modern art's next show is called (I think) "The Ideal Workplace". They used to have an online questionnaire inquiring about the ways in which we work. ("Do you commute to work?", "How many hours a week do you work?" Etc.) I just looked again, but it wasn't on their website today. The show is supposed to open in January/February.

If you are in NYC this week also check this out:
CULTURAL CAPITAL/CULTURAL LABOR - CONFERENCE ON CULTURAL WORK NEW YORK UNIVERSITY/NEW SCHOOL UNIVERSITY - DECEMBER 1 & 2, 2000 SWAYDUCK AUDITORIUM, NEW SCHOOL - 65 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY Contact: 212/998-3725 This conference will focus on the labor conditions in the arts and culture sphere. Organizing by: Barbara Abrash, Jan Cohen-Cruz, Andrea Fraser, Faye Ginsburg, Micki McGee, Kathleen McQueen, Toby Miller, Lorie Novak, Marcelo Penha, Jerry Philogene,

Andrew Ross, Mary Schmidt-Campbell, Brian Wallis, George Yúdice, and Vera Zolberg for full information please click below: <http://www.e-flux.com/decode.php3?cid=130> I'm getting a little confused by the two lists as well, it's much simpler for me to just read a bunch of email. (though it can be time consuming, as Meighan pointed out in Dexter's email.) To complicate things further, I have a question which sort of builds on Corinna's question: Given that most of you don't make art full-time how have you managed to do the two kinds of work (art/job) that you do, has anyone found a solution that's satisfying to them?
Amy Griffin

Its definitely going to be confusing to run tandem lists. Those more savvy with computers seem to be into the link model, and others more at ease with simple email. If this is true (response anyone?), I would opt for the latter model. Meighan Gale just commented to me that her art practice time was going to be devoted to these questions. Interesting.
Dexter Buell
I definitely need more time in my life devoted to the practice of art making.

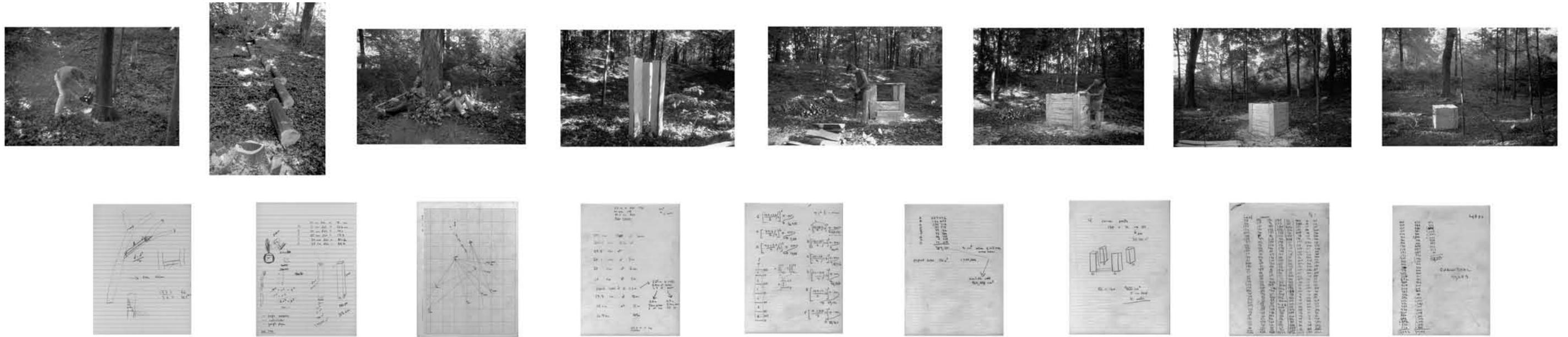
For me it's a question of priorities, I always put family, work, home first. After that, there's not a lot of space left. I don't find it entirely satisfying but I feel fortunate that I have any time to make work.
Meighan Gale

My suggestion: use the e-mail interface. We can archive the discussion in an organized, threaded interface on the web page next time one of us is sitting around with nothing to do. This was my only fear with the discussion list: that the tech would overtake the content. I just sent an e-mail to Zheng last night retracting my early pessimistic comments on the web discussion page and congratulating him on the simplicity of the interface he designed, and I still think it is pretty cool. I have to confess, though, that I am a bit of a geek and I tend to be drawn to things (including ideas) with lots of moving parts. I already feel a bit sheepish, though, asking you all to take time out of your schedules to respond to these questions. I'd feel worse if I thought you were trying to manage two parallel discussions. Let us keep it as simple as possible. I'll pledge to use the e-mail list only for now. I should add, though, that I'm pleasantly surprised at everyone's willingness to participate. I promise not to take undue

advantage of your generosity. I have lots of questions to follow, but I'll hang back a bit while we get more comfortable with the whole setup.
DG

Danny, I think you are right. It is getting too messy. Let's do the email and if necessary use the web as an internal archive.
Zheng

I apologize if this sounds as if I have a bad attitude regarding this process, but I am somewhat unsatisfied by all of this. First, I would actually like to have some curatorial input as to the reasons why each of us was selected for this show. I would also like to know what the curators expect to be gained or learned from such a grouping. I think better questions should be asked by the curators because to this point, the questions have been a little remedial and incredibly nonspecific and they leave me with the impression that the grouping of artists was/is arbitrary. I guess that's all,



Red Maple Cube, 1988
 These notes and photographs document the process by which the artist and his collaborator, Kirk Johnson, reduced an average-size maple tree to its smallest possible cubic volume. They also counted all 99,284 leaves on the tree before packing them, along with twigs and sawdust, into the box made from the limbs and trunk of the tree. The project took two and a half days.
 One 30 x 40-inch LightJet digital c-print, nine 8 1/2 x 11-inch pieces of documentation on lined paper, eight 11 x 14-inch inkjet prints

Clara Williams
 Clara,
 Sorry this process isn't working for you. What do others think?

At this point, I'd say the listserv is organic and conversational in tone. I don't think the curators want to be the only ones posing questions. I like the fact that so far the dialogue seems generated by gut response, not prescribed boundaries, but like any good conversation, maybe you're right, Clara; it's time to move on. Please feel free to add the rigor you feel is missing and let's proceed from there.
 Corinna

Clara,
 I appreciate your candor and I can understand your desire for a little specificity, at least as regards the one question I have asked, since it was so apparently simple. I think, however, that a question such as "where do you work?" only belies simplicity and, in fact can offer terrific complexity if it is thoughtfully considered (as has been borne out in some of the responses). Remediation, I assure you, is not something I'm interested in.

If I or the other curators are seeking any remedy, it is to the often stilted and remedial process by which many group exhibitions are curated. We have been trying, in fact, to (as Jeffrey recently put it) "peel back the onion skin" that obscures the curatorial process and give the artists as much freedom as possible in determining the shape of the exhibition. I guess I'd like a little clarification as to exactly what you mean by remedial, but let me clarify how we came to this group of artists:

When Zheng, Corinna and I first sat down to discuss this project, we were all in agreement that it would be refreshing to have an exhibition in this space that is decidedly underdesigned. That is, that it would be nice to choose a small group of "emerging" artists to respond to some ideas and avoid the parochialism of so many theme shows. We chose not to distribute a prospectus precisely because we want the exhibition to evolve as the artists respond. This is why the catalog for the exhibition will not be published concurrent with the opening, but will follow the closing—giving us time to include all that comes out of both the conversations between artists and images of the evolving installations in the space. This is also why we have discussed opening the museum to the public during installation. Still not sure if we'll get away with that

(due to security issues), but it is something I am very committed to. As regards the criteria for the selection of the artists, we sought both to invite people we thought would produce varied and interesting responses to the multi-faceted concepts of work, as well as artists whose work somehow denoted or connoted the process by which it was made. I will admit to a personal obsession with art objects that seem more the by-product of a performance or props used as a means to another, perhaps unseen, end. I have also been thinking much lately on the stultifying process by which I am able to find time to work, and I was very interested to hear some honest, candid feedback from other artists as to how they "manage". I have, in fact, been very pleased with the responses so far.

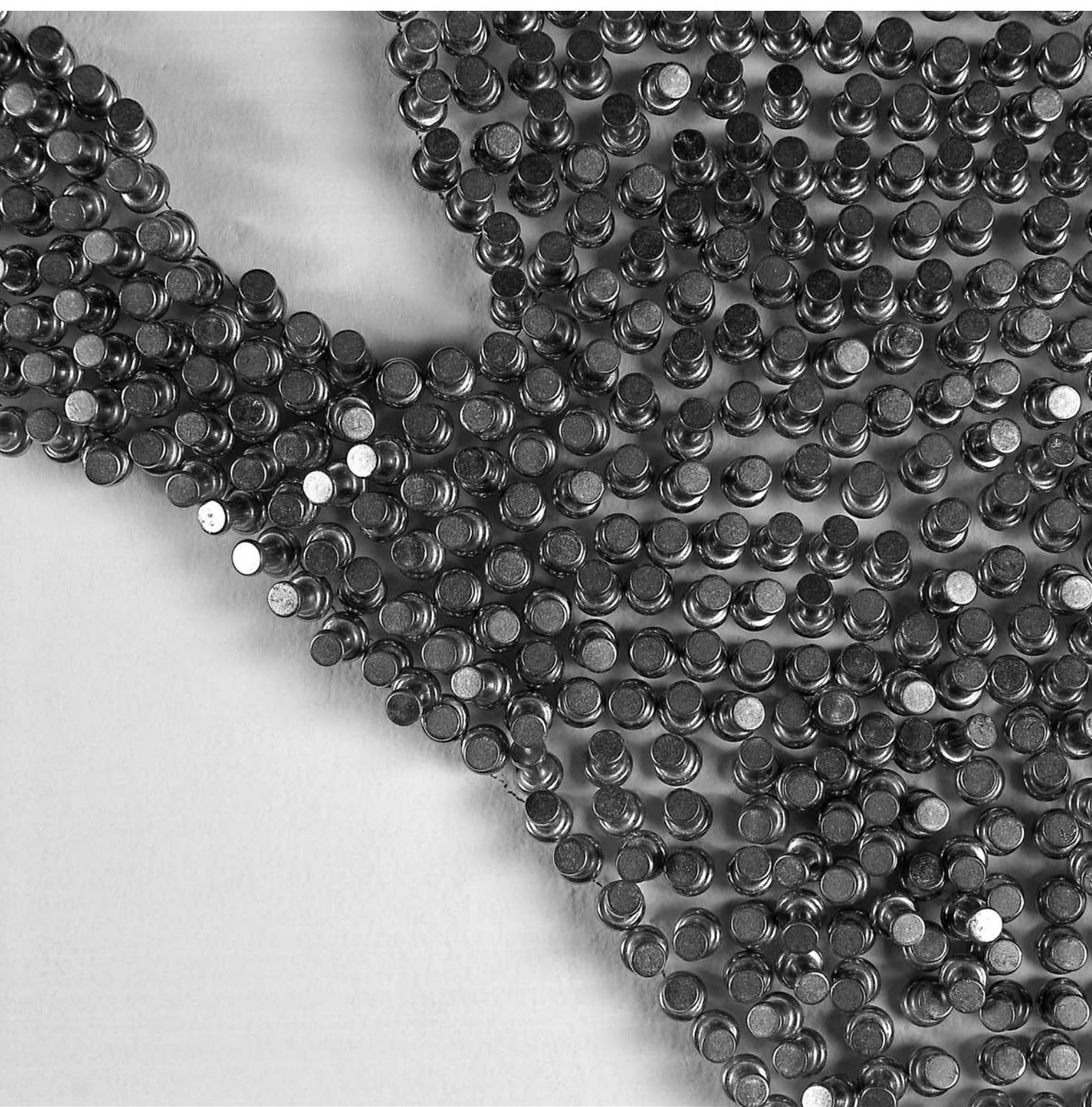
I think your work, specifically, addresses the monotony of clerical labor and the shift in means of production from an antiquated agrarian landscape to the hyper-pragmatic capitalist office building. I remember something in your statement about a daydreaming worker. I really responded to the notion of a laborer dreaming not of escaping work altogether, but of more fulfilling, meaningful work. Can't shake those Marxist urges. I'm looking forward to your proposal for our space.

I want to allay your suspicions that the process of selection was arbitrary, but I don't really feel compelled at this point to delineate the reasons, one by one, why we selected each of you. Corinna is, after all, writing the catalog essay—not me. Rather, I am interested in how YOU think your work relates to this show.

Best regards,
 Danny

P.S.: I'm really sorry I wasn't able to meet with you the day you came by the museum—I was in class.

Danny,
 I assure you that I have thought about each of the questions that have been posed to this point. That my answers have been short and very much to the point, should not be interpreted as a lack of thought. One of the points I am trying to make is that the questions that you are asking favor the kind of ~ work that you admitted (in your



JAMES CULLINANE

LEFT
Stones Throw, 2001 (INSTALLATION VIEW)
 Pushpins
 24 x 12 feet
 Dedicated to Lois Buell

FAR LEFT
Stones Throw, 2001 (DETAIL)

previous email) to being obsessed with. The questions are good questions if you are geared towards work and ideas of work that foreground the process. I find much, though certainly not all of this work, to be symptomatic of a fascination with manual labor and with a romantic notion of the artist being driven to create work because of various obsessions and neuroses. Though I happily respect whatever may be the impetus for other artists in the creative process, I ask that you widen or at least shift the parameters and not be so focused on 'process' work. (I am not stating or even implying a value judgement on any of the other work in this show.) At the risk of being overly simplistic in this analysis primarily make site-specific work and I would prefer more site-specific questions. Regarding the things that you quoted from my statement, you have to accept that the statements change as much from site to site as the installations. There is also a large amount of facetiousness within that particular project. I am not a Marxist, and find many of the oversimplifications within Marxism to be useful only as parody or satire. Also, only 3 of my pieces have dealt specifically with clerical labor and each has deliberately used the preconceived notions of clerical labor specifically and monotonous work in general as red-herrings of sorts. I realize it is difficult to distinguish details from slides. I understand and respect your interest in "peeling back

the onion skin", but it is precisely the fact that the curatorial process was obscured that caused me to question it. I have no problem with giving the artists more freedom, but it is my understanding that much of the work for the show has already been selected, so I am honestly not sure where the freedom part comes in. Certainly in my case, given that I haven't even submitted a proposal, I have the freedom to maneuver but this has always been the case with site-specific work. My questions about the curatorial role are not intended to be hostile, I am simply trying to figure out the limits. If there are none to be found, fine. One other thing, I am not in favor of having the museum open during the installation process. This also seems to favor those artists who foreground the process and makes it nearly impossible for subtlety and individual discovery on the part of the viewer to occur due to the fact that there will be an artist (and work crew?) signalling all the places where an art object is located. Thanks, Clara

Sorry to have been out of communication for a while. E-mailing seems like an inherently casual and banal process. I haven't been annoyed by the simplicity of the

questions or the answers. I see this conversation as a starting point both for the artists and the organizers as well as for the catalog. MG

John,
 No apology necessary. I know it is something of a strain for everyone to keep up with the list. I subscribe to more than a dozen, so I tend to do marathon response sessions when my daughter goes to bed. Kinda pathetic, actually. I'm pretty much an e-mail slut. I should apologize upfront for the length of this e-mail. I know most of you don't have time to read a long posting, so I promise to be more concise in the future, but I want to respond to several things you bring up, John. My two-and-a-half cents are inserted below:

John Menick wrote:
 > Of course, as is
 > maybe the case with many of you, I haven't had the time mostly because of the things we are > discussing work. However, the extra labor of responding to this listserve is (at

least for me) > done appreciatively. Glad you think so.

> I guess this can also be
 > part of my response to questions involving the web/spy cam, an idea I'm not
 > too fond of, most of all because this discursive forum has the potential of
 > showing and explaining more about our working methods. There's a longer
 > response to why I don't like the idea, but I'll save that for another email.

I'm very interested in your thoughts on revealing your working process. Especially because I feel yours is such an accessible means of production, anyway. What I mean is—you don't prepare an installation in a theatrical way (drawing back the curtain when the work is "ready"), but, rather, the evolution of the programming of the space IS the work. Is this an unfair characterization of your proposal? Don't get me wrong: I am definitely not trying to talk anyone in to the webcam setup. As I said earlier—I would have no interest in participating myself if I were in the show. I'm just a little puzzled and intrigued by your shyness when you work in such a public and collaborative mode.



process to the public. However, I'd like to keep an open mind about it because I've always felt it is an interesting process, but there are some real problems with bringing the public in. I'd suggest to all you computer literate folks that a web-cam set up might be a better idea or post some sort of time-lapse photography to show the process. To me an open installation is only interesting over the course of the jobs. Someone visiting once will not see nor derive much. That's not the last word on the idea, just my thoughts. I'm sure we can work out something that is satisfactory to all.
Jeffrey

in theory i think opeing up the installation to the public is agreeat idea - it's hardly a closed set in most cases anyway but, i have to admit that i'm also not so comfortable with it either. i think maybe for some of the same reasons that clara stated but also for maybe a more selfish enjoyment of the odd yet wonderful vibe of a space during installation. not the 'don't enter - you're not included' vibe but rather the 'i'm having a lot of fun working in a new environment and discovering things' vibe that i'm guessing many artists have in their own way. as a very process based worker, that time installing is really kind of a special thing for me and the work - its defintely one of the rewards

of doing a show and i'd like to keep it if possible tara
As you wish. I respect your reservations. We'll not pursue opening during installation. Probably more interesting in theory than in practice, anyway.
dg

danny-
i would say that if some scheduled classes or other wanted to come through during installation that might be ok in place of general openness. i would certainly be happy to talk to students or something like that - I know that James was hoping to get some assistance from students so that mibht work for him too. just a thought
tara

Tara,
Having scheduled walk-throughs is something I think the museum has done before. Is that right Corinna? I'll start talking to my Grad students and others I think might be around during installation to find some volunteers for James and others who'll need help, but I think Jeffrey is probably best at coordinating this stuff. Right, Jeff? I'm sure

we can work it out. What do the rest of you think of having a Wildlife Safari day during installation?
dg

A scheduled walk-through is just fine.
Clara
Dear all,
Well, its been a while since I piped up. I've been away for the holiday and access to the web was limited. But that's not to say I haven't been paying attention, and I've been glad to see things heating up.

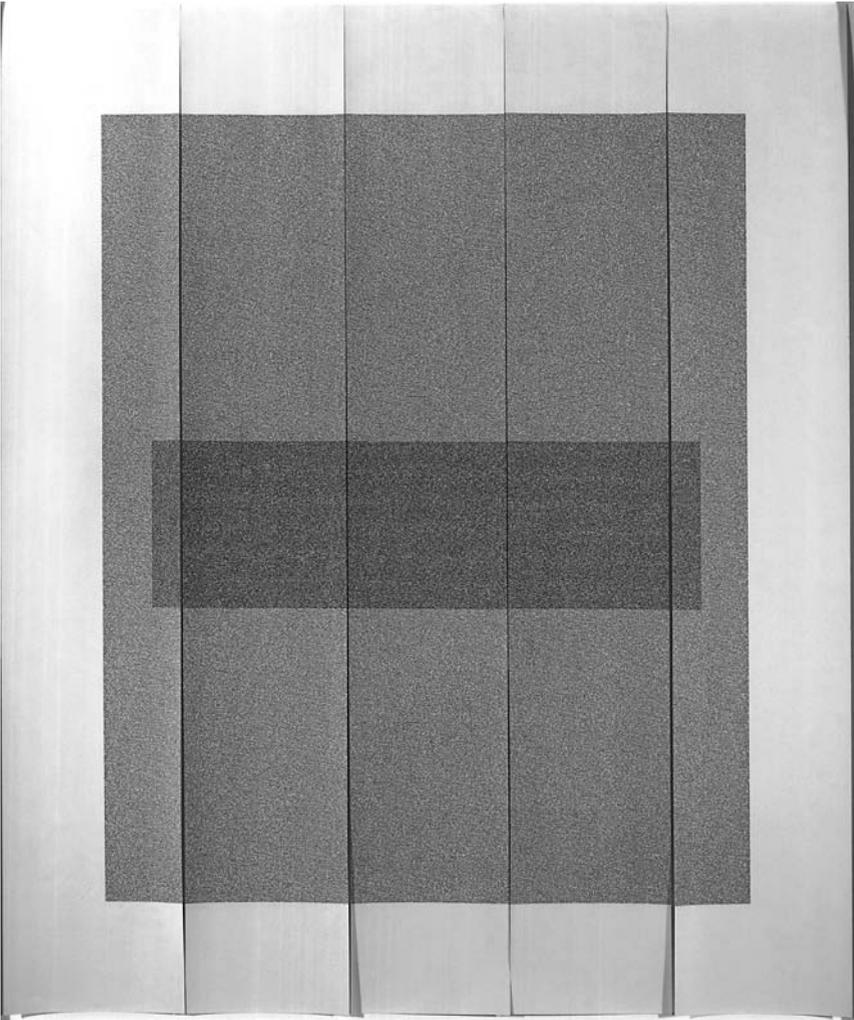
There have been a lot of topics introduced, and I've been mulling over grand themes, even drafting a few, but they seem hopelessly general, and dangerously underinformed. So I guess I m relying on the chatty quality of the list serve process to float some responses.

The webcam idea may be more germain to some than to others and it's interesting to

think about why. In my case, I will be installing a big hampster wheel, a piece made almost four years ago, but which involves a lot of mechanical and spatial maneuvering. In this case it seems fine to webcast the whole thing because its interesting to watch people work, that is to say, work in the most obvious sense: pick something up and put it someplace. NOT working in the sense of making a new piece of art, because this thing is already made, done, over.

But I've gathered from some of you that the process of developing an installation in situ is a private enterprise, and I completely understand and respect that it is. This also seems to infer that the site is therefore an extension of what used to be called the studio, and that the practice that takes place there occurs in "isolation."

John also seems to be saying that his time spent doing his work (or Network work) is separate from the market place and in a sense is about that separateness, or rather about a community outside of the market place. Both methods engage isolation as a value X or -X. Either way it is part of the equation.



LEFT
Times Square, July 19, 2000
Typewriter ink on Japanese paper
55 x 65 inches
Collection of Matt Pappajohn, Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania

FAR LEFT
∞, September 10, 2000 (DETAIL)
Typewriter ink on Japanese paper
16 x 19 inches

Following this thread I have to say I disagree with John Menick's assertion that labor markets isolate us. They define us. Think of any type of work and you will see that it actually unites the individual to a particular subset of our social unit. Doctors, lawyers, plumbers, they've all got their crowd that they see and interact with while they work. And so do we. I think we're all confused because we don't get compensated the way others do, and therefore have to have day jobs. We look around at people who make real money and think, hey I'm smart, I'm here and I ought to be entitled to a piece of this American Pie, because I also work, and I work hard. And so there are conferences about culture workers, and issues of valuation are discussed.

The labor market isolates artists because 99% of us assert ourselves in a field that has no direct impact on the fortunes of other men and women within our social unit. And I think that is a freedom we pay for with our day jobs. It's a freedom to be isolated. And that freedom is only barely tolerated by those who hold real power, because sometimes we have good ideas and that keeps things fresh. More often than not it's tolerated by us as artists because it offers us a potentially very powerful role in the market place of both commerce and ideas.

I'm getting tired of cutting and pasting here. I'm sure there are tons of holes in this argument, but I've got to move on. There is just one last thing I think is worth mentioning here and that has to do with the fact that in all of these discussions about where, how and for whom we work, we haven't discussed the way things "look." Does a discussion of visual content have a place in the current setting? After all, we are presumably all artists, just not perhaps "visual" ones. Dbuell

Jeffrey,
Good points. Easy for us to assert that it would be interesting to put the installation process on display, so to speak, when you're really the one who would deal with it in a pragmatic sense. I could be talked into setting up the webcam thing. Josh Singer has already entertained the idea of setting up a webcam during the closing, since he will not be able to attend. I'll donate the CMOS camera if Zheng has a box to plug it into. In a funny way, I (were I a participating artist) would be less inclined to have the process broadcast to the web than to have the occasional pedestrian saunter up with a question or two about what I was doing. The latter seems much more manageable

than the former. From the perspective of an organizer, however, the webcam holds much appeal.

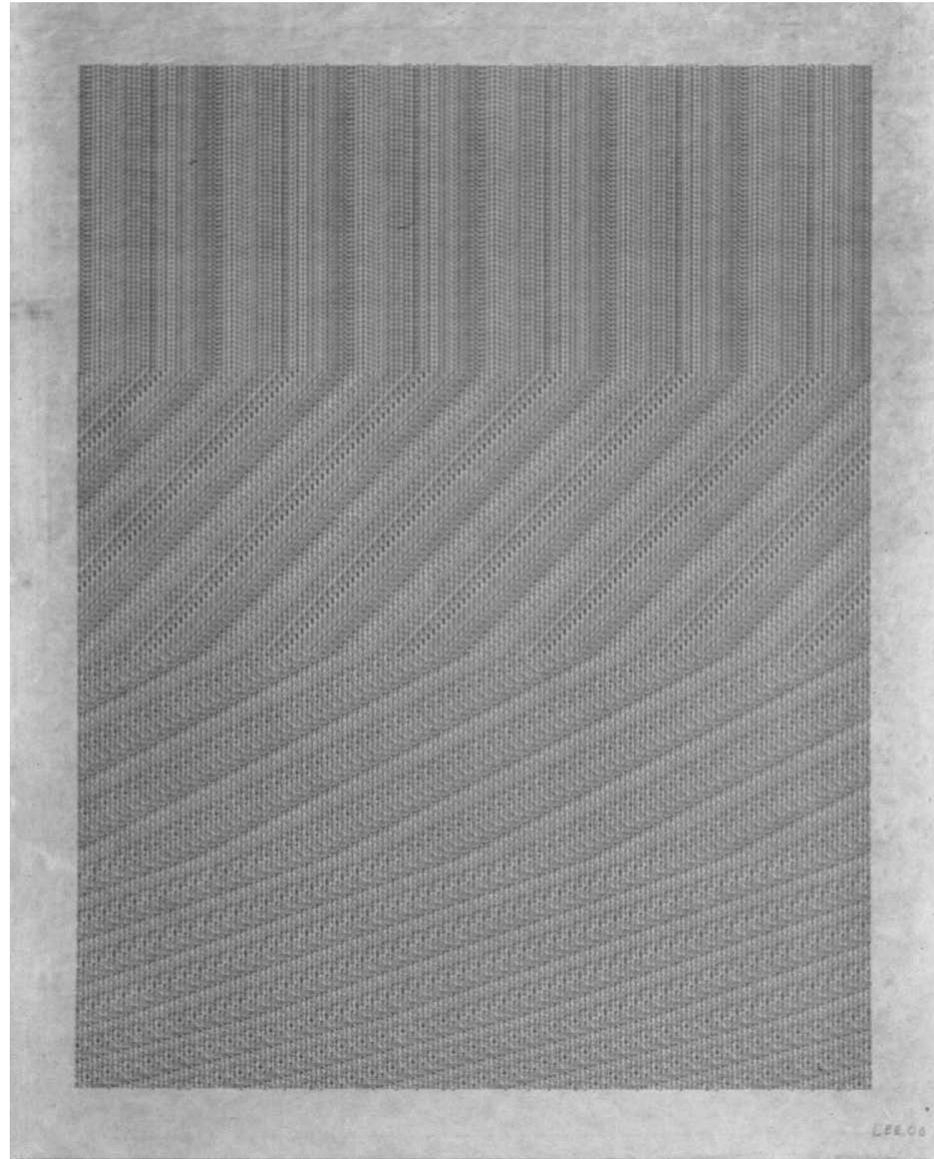
Security isn't an issue, and you're right—viewers will be more likely to wrap their minds around the process as a whole, rather than taking a single 15-minute walk-through and extrapolating some meaning from it.

On a related note, I've installed in public venues before that did not afford the luxury of being closed to the public, and I must say the process was energizing. I'd like to hear what the rest of the artists think about laying bare (on whatever level and to whatever degree is logistically tenable) the installation process. I'd assert that this is rather what Josh's piece already deals with—opening up the process of editing rough footage to the viewer's participation, thereby relinquishing control over the final result and (more than foregrounding the process) interrogating the notion of authorship. I'm only being partially facetious in appreciating that project for its calculated effort to avoid work—a tack that is familiar to anyone who has ever worked in retail or advertising.

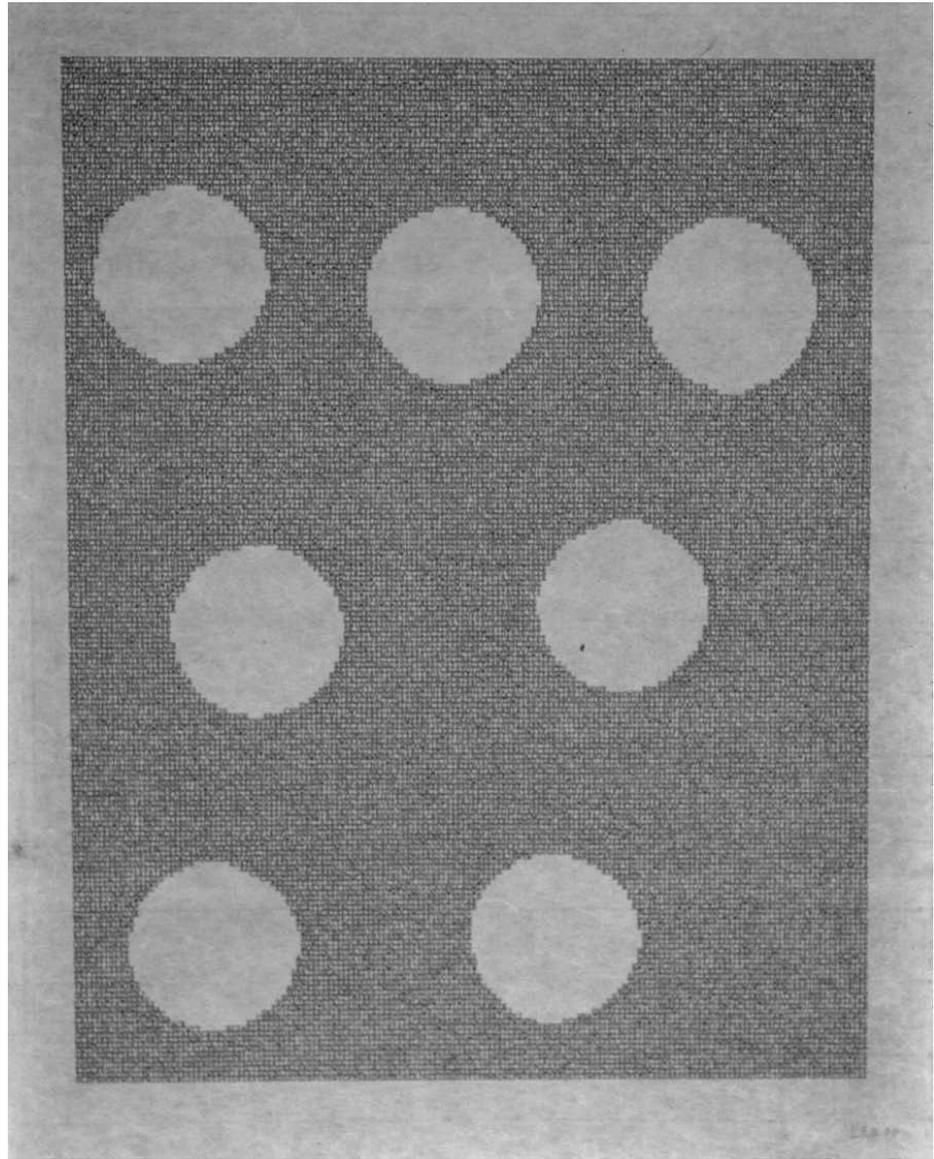
I just found this quote from Paul Pfeiffer in the Voice (December 5, 2000), p. 65. I thought it related to some of our discussions on the nature of work: "if you think of the creative process as a conversation between a creator and his materials, usually in the end the will of the creator is victorious over the raw material. For me, what's interesting about digital media is that the reverse happens. The power of the medium really overwhelms the will of the creator. I fell like we're seeing artistic productions now that are really hard to talk about because they almost defy conventional aesthetic judgement."
MG

Dear All,
OK, I usually am not this verbose in emails...maybe I got off on the wrong foot...But in response to your questions about what I think a culture industry is today... here it goes.

The cultural sphere within the United States has always been relatively a private market. Although the same can be said for health care, education, etc., state funding for the arts pales in comparison to some European cities, let alone some European countries. But



LEFT
Circus, 2000
 Typewriter ink on Japanese paper
 19 x 16 inches



FAR LEFT
Special Relativity, 2000
 Typewriter ink on Japanese paper
 19 x 16 inches

that being said, much of what is going on in the U.S. is now being exported overseas, and many countries are re-aligning themselves to an American model of the 'public-sphere'. In short, as we know, museums and other cultural institutions have been/are forced out into the 'free market'. But museums maybe illustrate the point most clearly

Rather than being the elitist institutions of the 19th century, the 20th century museum has emerged as an extremely popular form of leisure culture. Popular here is meant in terms of numbers. Although this is counter-intuitive to many who think that the Met and Guggenheim are still the bastions of snob culture, statistics show often the opposite. The museums in NY have much higher yearly attendance than all the sporting events in that city combined. Some museums boast attendances in the millions, not only for shows about motorcycles, but also survey shows of abstract painting. This ties in museum culture intimately to other markets we without question call 'industries'. For example, the tourist industry. Real estate may be another. For me the most interesting may be the public relations industry, which no longer simply exists to cleanse corporations of bad reputations, but exists to sell museum policies themselves to the public. I recently had a conversation with a woman who works in cultural PR and the

ambitions of the industry are staggering.

But a lot of this is old news. There is an new article by Anthony Davies and Simon Ford called 'Culture Clubs' that explains recent alliances between media industries, multinational corporations, universities, cultural foundations and museums in England with the aim of creating "a type of club dedicated to the networking of culturepreneurs and the business community. Much of this activity has been in line with organizational and structural shifts occurring in the corporate sector— principally, the shift from centralized hierarchical structures to flat, networked forms of organization." Forexample: "At London's Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA)... a networking club for cultural entrepreneurs and, initially at least, educationalists, arts administrators, television executives and business consultants has been set up in conjunction with Goldsmiths College, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA), Channel 4, the Arts Council and Cap Gemini. The Club is coordinated by Andrew Chetty and Sarah Duke at the ICA, Andrew Warren at Cap Gemini and Alan Phillogene of the Center for Cultural Studles at Goldsmiths College. It is an invite-only monthly event that provides "a networking base for its members" and promises to introduce them to

agencies from television companies to venture capitalists and private organizations who "may wish to support and commission them"

The article is extremely interesting and I can forward it to anyone who wants to read more.

There's more to say, but I have a lot of other things to do today. Hope to hear from you soon.
 John

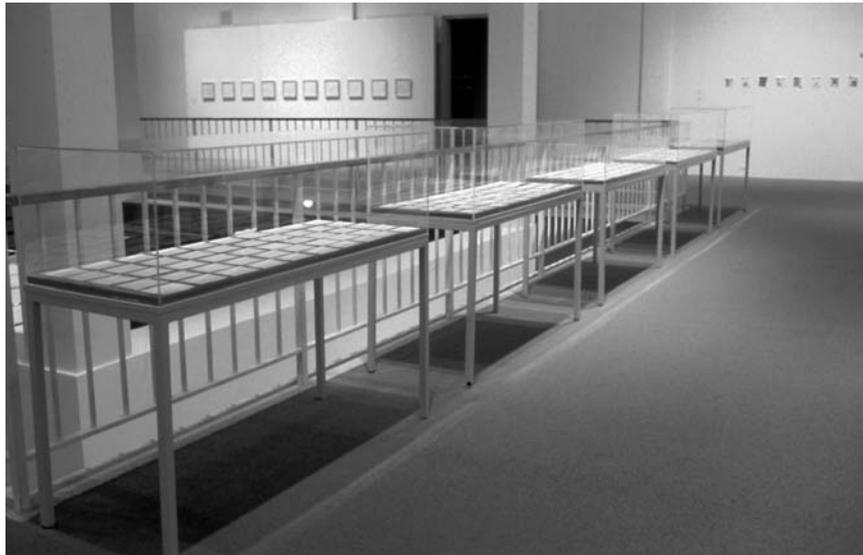
Danny,
 I appreciate your humor and sarcasm. The web cam...I'd rather not be a part of that. This is not to discourage others from taking part. I'm shy. I'm a bit secretive. Then there's the performative aspect of it that I tend to avoid. Nevermind, the whole issue of relinquishing control...
 Clara

Hey All:
 Just wanted to drop a quick note to let you know that Clara has decided to withdraw from the show. She couldn't get past her initial misgivings as to the curatorial process and thought it would be best for all concerned if she backs out now. I'm disappointed, but—c'est la vie, no?

A few quick updates I have several MFA students and two VERY reliable undergrads lined up to help with installation. Specifically, I have two people to ride out to Brooklyn to help Dex with the wheel pickup and installation back here in Albany. While in Brooklyn, we'll swing by Plerogi to pick up the massive Mark Lombardi drawings. I'm also looking at work by James Lee Etheredge IV that we may be getting in the same trip. I have four (maybe) people to assist James with his installation. What else is required? If any of you have additional support requirements for installation, please contact Jeffrey ASAP.

I'm swamped with SUNY stuff right now, but I'll be contacting you all this weekend to finalize the checklist of works for the show. I DEFINITELY want to resolve this before

TARA
FRACALOSSO



Archive (Museum Cases), 2001 (INSTALLATION VIEWS)
Color photographs, paper, tape, museum cases
Dimensions vary



the holidays.
Also, a reminder: if you have reviews or other bio information that you have yet to send to Amy for press, please do so at the earliest convenience. Anything else I've overlooked?
DG
Danny and Jeffrey,
Technically speaking, it will be no problem of setting up the web cam, or a series of cams (museum can purchase a few at about \$50 each) for different perspectives. I have at least 2 to 3 boxes that can be used for this purpose. The museum's graduate web intern Sairam, I believe, can easily handle all the set up issues. The interesting thing is to hear the artists' response. Let's wait and see.
Zheng

jeff-
thanks for the list - i think the idea of a web cam might be an interesting in-between kind of thing.
tara

My installation will be quite boring and standard so it doesn't really matter to me if the installation is on view to the public.
Meighan

Danny,
You forgot that classes end on December 22 and resume on January 22, which means the entire installation will take place while most students are away, dumbass. Also means traffic would be very light if it were open, anyway. The only realistic pre-opening walk-through would likely happen between Jan. 22 and 24th—the day the exhibition opens. The whole question is academic (which doesn't mean it isn't interesting). I love replying to myself on these lists.
dg

jeff -
i have about 200-300 photos so it's time to see if i have enough or need more or what. and to think about arrangement etc.
thanks again

tara
If it's not too much trouble, please forward me the ICA article. Many thanks.
Corinna

After John sends that article to you, Corinna, I'd like to copy it. I'm interested in the Culture Clubs. But I'm curious about the notion of a non-hierarchical structure that's "invitation only." How does that work?
Amy

Here is the whole essay... I'll just send it to the list. In response to your observation: I know, it's a little strange to claim to be non-hierarchical and then charge 10,000 pounds for access to the meetings (no shit, see the rest).
dg

Take care.
John
Culture Clubs

Anthony Davies and Simon Ford FIRST PUBLISHED: Mute, Issue 18, Sept 2000
a.davies@csm.lnsta.ac.uk, s.ford@vam.ac.uk

Today, a new variety of club is emerging: a type of club dedicated to the networking of culturepreneurs and the business community. Much of this activity has been in line with organizational and structural shifts occurring in the corporate sector - principally, the shift from centralized hierarchical structures to flat, networked forms of organization. In this report we look at how these networks and 'new' economies are being formed, accessed and utilized, where they converge and where they disperse.

In the late 1990's the surge to merge culture with the economy was a key factor in London's bid to consolidate its position as the European center of the global financial services industry. Culture was part of the marketing mix that, within the context of the European Union (EU), kept London ahead of its competitors, particularly Frankfurt. This can be traced back to the UK's exit from the Exchange Rate Mechanism in 1992 and a range of economic initiatives aimed at attracting inward investment, or Foreign Direct



ABOVE
Archive (Recovered Photos), 1998–2001
 Found photographs, glassines, photocopies
 Dimensions vary

LEFT
Archive (Recovered Photos), 1998–2001 (DETAIL)
 Found photographs, glassines, photocopies
 Dimensions vary

Investment (FDI). During this period the UK accounted for 40 percent of Japanese, US and Asian investment in the E.U. 'Cool Britannia' may have been a media spectacle, but it was the need to attract FDI, combined with the co-ordinates of a new service-based economy, that underpinned London's spectacular emergence as the 'coolest city on the planet'. (This state of affairs could be about to change with the proposed link-up between Frankfurt's Deutsche B? and the London Stock Exchange (i.e. the iX market) and the recent German tax reforms that will pave the way for a radical restructuring of its corporate landscape. With higher international inward and portfolio investment and the combined iX market, Germany looks set to become the leading market destination for young companies, making Berlin's pitch to become the new cultural 'it location' look increasingly viable.)

In London it was the cultural requirements of the 'new' economy that resulted in the emergence of culture brokers — intermediaries who sold services and traded knowledge and culture to a variety of clients outside the gallery system, from advertising companies and property developers to restaurateurs and upmarket retail outlets. Job descriptions such as artist, curator, critic and gallerist no longer reflected the range of activities these

individuals were engaged in. For culture-brokers art production was just one element that, along with the music, drug, fashion, design, club and political scenes, could be brought together, mediated and repackaged in a range of formats, from exhibitions and websites to corporate parties and instore merchandising. At the same point many companies were beginning to move away from sponsorship towards an integrated partnership or alliance strategy. This marked a further shift from the 'something for nothing' arm's-length philanthropic mode to a 'something for something' contract in which marketing departments perceived cultural (and often environmental) programming as an integral part of ethical marketing strategies (the so-called Total Role in Society).

Along with these new developments corporate strategists realized that, because of the emerging knowledge-based economy, a company or individual could be valued principally on 'intangible assets' (e.g. intellectual capital and access to networks). This brought about a revolution in the corporate sector. The underlying trend has been to develop flatter, more flexible and intelligent forms of organization. This, in turn, has put pressure on companies to form alliances and break down inflexible departmental

structures and initiate cross-departmental project teams (increasingly staffed by short-term or outsourced contract workers). Indeed, we have recently witnessed the birth of an alliance culture that collapses the distinctions (or boundaries) between companies, nation states, governments, private individuals and even the protest movement, as we shall demonstrate later. This trend toward alliances and partnerships has resulted in what have been variously described as 'virtual' or 'boundary-less' organizations. It has also made it increasingly difficult to identify 'cores': as companies loosen their physical structures through outsourcing, concerns have also been raised about the danger that core activities are disappearing, leaving fragile shells or 'hollow' organizations.

A number of corporate organizations are currently gauging the potential of extending their networks into strategic alliances with other sectors, particularly the public sector. This new alliance culture between the public and private sectors can be seen within the context of the UK government's drive to establish a Third Way in which 'public' is no longer equated solely with 'the state', but with a combination of public/private agencies. With the private sector leading the way, public institutions are undergoing

an ideological and structural transformation to make themselves more compatible with corporate alliance programs. Like their corporate partners, many cultural institutions now perceive their role as 'hanging out with culture', interacting with and being part of it. In their drive to formalize informality, they provide what are essentially convergence zones for corporate and creative networks to interact, overlap with one another and form 'weak' ties. The prominence that events such as charity auctions, exhibition openings, talk programs and award dinners have attained demonstrates how central face-to-face social interaction is to the functional capacity of these new alliances.

Some institutions go further. At London's Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), for example, a networking club for cultural entrepreneurs and, initially at least, educationalists, arts administrators, television executives and business consultants has been set up in conjunction with Goldsmiths College, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA), Channel 4, the Arts Council and Cap Gemini. The Club is coordinated by Andrew Chetty and Sarah Duke at the ICA, Andrew Warren at Cap Gemini and Alan Phillogene of the Center for Cultural Studies at



ABOVE
Untitled (Vermont), 2000
Gelatin silver print
38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches

LEFT
Untitled (Vermont), 2000
Gelatin silver print
38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches

Goldsmiths College. It is an invite-only monthly event that provides “a networking base for its members” and promises to introduce them to agencies from television companies to venture capitalists and private organizations who “may wish to support and commisslon them”.

Through initiatives like The Club the ICA aims to become the leading institutional home for cultural entrepreneurs and perceives its role as a facilitator and “ideal forum for the cross fertilization of ideas, and support base for these enterprises”. After the success of the first two meetings at the ICA, the third will reputedly take place at Channel Four in September. Such nomadism indicates that The Club itself has no fixed base or home and can move to any location within the network. This makes identifying the core organization difficult and, in line with the complex and often hidden alliances that characterize the new corporate landscape, it raises serious questions of transparency, representation and accountability.

Given their foregrounding of The Club’s ‘development and growth potential, its coordinators must be aware of the current sale talks surrounding First Tuesday, the

market leader of match-making clubs for internet entrepreneurs and venture capitalists. With 100,000 members on its database and the claim to have raised \$150M in seed capital from its networking events, it is no surprise that its valuation of \$33.5M was based principally on access to its “extensive database of the digital elite”.

A variety of means exist to finance these clubs. First Tuesday takes a two per cent commission on deals, while other culture clubs generate capital through membership (The Fourth Room) or building the most “influential list of contacts in the world” (FreeThinking). With the creative industries accounting for six per cent of gross domestic product and estimated to increase from \$50BN to \$80BN within the next ten years it is no surprise that The Club is endorsed by both government agencies (NESTA) and private companies.

At this stage it is difficult to locate the mutual bonds and orientation of The Club, but it is a good example of the emerging inter-organizational relationships that characterize the ‘new’ economy. With representatives from the corporate, state, media, educational and cultural sectors, it may also represent the initial stages of a corporatized future for UK cultural and educational institutions. This falls in line with the forthcoming D TI

spending review, which aims to refocus its funds into promoting enterprise, small business and ‘knowledge transfer’ and to “concentrate on managing change rather than attempting to direct companies’ activities.”

In the education sector, ‘knowledge transfer’ translates into an \$80M fund (the University Innovation Fund) to establish consultancies that will mediate between universities and businesses. With the ICA and Goldsmiths College stepping up contact with Cap Gemini and providing a “support base (and provider) for enterprise”, the so-called revolutionary venture capital models proposed by companies like The Fourth Room come into the equation.

The Fourth Room was set up by former Chairman of The Research Business Wendy Gordon, founder of brand consultancy Wolff Olins Michael Wolff and former head of strategy at Interbrand Newell and Sorrell Piers Schmidt in 1998 as a hangout zone and creative bolt-hole for corporate executives and other ‘leading individuals’. It has been variously described as a business development club, a networking club and a strategic marketing consultancy which aims to take the strain out of networking and “put together venture ideas and management teams and take them from the moment of

thinking through to the patent or crystallized idea”. The £10,000 per annum membership fee includes use of the clubhouse in central London and access to “focus groups comprising of [sic] ‘ordinary’ people and teenagers who will act as sounding boards for new ideas”. In addition to the clubhouse, members receive a weekly in-house publication and an opportunity to eavesdrop on ‘emerging cultural trends and monitor changing patterns and beliefs’. This is described by the company as a corporate early warning system. As with The Club at the ICA, very little information is publicly available, but we know that The Fourth Room is “dazzlingly white, with high ceilings, long windows and white painted floorboards” and that members are encouraged to draw on the walls with colored crayons to release their creativity. As Piers Schmidt claims, “It’s all about collaboration”, and to this end the aim is to get CEOs mixing with eco-activists like Swampy to discuss environmental issues over breakfast.

The relationship between Cap Gemini and the ICA and Swampy’s proposed breakfast with CEOs at the Fourth Room indicates that terms such as ‘collaboration’ can be utilized to mask a variety of vested interests. The recent shift in terminology regarding



ABOVE
Untitled (Saratoga Springs), 2000
 Gelatin silver print
 38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches

LEFT
Untitled (Saratoga Springs), 2000
 Gelatin silver print
 38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches

arts funding (i.e. away from 'sponsored' towards 'co-production', 'in partnership with', 'in association with' and 'co-produced by') is also indicative of a new agenda based on alliances and an increased corporate decision-making role in cultural programming. A signal event in this diversification was the UK-based Association of Business Sponsorship of the Arts (ABSA) rebranding itself as Arts & Business (A&B), in the conviction that "the arts are the new secret weapon of business success". As a government funded organization A&B have taken collaboration and alliances a step further through the Professional Development Program and the NatWest Board Bank, which has placed 1500 young executives on the boards of arts companies. The Creative Forum members at A&B, who include American Express Europe, Arthur Andersen and Interbrand Newell and Sorrell, are seen as the 'shock troops' in the involvement of arts in companies and as a result A&B receive \$5.05M a year from the government to run the Pairin G Scheme. The arts organizations, it is claimed, gain from the decision making and entrepreneurial skills of the executives, while the executives gain valuable experience in creative processes through working with artists.

Other examples of recent collaborations follow an informal, networked and often

hidden alliance-type arrangement between galleries, public institutions and corporations. An alliance-type project covered by this new lexicon is the Fig-1 website, project space and club founded by Mark Francis and gallerist Jay Jopling and financed by Bloomberg, the financial information company. Fig-1 aims to present 50 projects in 50 weeks; given such a collaboration, the claim to be simultaneously "in association with" Bloomberg and "independent, nonprofit [and] free from institutional and commercial obligations" seems curiously paradoxical. Rather, it appears that Fig-1 operates as a (principally new media) satellite organization for White Cube and a cultural scratch-and-sniff site for Bloomberg.

We turn finally to a consideration of what might be termed 'political engagement'. In order to meet the challenge posed by these new alliances and networked global businesses, new forms of flexible and subversive organization have emerged that can disperse and re-form anywhere, at any time. These strategic movements also take into account the fact that company networks and hollow organizations actively solicit and harness counter discourses to service the illusion of dissent and dialogue. (Corporate friendly counter discourses fall into at least two distinct categories: those that are linked

to corporate networks and ethical marketing departments to create the illusion of dissent and dialogue; and those that represent a pathos for a simplified political past to escape the complexities of the political present.) In a networked culture, the topographical metaphor of 'inside' and 'outside' has become increasingly untenable. As all sectors loosen their physical structures, flatten out, form alliances and dispense with tangible centers, the oppositionality that has characterized previous forms of protest and resistance is finished as a useful model.

In the cultural sector (particularly the 'cutting edge' art world), with so many brokers acting as corporate-friendly conduits to an artificially constructed 'outside', 'marginal' and 'socially engaged' culture, it should come as no surprise that these oppositional metaphors, for some, are difficult to dispense with. Yet in contrast to such attitudes, more astute activists and agitators who once spoke of critical distance now recognize that their challenge lies in the forms and quality of access and connection. Fittingly, a useful new metaphor for this challenge comes from the world of digital systems. In a networked society individuals and groups are constantly alternating between 'on' and 'off'. As a result we can expect to see emerging new forms of 'engagement' which

exercise border controls on networks, withhold, filter and restrict access to information and disable 'eavesdropping' strategies and 'early warning systems' employed by business consultancies, corporations and public institutions. The extent and nature of these forms is still to be determined and will be examined more closely at a later date. But it can already be asserted that informal networks have become extremely effective forms of counter organization in the sense that —just as with corporate alliances —it is extremely difficult to define their boundaries and identify who belongs to them. Informal networks are also replacing older political groups based on formal rules and fixed organizational structures and chains of command. The emergence of a decentralized transnational network-based protest movement represents a significant threat to those sectors that are slow in transforming themselves from local and centralized hierarchical bureaucracies into flat, networked organizations.

These developments are taking place against a backdrop of waning confidence and belief in the ability of governments to regulate the growing power of global corporations and their networks of influence. But thanks to corporate restructuring and the access it provides to global networks, new forms of knowledge-based political engagement



ABOVE
White Goes with Everything, 2000
LightJet digital c-print
27 x 40 inches

LEFT
Tenderfoot II, 2000
Light Jet digital c-print
27 x 40 inches

promise possibilities and scales of effect previously unimaginable.

Graham, George, 'Overseas banks warned on London' and Graham, George and Timewell, Stephen, 'City confident of keeping status', *The Banker* supplement, *Financial Times*, 27 November 1997.

Grass, Doris and Boland, Vincent, 'Deutsche B? board split on link up with the LSF', *Financial Times*, 13 July 2000; and Simonian, Haig, 'German tax reforms set to aid investors', *Financial Times*, 15 July 2000.

Powell, Nicholas, 'Avant-garde flock to Berlin', *Financial Times Weekend*, 3/4 October 1998.

For a fuller discussion of these developments see Ford, Simon and Davies, Anthony, 'Art Futures', *Art Monthly*, no.223, February 1999.

For a discussion of this concept see Law, Andy, *Open Minds*, London: Orlon

Business, 1999; and Alburty, Stephen, 'The Ad Agency to End All Ad Agencies', *Fast Company*, no.6, December 1996.

The INNFORM research program found widespread initiatives in almost all new forms of corporate organization in the period 1992- 1996. See Whittington, Richard et al, 'New notions of organizational fit', *Financial Times*, 29 November 1999.

Center for Research in Strategic Purchasing and Supply (CRISP S). *Returning to core or creating a hollow?* Bath: Bath University, 1999.

See Capital Strategies, the city corporate finance house, 'Education News' at <http://www.cditalstrategie.co.uk>. The Cap Gemini Group is, after IBM, Europe's largest management consulting and computer services firm and has collaborated with the ICA on previous occasions, most notably *Imaginarium '99*. The ICA's definition of 'cultural entrepreneur' is derived from an earlier collaboration with Charles Leadbeater, Kate Oakley, the BBC, and Demos. See Leadbeater, Charles and Oakley, Kate, *The Independents*, Demos London, 1999.

Duke, Sarah, *The Club* press release, 14 June 2000.

Daniel, Caraline, 'First Tuesday in sale talks', *Financial Times*, 20 July 2000.

Brown, Kevin, 'DTI allocated funds to boost enterprise', *Financial Times*, 17 July 2000.

Schmidt, Piers, 'Me and My Partner Michael Wolff and Piers Schmidt', *The Independent*, 7 April 1999.

Jones, Helen, 'Help is at hand to make the right contact s', *Financial Times*, 12 February 1999.

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Deeble, Sandra, 'Fourth Room opens the doors of perception', *Financial Times*, 30 December 1999.

See the Arts & Business website: <http://www.absa.oro.uk>; and Thorncroft, Antony, 'From a cosy warm glow to hot support', *Financial Times*, 6 September 1999. See its website: <http://www.fia-1.com>.

See Knight, Philip 'A forum for improving globalisation', *Financial Times*, August 1 2000, and Tomkins, Richard, 'Global chief thinks locally (Douglas Daft is persuading protestors to drink cans of Coke, not smash them)', *Financial Times*, August 1 2000.

See exhibitions: 'Unconvention', Center for the Visual Arts in Cardiff, November 1999 - January 2000, and 'Crash', Institute of Contemporary Arts, November 1999.

See *Art Monthly*, Editorial, February 2000, No 233: "It is hard to resist the lure of direct action, particularly for those of us frustrated by the inexorable process of commodification of even the most critical art practices, and by the marginal position occupied by art in our society as a whole."



ABOVE
Untitled #1 (III), 2000
 LightJet digital c-print
 27 x 40 inches

LEFT
Untitled #2 (III), 2000
 LightJet digital c-print
 27 x 40 inches

See Carpenter, Merlin and Davies, Anthony, 'The protest had already impacted on London in the form of its absence', from the catalogue as a painter I call myself the estate of, Secession, Vienna 2000.
 —John Menick
 Tara, Here is the breakdown of the display cases

- 10 wall mounted (birch) shelves 20x38
 - 5 Table displays 21 x59
 - 1 Table display 40x40
 - 12 wall mounted glass shelves
 - 1 4x40 made for Searching the criminal body exhibit - held BURN'S ARCHIVE)
- Well, that it. I hope it helps you plan your installation.
 Jeffrey

jeff
 thanksforthe list- i thinkthe idea of aweb cam might be an interesting in-between kind of thing.

jeff
 i have about 200-300 photos so it's time to see if i have enough or need moreorwhat.
 andtothinkaboutarrangementetc.
 thanks again
 tara

In terms of how our work relates to the theme of work, mine comes under the rubrics of effort, exercise, practice, repetition, and precision. My current work involves the creation of a dictionary of postures based in yoga, performance, and everyday life. The outcome is fairly traditional — photo and video.
 MG

Meighan,
 A couple of questions to be answered at your leisure:

1. How intuitive are your dictionary postures or are they more culturally defined?

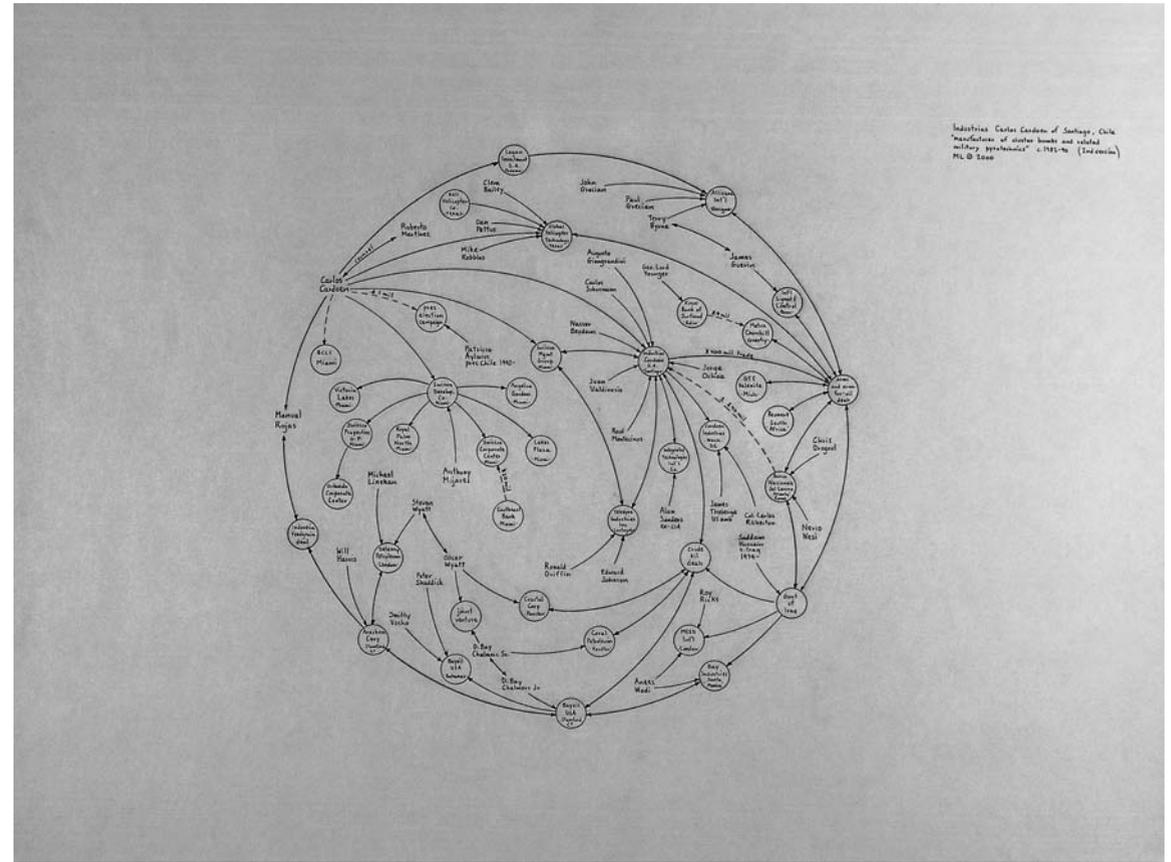
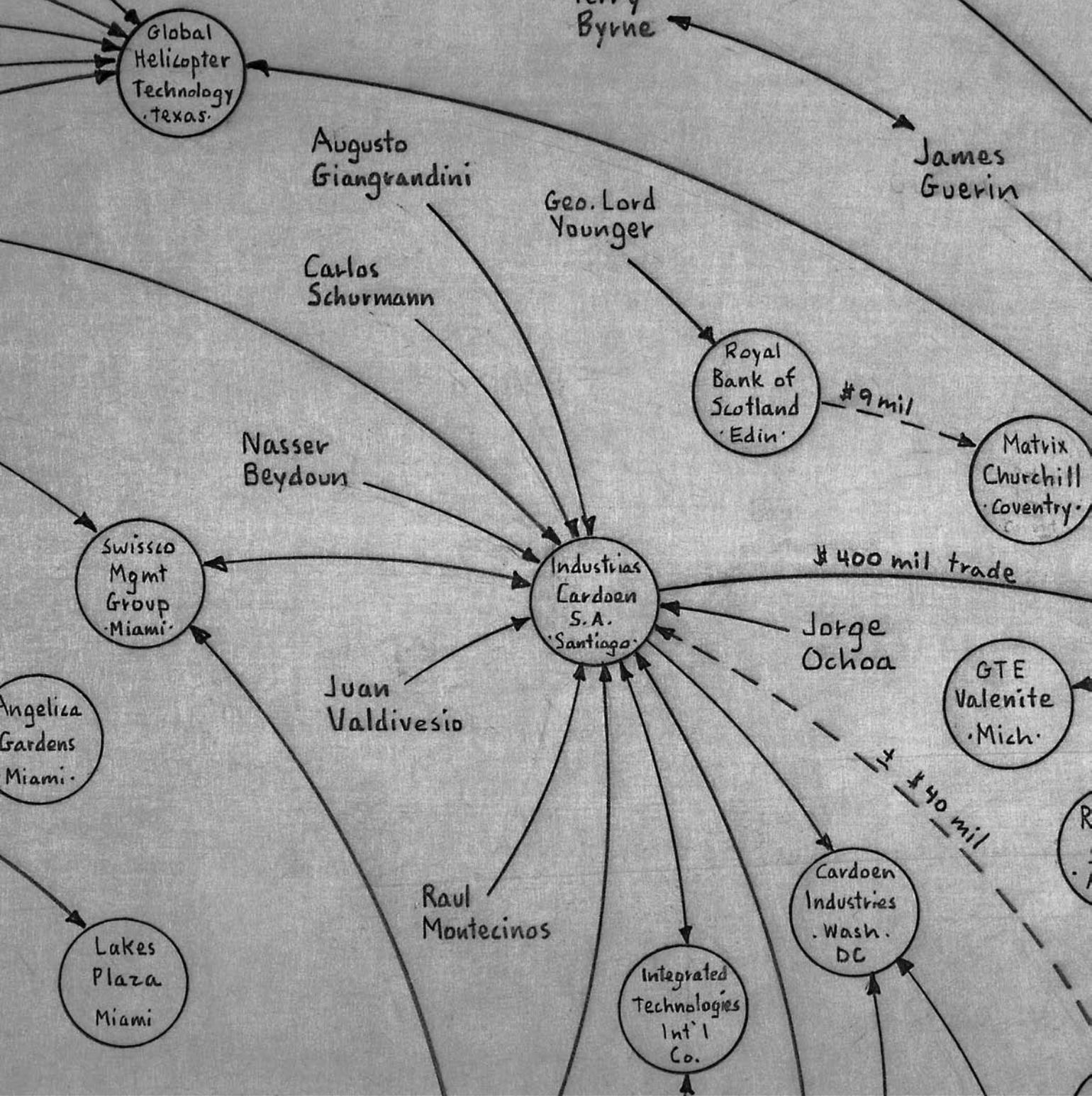
2. What self imposed criteria do you use in determining a final posture? What about visual criteria ? (I'm referencing Dexter's comment that we have yet to talk about visual criteria in anyone's work—a good point.)
 CR

Corinna
 I would say that the positions are culturally-defined at the outset or in the research stages but in the final moment when the photo is taken they are in response to the material conditions at that moment in time. I like the idea that there are specific routines or physical regimes that can lead to certain kinds of physical and mental organization. In terms of aesthetics or criteria I use a fairly formal and two-dimensional grid. The camera is usually parallel to the subject, very square and spare, so it becomes an almost scientific study. The final criteria really takes place in the editing and printing — not all of the postures function visually.
 MG

Meighan:
 How long have you been working on the positions? Is there an end in sight?
 CR

Corinna,
 I've been doing these positions for 5 years now — a long time. I'm actually working on my first video (I haven't done any video for about 5 years) and I'm sort of hoping it will push me into a new domain. Doing all these large -scale prints this Summer did seem like the final stages of this body of work.
 MG

Hi.
 I like Dexter's reference to a "quilt of obligations". I haven't done anything fulltime since 1992. I'm always asking myself if being fragmented makes me more or less effective at what I do at any given time? I've been writing about art instead of making it for the last three years. I also curate shows, work at the UAM half-time, and take care of my family (not necessarily in that order). On a good day day I'm satisfied if I have one moment of



ABOVE
Industrias Carlos Cardoen of Santiago, Chile.
"Manufacturer of cluster bombs and related military pyrotechnics." 1982-90 (2nd version), 2000
Pencil on paper
25 x 32 inches
Collection of Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York

LEFT
Industrias Carlos Cardoen of Santiago, Chile. (DETAIL)

clarity, a linear thought that feeds into something I thought about the day or week before. On a really good day I'm able to take this moment of clarity, jot it down, and maybe give it some context. I've tried to stop imagining what my days would be like if they weren't so fragmented, but the fantasy lives on. Stupid really, since reality is much more interesting.

So here's a question for anyone who wishes to respond: If you didn't have to work (for \$\$\$), would you?
CR

Not a chance. Which doesn't mean I would sit around watching TV. "Work is everything, but the definition of work has to be expanded to include a kind of mind/body exercise. As if the soul were a muscle. If I dont flex/relax that muscle on a regular basis I have no sense or proof that it exists. The couch potato is a resident of the Inferno, which balcony I'm not sure.

i certainly wouldn't work if didn't to - i even like my job most of the time but i'd rather do other or more things with my time.
TF

Followup on my pretentious comments about the soul, and references to Dante's Inferno
By 'work', I mean keeping busy. It would not be hard to stay busy without a day job.
DB

At the risk of sounding corny, I want to weigh in here as one fool who would keep his day job (albeit, perhaps, on different terms) if financial sustenance were not an issue. I really love teaching. There is much about academia that I loathe, of course, but the forum I am privy to on a daily basis—of young artists exploring and discovering—leaves me buoyant at times. It is just really cool to be standing there when someone discovers something about themselves that surprises them. These moments of relative buoyancy are, naturally interspersed with rote and demeaning administrative chores, but I think I

would miss that forum if I quit teaching. Don't think I'm not jonesing for a sabbatical, but I hardly consider what I do a real job. My work is primarily to have conversations all day, three to four days a week. The odd struggle, at a research institution, is with how to avoid "work" so that one can work in the studio so one might produce more and better work to the end one is promoted and thus, stereotypically, is required to work slightly less.

I'm curious to hear from Richard, who I know has been doing construction in Brooklyn since summer. That's really real, man.
DG

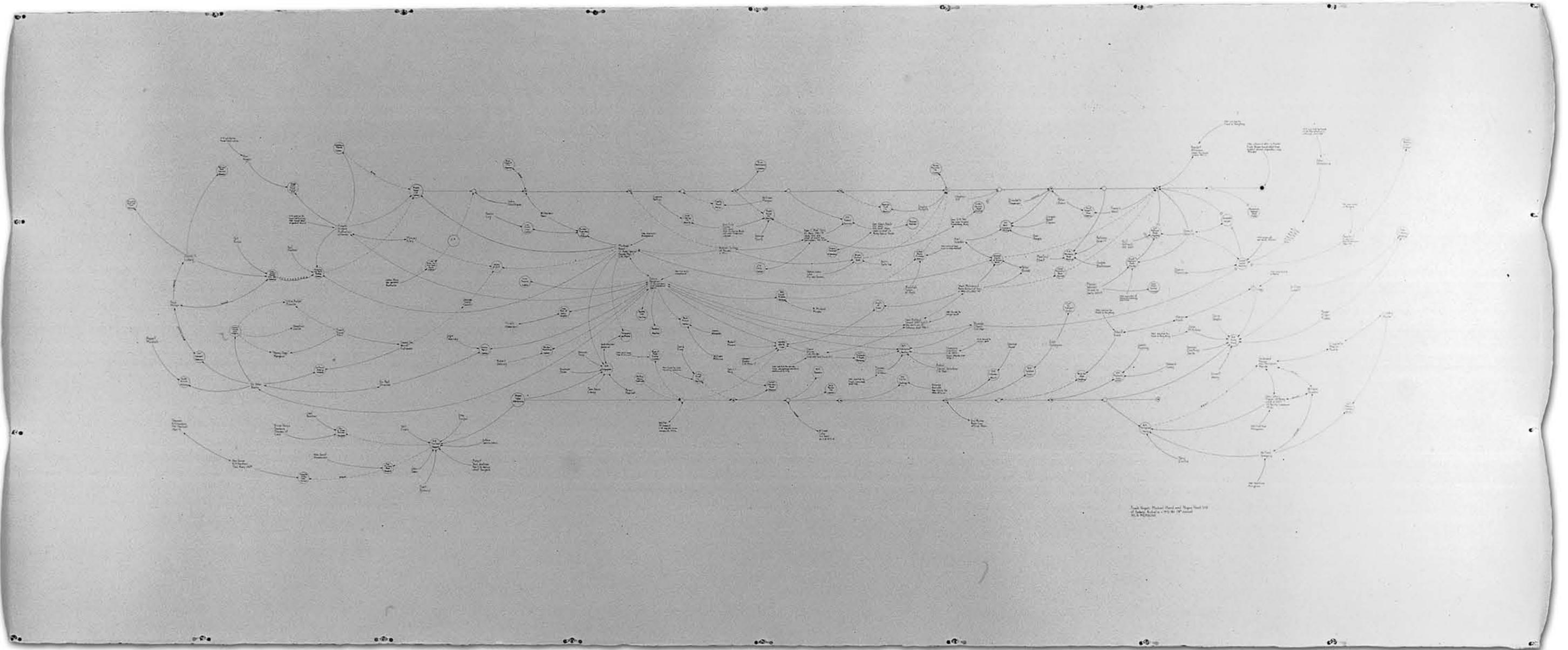
in response to danny's comments on not quitting teaching, i made reference to actually liking my job which is also teaching and i completely agree with danny's assesment of the fine rewards of chatting about art with a young, unjudged and generally really hungry group of people. it does remind one often of the reasons one became an artist in the first place—at least it does me. i guess the only down side is that if one is a really dedicated teacher, the end of the day brings complete exhaustion from giving so much that is never enough. it's good giving though — i wish i had

received more of when i was in undergrad school. and as danny said— its not really wor—when compared to real, physical labor or other less self-directed work.
TF

Wager will sand, scrape, oil etc. the wood cap of the Admiral Oewey Promenade seawall railing "Railing") on a schedule to be determined in consultation with the Conservancy for Historic Battery Park ("The Conservancy"). In the course of the work Wager will remove graffiti, scratches, etc., and apply protective oil to the entire length of the railing. Wager will clean, prime, and paint the metal portions of the seawall railing.

TERM:
This agreement shall be effedive from date of signing until the satisfactory completion of the work.

WAGER RESPONSIBILITY:
Wager Shall assume responsibility for the workmanship required for the execution of



Frank Nugan. *Michael Hand and Nugan Hand Ltd. of Sydney, Australia c. 1972-80 (8th Version)*, 1998
Graphite and red pencil on paper
51 x 124 inches
Collection of Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York

the work. Wager will also be responsible for ensuring the safety of the public and take precautions to ensure that the public is aware that oil and paint have been applied to the railing (conservancy will provide signs. Wager will ensure that they are properly posted.)
SCHEDULING:
Wager will coordinate scheduling of the work with the Conservancy. The work will be scheduled so as to avoid interference with regular park users, including the lines for the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island Ferry and with weather conditions.
CHANGES:
Modifications to this agreement must be in writing signed by both parties.
INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR:
Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, it is specifically understood and agreed that in the performance of the terms and conditions of this agreement, Wager shall not be deemed to be acting as an agent of the Conservancy by virtue of any approval, grant, or other authorization given by the Conservancy pursuant to this

agreement. Wager is acting as an independent contractor performing services for the Conservancy without power or authority to bind the Conservancy. Wager is solely responsible for all acts taken or omitted in the performance of this agreement. We look forward to working with you on this project.
Richard Wager
Richard,
Is this a performance that has already taken place, or is it a pending proposal? In whose voice is it? The Conservancy? Is this for real? Sorry to be so flat-footed, but I'm not accustomed to your being this obtuse. You're not asking for any goddamned money from me, are you?
Danny
JERSEY CITY MUSEUM
Conditions of Employment:
Month=Nov/Dec
JobTitle=Art Handler/Preparator
Responsible to=Curatorial Department

Job Description=Undertakes duties necessary to prepare galleries, prepare works of art, and install works of art for museum-standard exhibition presentations, at the direction of the curator and collections manager.
Lunch/Breaks=30 minutes paid lunch and 15 minute break during the day.
Medical insurance=Contract employee not covered by Museum, Library, or City.
Tax=Tax can be deducted from paycheck if requested.
Dates of Employment:
Tuesday, November 28, eight hours
Wednesday, November 29, eight hours
Friday, December 1, eight hours
Monday, December 4, eight hours
Total hours=32

RW
birthplace: Bakersfield, CA 1964
RW
Hello to all—
I need some help as I write my essay. I have a couple of general questions for the group (with a few to follow):
1. What are you reading? Any past favorites that influence your work? 2. How about sources? Ongoing, new, or both?
Please bear with me as I pry. If you aren't comfortable with the listserv or it's just too much work, you can call me (I'll reverse the charge) or email me directly. Many thanks.
518.442.4038 (Tuesday/Thursday) corinna59@juno.com
CR
Dear Corinna:

9 to 5, 5 to 9

The project involves the participation of several work study students employed at the Museum. The artist has asked these students for responses to the following question:

“If you were to be paid to engage in a leisure activity that you have not had the opportunity to occupy yourself with at school, what would it be?”

During the exhibition, the participating students have been asked to engage in the activities of their choice during the hours they would normally be working at the museum. The artist will compensate the students as they normally would be compensated as employees.

The following is a series of discussions with the participating students concerning their thoughts about “free time” and “work time.”

Andrea Innis Chosen activity: jogging

What is your definition of leisure?

It should be something that you don't get paid for, and that you enjoy doing. You could enjoy doing work, but you get paid for it.

How much of your day is devoted to leisure time?

On an average weekday? An hour or two watching TV before I go to sleep and that's about it. Maybe going on my computer or something. That's about it.

What are some favorite leisure activities?

I like watching TV. . . something I don't do a lot that I would like to do is go running. I used to run in high school, but it's something I don't do a lot since I've been here.

Are you involved in programs here?

No not at all. I would like to do that. I just don't have the time for it.

Are there some things that you do for free that you think you should be paid for?

I guess it would be something that I had a talent for. If someone plays basketball in their leisure time and they're good at it then they should get paid for it.

Are there some forms of work that you think people shouldn't get paid for?

People get a little bit too much money for playing sports. Just a little bit too much. I don't think they should get paid so much for doing that. Because it's a leisure activity I think. It's not that important, it's not really helping anybody playing basketball or football or something.

Do you think there is a difference between leisure and laziness?

I would think so. Watching TV, that's lazy.

Is there one that is maybe better or worse than the other?

Laziness is definitely worse.

What do you think the problem with laziness is? Why do people get so angry about laziness?

Because you're doing nothing! People think you should be doing something all the time. It's just a waste of time.

What would your ideal job be?

Doing something that I like. Something that I don't have to bring home. I leave work and I go back to it when I go back to work. Being a teacher sometimes you have to go home and make lesson plans— I don't want to do that. I don't want to think about work when I go home.

What about being a Hollywood actor or something like that?

That's great, but I still think that they get a little too much money. That's a good job, but it's too much traveling, I'd rather be just working 9 to 5 I think.

Do you think that schools can be tuition-free?

Not college. Of course high school is free. It should be a little bit more with the room and board. Unless it's going to be a college like high school you just go to school and go back home. But right now it's impossible.

Megan Keefe Chosen activity:

What is your definition of leisure?

Something that you do for fun, something that you would do without being paid. Something that you enjoy doing.

If you were to be paid for it, would it still be leisure? Or would it be a job?

It would be a fun job. [laughs] It would be something that you want to do, but if it were a regiment and you had to do it for two hours then I guess it would be some sort of a work-type atmosphere.

What are some of your favorite leisure activities?

I watch a lot of TV and I read a lot. I like to go out with a bunch of my friends every so often. I like hanging out a lot. Like anyone else. I'm pretty low-key. I sing a lot, but I don't collect stamps or anything. I read a lot.

Are there some things that you do for free that you think you should be paid for?

Cleaning my suite. I live in the dorms. There are six girls and I'm the only one who cleans it. I feel like I should be compensated for that.

Do you think people should be paid for housework?

I think people should be paid for housework. Sometimes it's harder work than actually going out and getting a job. If you are at home and you clean and scrub and take care of things, you're as tired if not more by the end of the day than getting a job.

What would you say the difference is between being leisurely and being lazy?

Leisure is the kind of thing that you do to take time off from your regular life. You know you'll work all day, and you have about a half-hour forty-five minutes a day when you have something that you want to do. Being lazy is when you do absolutely nothing all day. You just sit there, you're not taking off time from anything.

Do you think that one is worse than the other?

No. I'm an incredibly lazy person. It's a very good quality that I have! [laughs] I think that neither of

I read a lot of contemporary fiction for pleasure: J. M. Coekee's Disgrace, Joyce Carol Oates's Blond, and Martha Cooley's The Archivist, for example. My influences include Chris Marker's La Jetee (his beautiful use of stills and work with time-based mediums); Henri Bergson's Matter and Memory (his study of memory and the body); various exercise manuals including RudoH Laban's Labanotation (a book on the system of dance notation); dance performances including the White Oak Project, Mark Morris, and Buto (Japanese dance movement started in the 1950's that dispensed with Western and Eastern choreography systems). In terms of artists, Francesca Woodman's interest in geometry and environment and Ana Mendieta's "Siluetas" have informed my explorations of the physical body in the landscape. Annette Messager's use of household materials and domestic work spaces have influenced my use of materials and process (quickly sewing around an image while your child runs into the other room). Joan Jonas and her exploration of choreography, movement, and space are also important to my work.
MG

Thanks Meighan.

This is precisely the kind of information I'm looking for. I appreciate your effort of responding so thoroughly.
Corinna

Corinna,
In response to your questions about influence:

Favorite books on work:
-The Human Motor' Anson Rabinbach. Work and Fatigue from the 19th century to the present. Pretty amazing actually...

-Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages' Jacques Le Goff. A classic in the history of work and standardized time.

Reading at the moment:
-The Perspective of the World' Fernand Braudel. Incredible 3-part history of Capitalism and it's affects on cities, society etc.

-'Politics of Friendship' Jacques Derrida (third time reading it).

-'The Inoperative Community' Jean Luc Nancy. Post-structuralist view on community.

Always interested and reading, watching:
Anything by:
Maurice Blanchot, Chris Marker (to second Meighan), Godard, Robert Musil

Latest random thing that got me going:
Pasolini Retrospective @ Film Anthology
Artwise:
Michael Asher, Marcel Broodthaers, Hans Haacke, Adrian Piper

Younger artists, friends, and groups whose work I follow with interest:
Maria Eichorn, Andrea Fraser, Oreste, Renée Green

Plus a lot of other things, people and places...
John

Good stuff. Thanks to you, too, for responding so thoroughly.
Corinna

Hi Corinna,
Longitude, Galileo's Daughter, Dava Sobel On Nature-Nature, Landscape, Natural History, Ed. Daniel Halpern Pig Earth & others, John Berger Techniques of the Observer, Jonathan Crary

Some essays by Steven Jay Gould, Oliver Sacks. (a bit easy, but interesting)

Bernard DeVoto, Howard Lamar, Y9illiam Cronin and other mid and late-century historians of the American West.

them are worse than the other. I think if you are lazy all the time, then yes there is a problem. But other than that. . . there are days when I don't mind being lazy. There's no problem with that. I'm all for that.

Why do you think there is such a stigma around being lazy?

Because we live in such a fast-paced society where you have to go to work. You have to do this and you have to do that. If somebody is not doing any of that and is just relaxing and sitting around and just doing nothing, there's that stigma because everybody is doing the opposite of that. That's why there's that stigma.

Do you think that schools can be tuition free?

I don't know if it is possible for them to be free, but I can definitely see it as being possible for them to not cost as much. I think there is a problem for people who have millions of dollars to realize that \$4,000 a year is a lot of money. It aggravates me when they think they can raise prices \$500 or \$600 a year or \$1,000 a year. Some people like me, I don't know where that money is coming from. If community colleges can get away with charging so much less, why is it so different for a state college? And there is that stigma that follows if you go to a community college: you know you want to stay home, you're a loser. Especially in my town.

Carla Innis

Chosen activity: working out

What is your definition of leisure?

Doing something you like on your own time. Without the restraints of any responsibility. Without a necessary goal. You just do it to have fun.

What are some favorite leisure activities?

Doing anything with friends. Work out, go running. I like doing a lot of artistic things: going to museums, going to galleries. Walking around cities, going shopping.

Are there some things that you do for free that you think you should be paid for?

Well I guess I don't mind doing anything that is leisure-oriented, so I don't feel that I should be paid for it. If I were to be paid for anything that I did in my own time, I'd probably make the most money doing something like working out. I like to do that a lot. I find I spend a lot of the time working or going to class or studying, so if I'm not doing that on the weekends I'll go out. But during the week I spend more time working out.

Are there some jobs that people should not be paid for?

I think everyone deserves money for the jobs that they do, if they go to work and they put in the effort. There are certain business jobs, like working on the stock market. . . it doesn't seem that people need much of an education to go into that, sometimes it seems unfair that they would make so much more money than a teacher.

What do you think the difference is between being leisurely and being lazy?

I don't really like laziness, I try and avoid it a lot. I think being leisurely is a more constructive way to spend your time, more practical I guess. Everyone has to be lazy sometimes, but being lazy too often is kind of like wasting your life. You're not really putting your abilities to use in any way.

When you're lazy, what do you do? Do you try to become active in some way?

Usually when I'm lazy it's because I'm procrastinating. When I'm being leisurely I'm doing something that I

Sunday, it was sold out. Maybe I can see the article you mention online. Does she directly address this whole issue of the Culture Club Culture that we've been talking about? Arts Section or Magazine? —Amy

Thanks Dexter.

I'm glad that I've read at least one of each of the books mentioned so far. The problem with writing about a group show is that there's no way to track down all the leads an individual reading list reveals. I'll give it my best shot and try to do justice to all. Thanks again for being so forthcoming. Re: Roberta Smith and Jerry Saltz's recent rants. Wow. I could wax on for hours. Curator as jet setter. Interesting. There may be a handful of curators out there playing for big stakes, but it remains my firm belief that museums have always been business ventures and that despite the appearance of shifts in the inner sanctum, the almighty board still rules. Hans Haacke's Guggenheim expose continues to hold sway. For what it's worth, my own rant is informed by a five-year job stint as Director of the New York State Senate Special Committee on the Arts and Cultural Affairs. What I did and what I

learned continues to shadow me ten years later. I don't think any of us, including Smith and Salz, really know the intricacies of current museum practice. I think we're feeling the backlash of good intentions — storming the art church seemed like a good idea thirty years ago. I contest that it still is, but I think it's important to acknowledge our own culpability in paying homage to its sacred halls. Who among us would refuse a MoMA gig? Corinna

Do you think it is possible for schools to be tuition-free?

I think it is. I guess I may not know enough about what goes on in the government to definitely answer that, but I think that there are a lot of things in society that are wasteful. Too much money goes to things like media and advertisements.

Donald Rains

Chosen activity: playing the guitar

What is your definition of leisure?

My definition of leisure is anything that is recreational, that's a kind of free will kind of thing, not something that you feel you have to do—well, sometimes you feel that you have to have leisure time I guess, but something. . . that you feel you want to do rather than you have to do. Something like playing a chess game could be leisure, sometimes even working could be leisure if you feel this is something you want to do voluntarily.

What are some of your favorite leisure activities?

Since I was in high school, since I was younger than high school, I've always loved music, I've always loved performance. So now I'm learning to play guitar. Hanging out with my girlfriend is definitely one of my leisure activities. Playing around with my computer, hardware configurations, not too much the software stuff. I love finding out how my computer works.

Are there some jobs that people should not be paid for?

Yeah. Again, I can't think of anything offhand. . . I got introduced to someone who sort of travels around and just researches information, but it was such a fun way of doing it. I'm just like: man, I want that job! Free traveling, paid expenses, that's cool. But I can understand the bad part though, because you never get any commitment or any foundation because you're always moving around.

What do you think the difference is between being leisurely and being lazy?

I think laziness is in the realm of neglecting your responsibilities. You can be lazy when you are working. You can be lazy when you are not working. But leisurely is something. . . well I guess in a sense you can be leisurely when you are working. Maybe it is more of an effort or commitment that you give, even though you are doing something leisurely, that you wouldn't give if you were being lazy. If you're lazy you would have a nonchalant attitude. If you are doing something leisurely, even if it is something that you do and enjoy, you are not being nonchalant about it. You are putting a conscious effort into achieving something.

Why do you think there is such a stigma around being lazy?

I think everyone who stigmatizes laziness has a little bit of this Communist attitude that you should be working, everybody should be doing something to benefit the whole of society. If you're not doing it, you are in a sense an obstruction to development. People say: "Well if I work why can't you work too?" They don't want to see anybody not doing anything at all and just getting by.

Do you think that schools can be tuition-free?

No. I think it could be possible if you raise taxes more, and then you get that to pay. I don't think it should be. I'm the first person in my family who has ever gone to college through my junior year with the expectation of graduating. One of the reasons why is because a lot of people can't afford to go to college. I know that is the reason that holds some people back from college. I still don't think it should be free because the price tag for college is necessary to get a lot of resources that you probably wouldn't get.

problem is that she retreats to this thoroughly conservative 'visual art' 'good craft' 'non-contextual' 'private viewing experience' bullshit. If that's the way you view art, fine, but it doesn't help when arguing about this stuff. It's an issue of the subletting of public space to private corporate interests Roberta! Come on! The PR person that I mentioned that I talked to in my last email organized this Grey Art Gallery show with the Japanese cosmetics company. It's all marketing marketing marketing... NOT high art versus low art. The 60's Pop controversy is over Roberta.

Thanks for the article, and sorry for the bluntness again, I'm in a bad mood. John

>from Village Voice
>Thinking About Museums Thinking About Themselves
>Living Large
>by Jerry Saltz
>
>I love museums. It's museum curators I sometimes wonder about. Maybe I'm



ABOVE
Untitled, 2001 (DETAIL)
 Interactive web site, digital video

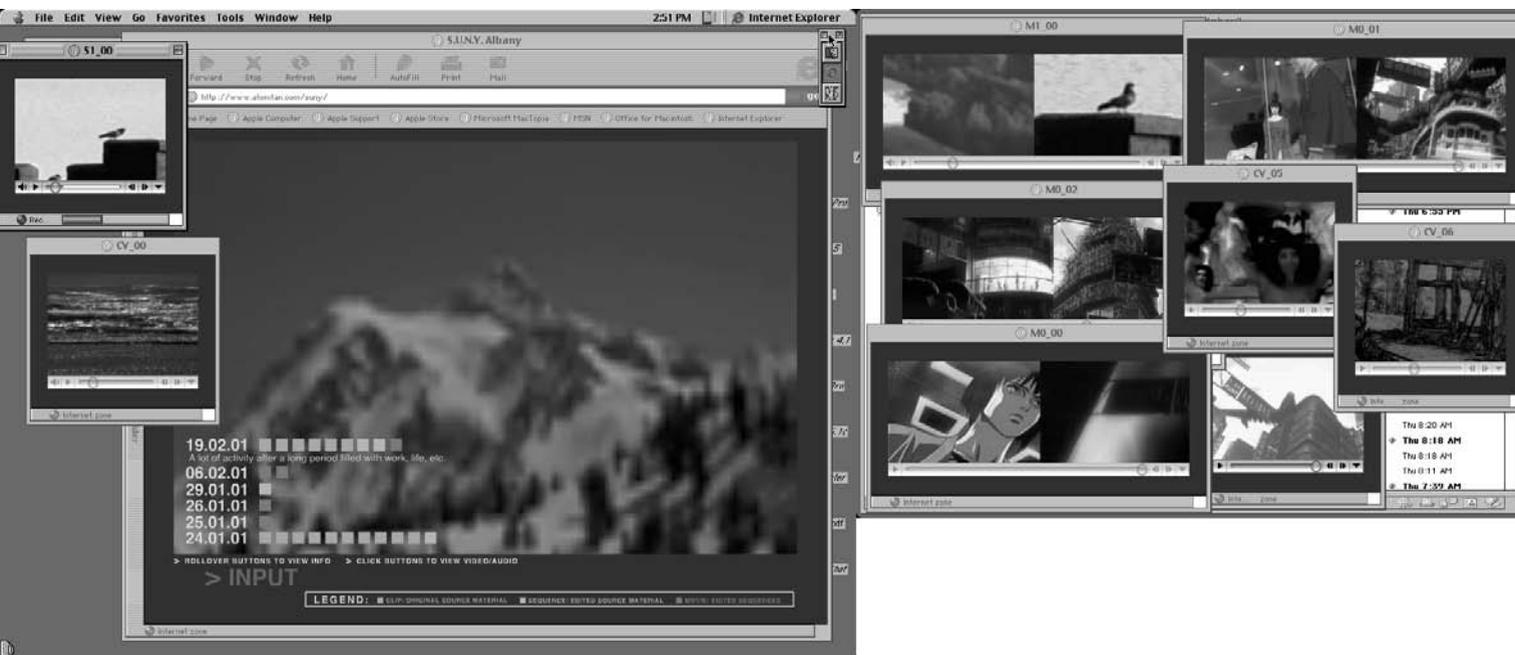
LEFT
Untitled, 2001 (DETAIL)

>just
 >jealous, sheepish about how little traveling a New York trench critic gets
 >to
 >do. Maybe I still haven't gotten over reading Dan Cameron's
 >10-favorite-exhibitions list in last December's Artforum. It included
 >venues
 >in Copenhagen, SÃ£o Paulo, Spoleto, Antwerp, Arnhem, London, Johannesburg,
 >and
 >Queens. Guess which was the only show he listed that I had seen.
 >These days, curators seem to have all the fun. They're the frequent-flying
 >freelancers and salaried professionals. They stay up late, drink together
 >in
 >hotel lobbies, and see one another's shows. Always talking, taking
 >meetings,
 >being on panels, or organizing exhibitions, curators are the art world's
 >latest art stars, the power brokers and precinct captains.
 >

>That's why I was feeling testy recently as I walked into "Curating Now:
 >Imaginative Practice/Public Responsibility," a two-day symposium organized
 >by
 >the Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative under the directorship of Paula
 >Marincola. Turns out I wasn't alone in my peevishness. Before the
 >proceedings
 >even began, a well-known critic for a national magazine leaned over and
 >whispered, "I'm hoping to get enough incriminating quotes to hold over
 >these
 >people for years." It was all very A-list. Participants included Nicholas
 >Serota, director of the Tate; MOMA's Robert Storr; Paul Shimmel from L.A.
 >MOCA; Kathy Halbreich, director of the Walker Art Center; Thelma Golden,
 >deputy director of the Studio Museum; Philadelphia Museum director Anne
 >d'Harnoncourt; peripatetic international curating machine and Antonin
 >Artaud
 >look-alike Hans-Ulrich Obrist; and Dave Hickey, who wears his curator's hat
 >with the same rebel abandon he dons his critic's hat.

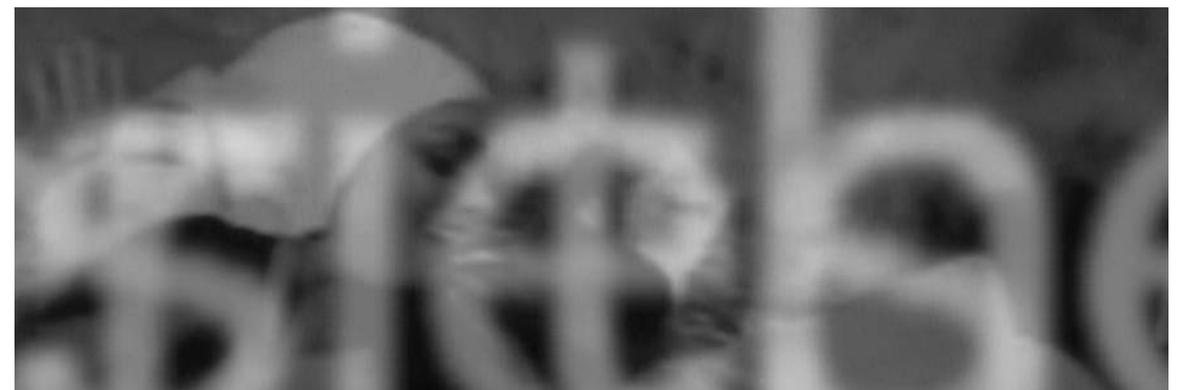
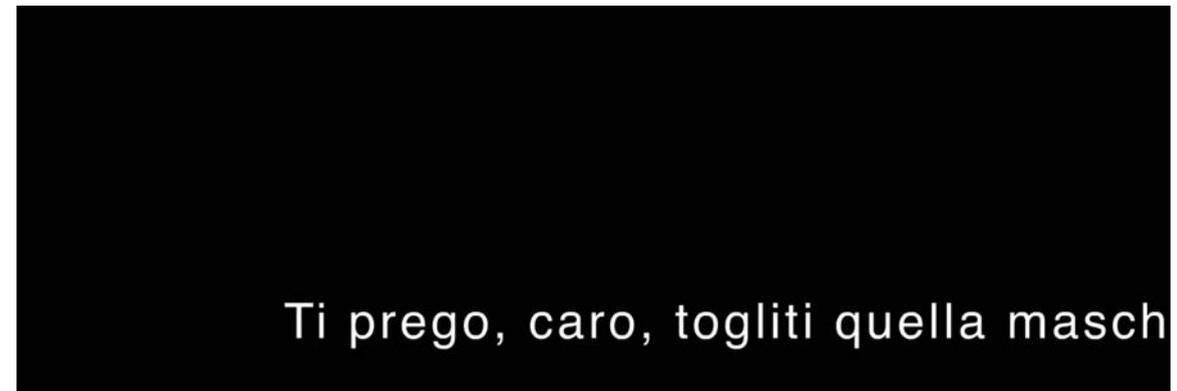
>
 >Museums are great. The problem is, too many of them have started to believe
 >what they're doing isn't just good, but necessary.
 >A lot got said. My favorite moment came after Storr gave an elegant opening
 >statement on the museum's need to be, in Lincoln Kirstein's words,
 >"dedicated
 >to art that is decidedly debatable." On the next panel, Mari-Carmen
 >Ramirez,
 >curator at the University of Texas, Austin, spouted a lot of familiar
 >nonsense about curators as "agents of change," "teachers," and "producers
 >of
 >theory," and repeated the old standby, "As many people go to museums as go
 >to
 >sporting events." In the pregnant pause before the room was about to slit
 >its
 >collective wrist, fellow panelist Shimmel cut to the heart of the matter
 >when

>he wondered aloud, "What does that mean?"
 >
 >In the afternoon, Halbreich delivered a rousing, Clinton-esque speech about
 >the Walker's "outreach programs," "educational initiatives,"
 >"interactivity,"
 >and "hyperlinks." Her main point, however, set up an interesting quandary
 >or
 >the symposium, and drew a line in the sand. "The museum," she said, "should
 >be a town square, not a temple." If I'm not mistaken, an air of disdain
 >shrouded the word temple.
 >
 >And that's where she lost me. In many parts of the world, town square and
 >temple are the same thing. Today, the entire city is a town square;
 >metropolises are busy, noisy places; they sustain us. But we go to museums
 >to
 >get away from the crowd and tap into the collective unconscious. In those
 >halls, we step outside of time and into something almost primitive or



ABOVE
Untitled, 2001 (DETAIL)
 Interactive web site, digital video

RIGHT
Untitled, 2001 (DETAIL)



>unknowable. I'm not saying art is sacred, only that it does something that
 >is
 >somewhat indefinable. In a sense, the museum is an ecstasy machine: a
 >building filled with wormholes and time warps, extrasensory switching
 >stations and ecto-transporters, psycho-circuits and invisible diving bells.
 >They are strange places where people stand in front of inanimate objects,
 >talk to themselves, and experience rapture.
 >
 >I left the symposium after the first day, so I didn't stay up late with the
 >curators, or hear Hickey speak. In my time there, the pressing questions of
 >academicism and institutional scale never came up. Beset by the desire to
 >please and beleaguered by "educational initiatives," a pious virus of
 >expansion is spreading unchecked. Nowadays, museums build bigger buildings
 >and erect huge impersonal additions to house uneven collections. Trustees,
 >millionaires, and board members pick architects; they help lay out loading
 >docks. Museums are becoming architectural attractions in and of themselves.
 >But is bigger better? Is more more?

>
 >The credo has become "To expand is to grow." MOMA's expanding, the New
 >Museum's moving, and the Guggenheim just got the go-ahead to erect a
 >575,000-square-foot Frank Gehry building on the East River—that's 10
 >times
 >the size of their Fifth Avenue flagship. Which is great; building is what
 >Thomas Krens does best. I'm sure Gehry's swooping structure will end up on
 >hats and T-shirts, plus New York could use an architectural shot in the
 >arm.
 >But when it comes to programming, expansion often brings dissipation, or
 >worse: stupidity. Gigantic edifices are built, then filled with junk.
 >
 >Museums can't be all things to all people. Every temple can't be Saint
 >Peter's. What about smaller congregations, the humble parish church, the
 >basement chapel, meeting halls, or the small but exquisite shrine? How
 >about
 >museum as nightclub, lounge, or honky-tonk? The possibilities are endless.

>Just as a pot by George Ohr can vie for greatness with the Sistine ceiling, a
 >small museum can be as exalted as a big one. In London, where there are
 >tens
 >of millions of people, the new Tate makes sense. In smaller cities,
 >building
 >a giant museum is like plopping down a shopping mall in a small
 >neighborhood.
 >More people come, but what are they getting? I remember standing six-deep at
 >a Monet show in Chicago, while the upstairs Impressionist wing, containing
 >several top-notch works by the artist, was nearly empty.
 >
 >Museums are great. The problem is, too many of them have started to believe
 >what they're doing isn't just good, but necessary. Too many curators seem
 >to
 >want to teach or preach to us; many are more interested in being do-gooders
 >than in doing good by art. It's as if they don't think art is up to
 >reaching

>people on its own. The truth about all this is, art's a lot of things, but
 >one thing it's not is necessary. It might have been to cavemen, but it's
 >not
 >now, not to us. Most museum people are dedicated to art in ways that go far
 >beyond the frequent-flyer miles, didacticism, and the after-hours
 >goings-on.
 >Although many need to lighten up on the museum-as-educator or
 >purifier-of-souls thing, most want what we all want. As Gilbert & George
 >put
 >it, "All we ask is to be with art."
 JM
 The preparation of the space is my main concern. It is my role to assure that the
 physical parts of this installation are brought together. To date,
 I believe that many of the items requested for the office can be found through Zheng's
 and Danny's expertise. Most of the office furniture can be obtained through request
 forms to the university's surplus department. Of course, we can only take what is
 available so I trust that there is not a color scheme to contend with. Wall preparation



209, December 12, 1998 (TWO VIEWS)
Standard light bulb, wax
14 x 11 x 11 inches

is another issue, as I said in earlier e-mails, we cannot meet with the request to remove any walls. Additionally, the wall color will remain at the discretion of our current paint supplies. I have an update on the phone installations Danny mentioned, it seems that I underestimated the costs - by a large margin. A phone line can be run, but the cost is prohibitive; to installation a line, line charges and deinstallation the fees will run \$248.35 and must be assumed by you or "the group". I have a request form and can mail it to you. The telecommunications dept. requires 2 week notice to make installation happen so you'll need to schedule this ASAP.

Access to the museum is another point that we must clarify. The museum cannot provide a key nor the security codes for any group that may inhabit this "office space". So, access will be during our established hours Wed.-Fri 10-5, Sat and Sun 12-4. The museum will be closed on Monday and Tuesday. It also seems reasonable that any group that will occupy this office should be from the "university family". If this turns into a dead-end then outside groups could be used but only with the blessing of the Director, Zheng Danny and Corinna. It is reasonable to proceed carefully here as the "state" will have to be figured into the equation. So, you should expect some sort of disclaimer/reference/waiver/contract for anyone outside the SUNY system. I'm not a

lawyer, but I expect that you'll need to do a lot of foot work to make this happen. The museum will undoubtedly demand some waiver to clear it from liability...etc...etc.

Well, I'm sure I've forgotten something, but there is plenty here that needs consideration. I think the first thing you should do as "ring master" is to clearly and formally outline what you want to do and pitch the idea Marijo Dougherty our director. She'll have additional concerns as to just what the museum is willing to do to facilitate this installation and what ramifications your proposal will have.

Good luck

Jeffrey Wright-Sedam Perparator, University Art Museum

This is that MOMA work survey I may have mentioned. It's in the air...

<http://www.moma.org/survey/survey.html>

John

John,

You're right about the critics. Their discussion doesn't go far enough. What do they really talk about at home?

But fill me in. If you take the "private" out of "private viewing experience" and agree that every viewing experience takes place in the context of an ever strengthening, corporate controlled mechanism of market opportunities, what are the terms of evaluation? Do formal terms simply drop dead? Even the "formless" ones of, for example, Roz Krauss? The same question applies to the actions, or the "work", of artists. Discussion of visual qualities, let alone quality, are moot. Does that mean we have relinquished ALL of our power as makers of images, or places that are unique or might exist outside of the market place? What's your take? And I hope you don't mind bringing me up to speed here.

Dexter

Dexter (and all)-

Thanks for the comments on my cranky rant. Private viewing experiences and the creation of images are very important subjects for me. But what I was trying to articulate was that the question I think is a rhetorical one. Arguing that what is missing here is aesthetics misses the point in the two articles I think. Sorry for repeating myself,

but high art and low art are irrelevant. As the article itself points out, art itself seems irrelevant. To explain a bit more: something I mentioned before, and that was left out of both articles, is that the Guggenheim Museum's "Abstraction" show several years ago was one of its most popular shows. No Armani or Rockwell, but Mondrian and Rothko. It helps to have sexy motorcycles to draw a crowd, but it is not necessary. No one would argue that these shows destroyed the 'aesthetic experience' or 'debased the temple' of art history. Including this in the mix complicates things a bit for people like RS and JS who seem to have nothing up their sleeve except aesthetic arguments I haven't heard since high-school. The issues have to do with how in fact these museums are situating themselves economically and politically in order to draw these crowds. Whose interests do these shows serve? More tourists? Better corporate image? Higher Real Estate prices? Less critical thought? Maybe. It certainly doesn't increase most of the staff pay. As was pointed out, it's true that most curators labor in their departments and hardly get any credit or money. Look at what was exposed during the MOMA strike. But I think these are the questions that will unravel the whole thing, not a retreat into arguments that went out with Abstract Expressionism. The Rothko paintings their still look great, but that's not the point. About your questions on work and artist's

Dipping transforms an object	Dipping renders an object impotent
Dipping is a mindful activity	Dipping is a mindless activity
Dipping is a pure experience	Dipping is physically engaging
Dipping is a form of cleansing	Dipping is a form of defilement
Dipping is ritual	Dipping is obsessive

Over the period of time (a day, weeks or months) objects were dipped with my left hand until I could no longer hold them.

Richard Wager



792, August 16–September 10, 1998
Plastic spoon, beeswax
16 x 6 x 6 inches

labor: I think all of this 'corporatizing' of the artworld has a very meaningful effect on how artists think of themselves as professionals (or not). It's a problem for a lot of us. E.g. Private foundations which may be well-meaning but help artists 'manage their careers' seems a bit odd. It's a very complicated and uncertain subject... I'd like to hear what some other people have to say about it.
John

While it does seem that the increase in more fashion-based shows does have something to do with fundraising issues and corporate image, it also seems like there's a larger more mobile cultural issue at play. Fashion in the museum is also flowing in the other direction, fashion in the studio. It's not always easy to discern the differences between art projects and advertising campaigns. Sometimes there are interesting plays with this blurring of art and advertising but sometimes it just seems redundant, and only provocative in terms of selling ideas — beauty, youth, location, and style. It also makes it difficult to figure out the criteria of judgment both on an aesthetic level and on the level of practice (or work). Let me know what you think. MG
Corinna -

even though we discuss this briefly on the phone I felt it might be easier for you if I e'd this to you to here goes.. fiction; Virginia Woolf - esp - the Voyage Out, To the Lighthouse, The Years and The Waves. Gabriel Garcia Marquez - Love in the Time of Cholera and Hundred Years of Solitude, Curtzio Malaparte - The Skin. The Aleph - Borges Non Fiction Lives of the Saints Grace Before Meals - Food Ritual and Body Discipline in Convent Culture by Patricia Curran. GoodWives - that's yours so you know the author, I hope. The Death and Letters of Alice James, ed. Ruth Bernard Yeazel The Contest of Meaning - ed Richard Bolton the Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction - Walter Benjamin
I hope that's helpful - give me a call if you need any clarification - Tara

Corrina:
Some books which I have recently read or reread:
Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" "Crime and Punishment" I can't get enough of Dostoevsky's humanity and compassion for even the most despicable characters. His portrayal of Marmeladov comes immediately to mind. "Machine Dreams" by Jane Anne

Phillips. I'm looking forward to reading "Shelter." "Playing Dead — A Contemplation Concerning the Arctic" Rudy Wiebe, a Canadian author who wrote this book following his son's suicide. But it's not about that. Other books which I am reading and rereading in a more random way: "The Essential Rumi," "Tales from Ovid" Ted Hughes translation, The Collected Poems of Theodore Roethke," "Altogether Elsewhere - Writers on Exile," ed. by Marc Robinson and Proust's "In Search of Lost Time," a book I've read once and am drawn back to time and again; it seems to have ruined me for everything else. Artists: Eva Hesse, Warhol, Bruce Nauman is huge, so huge that I have utmost admiration for anyone who can get past him, which brings to mind Mathew Barney. I loved Nayland Blake's show at Matthew Marks a couple of years ago, the one with the Gingerbread house and the S & M ish eating video, but I didn't like his last show very much. I like Gillian Waring's work and Rachel Whiteread's too. Early Johns. Mike Kelly rarely misses and Henry Darger's work is so brilliant I can't stand it. Robert Gober, too. Great. There was also a piece I saw in a show curated by Gober, a video of someone sawing the antlers off a deer's head. I can't remember who did it; very powerful, disturbing, quintessentially masculine in such a fucked up way. I think that's what attracts me to some of these artists, their ability to compress a world of

meaning in a single image, the honing in on the perfect metaphor. David Just so everyone knows, there won't be anyone at the Museum after Dec. 22nd until Jan. 3. So, keep that in mind if you're planning on sending anything to the Museum. Thanks, Amy

Hi all, Loan forms are going out today to all those whose work requires them. The invitations should be ready a couple of weeks before the show opens. Let Zheng know how many you'd like and we'll mail you a stack. Any other questions regarding invitations should be directed to Zheng. I'll be away starting the 20 through the 4th but will be periodically checking messages and email. Happy Holidays, Amy

PS: If any of you have text that you want to appear with your piece (other than labels)—send that to Zheng by January 3. Thanks. (Richard—I already have yours...) Amy

Amy;
Could you please see to it that "Stone's Throw" (the wall piece) has some type

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

	<i>The Dam</i> , 2000 Video 4 minutes, 55 seconds	∞, September 10, 2000 Typewriter ink on Japanese paper 16 x 19 inches	<i>Untitled (Saratoga Springs)</i> , 2000 Gelatin silver print 38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches	Mark Lombardi <i>Frank Nugan. Michael Hand and Nugan Hand Ltd. of Sydney, Australia c. 1972–80</i> (8th Version), 1998 Graphite and red pencil on paper 51 x 124 inches Collection of Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York	<i>Munther Bilbeisi, Muta, Gavilon & Peregrine Intl. of Dallas</i> , date unknown Graphite on paper 15 x 18 inches Collection of Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York
	<i>Treadmill/Zootrope #1 (Wipe Out)</i> , 1997 Video 5 minutes, 40 seconds	Tara Fracalossi <i>Archive (Museum Cases)</i> , 2001 Color photographs, paper, tape, museum cases Dimensions vary	<i>Untitled (Saratoga Springs)</i> , 2000 Gelatin silver print 38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches		
	<i>Treadmill/Zootrope #2 (Eggbeater)</i> , 1997 Video 2 minutes, 30 seconds	<i>Archive (Recovered Photos)</i> , 1998–2001 Found photographs, glassines, photocopies Dimensions vary	<i>Untitled (Positions)</i> , 2001 Video 5 minutes, 10 seconds	<i>Industrias Carlos Cardoen of Santiago, Chile. “Manufacturer of cluster bombs and related military pyrotechnics.” 1982–90</i> (2nd version), 2000 Pencil on paper 25 x 32 inches Collection of Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York	John Menick <i>9 to 5, 5 to 9</i> , 2001 Interview project
	<i>Treadmill/Zootrope #3 (Running West)</i> , 1997 Video 6 minutes, 40 seconds	<i>Archive (Recovered Photos)</i> , 1998–2001 Found photographs, glassines, photocopies Dimensions vary	David Kasdorf <i>Tenderfoot I</i> , 2000 LightJet digital c-print 27 x 40 inches	<i>IBM/Argentina Study</i> , 1999 Graphite on paper 15 x 18 inches Collection of Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York	Josh Singer <i>Untitled</i> , 2001 Interactive web site, digital video
Dexter Buell <i>Treadmill/Zootrope</i> , 1997 Wood, steel, mixed media sculpture 129 x 67 x 132 inches	James Cullinane <i>Stone’s Throw</i> , 2001 Pushpins 24 x 12 feet Dedicated to Lois Buell	Meighan Gale <i>Untitled (Vermont)</i> , 2000 Gelatin silver print 38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches	<i>White Goes with Everything</i> , 2000 LightJet digital c-print 27 x 40 inches	<i>EATSCO (Egyptian American Transport & Service Co.) c. 1979– 82</i> , 1999 Graphite on paper 15 x 18 inches Collection of Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York	Richard Wager <i>209</i> , December 12, 1998 Standard light bulb, wax 14 x 11 x 11 inches
<i>Red Maple Cube</i> , 1988 These notes and photographs document the process by which the artist and his collaborator, Kirk Johnson, reduced an average-size maple tree to its smallest possible cubic volume. They also counted all 99,284 leaves on the tree before packing them, along with twigs and sawdust, into the box made from the limbs and trunk of the tree. The project took two and a half days. One 30 x 40-inch LightJet digital c-print, nine 8 1/2 x 11-inch pieces of documentation on lined paper, eight 11 x 14-inch inkjet prints	<i>Gegenschein Series, 1–10</i> , 2001 Perforated paper and transfer 12 x 12 inches each	<i>Untitled (Vermont)</i> , 2000 Gelatin silver print 38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches	<i>Untitled #1 (JJJ)</i> , 2000 LightJet digital c-print 27 x 40 inches	<i>Joe Russo, & Associates</i> , 2000 Graphite on paper 15 x 18 inches Collection of Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York	<i>161</i> , November 17, 1998 VHS cassette tape, wax 15 x 8 x 5 inches
	Lee Etheredge IV <i>Times Square</i> , July 19, 2000 Typewriter ink on Japanese paper 55 x 65 inches Collection of Matt Pappajohn, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	<i>Untitled (Saratoga Springs)</i> , 2000 Gelatin silver print 38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches	<i>Untitled #2 (JJJ)</i> , 2000 LightJet digital c-print 27 x 40 inches		<i>1,046</i> , August 2–19, 1998 Graphite pencil, beeswax 5 x 10 x 5 inches
	<i>gravitation</i> , September 12, 2000 Typewriter ink on Japanese paper 16 x 19 inches	<i>Untitled (Saratoga Springs)</i> , 2000 Gelatin silver print 38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches	<i>Chicken</i> , 2000 Light Jet digital c-print 27 x 40 inches		<i>792</i> , August 16–September 10, 1998 Plastic spoon, beeswax 16 x 6 x 6 inches
		<i>Untitled (Saratoga Springs)</i> , 2000 Gelatin silver print 38 1/2 x 32 1/2 inches	<i>Cowboy</i> , 2001 Video 30 minutes		<i>3,100</i> , July 19–October 4, 1998 Toothbrush, plaster 8 x 12 x 4 inches
					<i>1,892</i> , January 9–March 25, 1998 Four-ounce paper cup, plaster 8 x 6 x 6 inches

of label that states “ Dedicated to Lois Buell ” ? This could be separate from the title label if it is already printed. Thanks very much!

Best regards,
James

Zheng,
last minute changes to the video program: The projections is as follows: Meighan Gale *Untitled (positions)* 2001 4:57 and Dexter Buell *The Dam* 2000, 4:50. I dropped *Rotate* because it was so damned literal. Also, *Running West* is now 6:40, and along with *Wipe Out* and the projection program is in the Fed Ex Loop under two separate covers. Sorry for the last minute changes, but I’m positive you have the necessary gadget on hand to pull it off.

Thanks again,
Dexter

Artists,
I want to thank you all for the work you’ve put into the show—which, as you know, opens tomorrow. The work looks wonderful in the space and I am very pleased with

the way the exhibition has turned out. I think it is a very good show. Special thanks to all who schlepped out here to work your asses off installing. Nicely done. Check out the website: <http://www.albany.edu/museum> Zheng is still working on it (in keeping with the evolving nature of the show itself) and will continue to update it throughout the run of the show. There are a few conspicuous absences that we are working on, but I would very much like to hear what you think of the sit, overall. We’re talking of including a lot more media such as QuickTime Virtual Reality views of the space and of specific installations, as well as many more images from the show. I’m also curious what those of you who came up to install think of the exhibition (what you’ve seen of it so far, anyway). If you have not received a package of invitations, please let me or Amy (dna@acmenet.net) know ASAP and we’ll get them out to you. More later. I’m hoping to revive the list for at least one more round of conversations before the catalog is designed. Be forewarned.
Danny

One more thing:
I forgot to mention that the entire archive of the listserv to date is viewable at

<http://listserv.albany.edu:8080/archives/work.html>, for those of you who are interested. I also realize I have neglected to introduce Lee Etheredge IV, the most recent addition to the show, to the group. Zheng and I saw Lee’s work at Pierogi when we were negotiating the loan of the Lombardi pieces, and I just had to get his work for this show. Check out Lee’s section on the website for a (teeny) glimpse at his work.

Lee, I’m sorry you got left out of all the prior conversations. You joined the list at a time when it was rather in hibernation. I do, though, have a couple of questions for you:

Much has been said in this forum about the balancing act of managing the work that is one’s art, and, for lack of a better term, one’s day job. In reading your statement and biography, I was struck with the notion that these terms somehow have great clarity for you. Can you comment further on your decision to leave medical school to make art? Corinna asked a while back if anyone in this group makes art full time. No one does (although Dexter had a taste for a year or so). Do you?

I also have a really simple question about your pieces: do you work from sketches? I

tend, when standing before your work, to be unable to shake the connection to the act of making it. Meaning, I imagine myself hunched over a typewriter. Tony Shafrazi, when he sprayed “kill lies all” on *Guernica*, said he was trying to bring that painting back to life by getting in touch with the act of painting it...or some such bullshit. The thing is, I don’t really connect with the production of most work in that way. I have to wonder if it is because the typewriter is such a ubiquitous instrument—one that requires a very different kind of skill to use than, say, a palette knife. There’s also something really seductive about making a very large, formal work with no large marks. So how do you visualize where the drawing is going as you make it?
That’s it for now. DG

I join Danny in applauding all the artists in the exhibition *WORK* and in addition thank the curators, Danny Goodwin and Zheng Hu for their excellent selections. The installation was supervised by Jeffrey Wright-Sedam and his hard work-alongside the artists and curators- has resulted in an exceptional visual impact. Now we look forward to Corinna Schamings essay and the catalog itself !! I look forward to meeting you all at the reception. Congratulations to all.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Dexter Buell

Born in Seattle, Washington, 1960
Studied at University of Washington, Seattle (BA, 1984); Yale University School of Art, New Haven, Connecticut (MFA, 1989)

Lives in Brooklyn, New York

ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

- 1999 *Dexter Buell selected by Chuck Close*, Artists Space, New York, New York
- 1998 Art Resources Transfer, Inc., New York, New York
- 1992 Nexus Contemporary Art Center, Atlanta, Georgia

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2001 Group show, Queens Museum, New York
- 2000 *Gym Culture 2000*, Thread Waxing Space, New York, New York and Cleveland Center for Contemporary Art, Cleveland, Ohio
- 1999 *Linea Negra*, Star 67, Brooklyn, New York
- Chronologies*, The Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, New York
- Zero G: When Gravity Becomes Form*, Whitney Museum of American Art @ Champion, Stamford, Connecticut
- Three Suitcases*, Art & Idea, Mexico City, Mexico

Conversation with Meighan Gale, Art Resources Transfer, Inc., New York, New York

Performing Video, Ex-Teresa Museum, Mexico City, Mexico

- 1998 *Back to Back—Selected NYFA Fellows*, De Chiara/Stewart Gallery, New York, New York
- Group exhibition, Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York, New York
- Scope II*, Artists Space, New York, New York
- 1997 *Killing Time*, White Columns, New York, New York

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Cotter, Holland. “Killing Time,” *The New York Times*, September 12, 1997.
- Dimling, Rebecca. “Dexter Buell,” *Artpapers*, November–December, 1992.
- Gavilan, Ana Isabel Perez. “Three Suitcases,” *Art Nexus*, January 2000.
- Schmerler, Sarah. “Dexter Buell, Arthur Jaffa, Judy Stevens,” *Time Out New York*, May 20, 1999.

James Cullinane

Born in Washington, D.C., 1955
Studied at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York, New York (BFA, 1979); The Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; Ford Travel Scholarship, Spain (1978)

Lives in Brooklyn, New York

ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

- 2000 *Little Hands Clappin'*, Walden Gallery, New York, New York

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2000 *Wall Drawings*, with David Godbold, Art Center Galleries, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain
- Blurry Lines*, Kohler Arts

Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin

James Cullinane/Sarah Graham, Feed Gallery, Brooklyn, New York

Super Duper New York, Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York

Momenta Benefit Auction, White Columns, New York

- 1999 Bernard Maisner Fine Art Gallery, Bayhead, New Jersey
- Slide file selection, The Drawing Center, New York, New York

1998 *James Cullinane/Eric Heist*, Everything is Everything, Brooklyn, New York

1997 *Current Undercurrent: Working in Brooklyn*, Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York

Group show, R-Town Gallery, Brooklyn, New York

1996 *Lowtide*, Sauce Gallery, Brooklyn, New York

Word: Artists Using Text and Language, Rensselaer County Council for the Arts, Troy, New York

1995 National juried show, Barrett House, Poughkeepsie, New York

Troy Windows Project, installation, Rensselaer County Council for the Arts, Troy, New York

Peep Show, site-specific installation, The New York Kunsthalle, New York

1994 Metro juried show, Exceptional Merit Award, City Without Walls, Newark, New Jersey

Lee Etheredge IV

Born in Augusta, Georgia, 1968

Studied at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio (BA, 1990); Louisiana State University School of Medicine, New Orleans (MD, 1995); New York Studio School

of Drawing and Painting, New York (Certificate, 1998)

Lives in Brooklyn, New York

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2000 *Meat Market Art Fair*, New York, New York
- Haulin' Ass: Pierogi in L.A.*, Post Gallery, Los Angeles, California
- Drawing from Pierogi: Selections from the Flat Files*, Usdan Gallery, Bennington College, Vermont
- Greenpoint Riverfront Artists 2nd Annual Open Studios*, Brooklyn, New York
- Multiple Sensations*, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, California
- Le Salon for Art Collectors*, London, England

1999 *Greenpoint Riverfront Artists 1st Annual Open Studios*, Brooklyn, New York

Galapagos Art Space, Brooklyn, New York

1998 *Absolut Secret*, McKee Gallery, New York, New York

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brooklyn Rail, October/November 2000.

Pierogi Press, Spring/Summer 2000.

Tara Fracalossi

Born in Jersey City, New Jersey, 1966

Studied at University of Vermont, Burlington (BA, 1988); University at Albany, State University of New York (MFA, 1991); Syracuse University, Florence, Italy

Lives in Valatie and Brooklyn, New York

ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

2000 *Some Archives*, The Hyde Collection Art Museum, Glens Falls, New York

1998 *Archives*, University of the Arts,

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1996 *Tara Fracalossi: Recent Work*, Russell Sage College, Troy, New York

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2000 *Archival*, Fotofest Gallery, Houston, Texas
- 1999 *Size Matters*, curated by Michael Weiss, Gale Gates, Brooklyn, New York
- Outer Boroughs*, curated by Lauren Ross and Paul Ha, White Columns, New York, New York
- Faculty exhibit, Usdan Gallery, Bennington College, Bennington, Vermont
- 1998 *1998 Invitational*, CEPA Gallery, Buffalo, New York
- Night of 1000 Drawings 98*, Artists Space, New York, New York

1997 *Memory and Mourning: Shared Cultural Experience*, University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York

Sight Unseen, MMC Gallery, Marymount Manhattan College, New York

Re-Vision: Art Works with History, curated by Sharon Bates, Rensselaer County Historical Society, Troy, New York

1996 *Tara Fracalossi/Thom Lail: Recent Work*, Foreman Gallery, Anderson Center for the Arts, Hartwick College, Oneonta, New York

Midway, Pilot Arts/Borax Films, New York, New York

Sideshow, Pilot Arts/Hells Hundred Acres, New York, New York

Meighan Gale

Born in New York, New York, 1965

Studied at Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York (BA, 1988); Hunter College, New York, New York (MFA, 1991)

Lives in Brooklyn, New York

ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

2000 *Positions 1-12*, Dance Theater Workshop Gallery, New York, New York

1995 *Her Leaving Trunk*, Alternative Museum, New York, New York

Remembered Images, Maine College of Art, Portland

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1999 *Conversation with Dexter Buell*, Art Resources Transfer, Inc., New York, New York

Outer Boroughs, White Columns, New York

1998 *Interpreting*, Rotunda Gallery, Brooklyn, New York

Backstage, Serge Sorokko Gallery, New York, New York

1997 *The American Living Room*, HERE, New York, New York

The Concrete Signal, Ben Shahn Galleries, William Patterson University, Wayne, New Jersey

1995 Inaugural Exhibition, Momenta Art, Brooklyn, New York

Video Sculpture, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

1994 *National Showcase Exhibition*, Alternative Museum, New York, New York

Phrenology Illustrated, Millennium, New York, New York

1993 *The Concrete Signal*, Tribeca 148 Gallery, New York, New York

1992 *The Neurotic Art Show II*, Artists Space, New York, New York

Marijo Dougherty
Director University Art Museum

Ditto on the thank yous with a special thanks to Amy for keeping things on track and on time.
Corinna

so i'll jump in with my thanks to all - agreement all around for a beautiful show - i'm happy to be in it. the students were great, and i know the ones from hvcc are still buzzing about being included in such an official art thing. thanks for the opportunity for them.
tara

Okay, since we're all patting each other on the back, I have to tip my hat to the tireless student volunteers who assisted James up on the lift throughout his monster installation, as well as the work study staff of the museum. You will all have your day when Menick's piece starts rolling!

Enough. Now get back to work. We have a catalog to produce.
DG

Last tape is on the way. FEDEX lost it for a day.
DB

I received Dexter final video this morning (Thurs). Thanks Dexter,looks good.
Jeffrey

All Art "WORK" and no Play, by William Yeager, Times Union, Sunday, February 4, 2001
<http://www.timesunion.com/AspStories/substory.asp?storyKey=51095&BCCode=E&SubCategory=AR>
Amy

Oof! Ouch!
So—what do you think of Bill's assessment? I don't always agree with Bill, but I think he's a smart guy. I have to say, though, that I think he was pretty lazy and probably

didn't spend a great deal of time thinking about the work, but, rather, expected it to "work" for him. I'm very glad he bothered to review the show, though. No such thing as bad press, dontchaknow.

My two cents: I was especially surprised that he highlighted David's work—in particular "Chicken" as the "better art" in the show. Last year, when reviewing the "Supermodel" show at MassMOCA, he slammed work by artists such as Jim Casebere, Thomas Demand, Miles Coolidge, etc. I won't attempt to paraphrase that review, but I remember he felt strongly that work that addresses photography's classic burden of representing reality is just plain boring. I think Greg Crewdson and Peter Garfield must have been in that show, too—but I can't remember now. I respond to David's photographs as I do, partly because of my appreciation of work like that which bores Yeager. So I'm confused. I have to give him credit, though, for picking up on "Cowboy". It at least means he stood there for most of the tape.

I think he made an incredibly shallow read of most of the other work in the show. I think he completely missed what I see as the point of the pathos in Dexter's work: that the urge to transform something can (in the case of "Red Maple Cube") be a

little sadistic (or at least complicit in a kind of sadism) and/or (as in the case of the wheel and attendant video) anti heroic. Dex builds this seemingly macho, medieval machine that, ultimately, not only produces "endless sweaty mindlessness", but overpowers its creator. I still find that kind of poetic. I can't really disagree with his assessment of Lombardi's work, except to say that I do find the content more than marginally interesting. Obtuse and self-absorbed, yes. Overblown? I guess that's pretty subjective.

As I read that last sentence— "This lack of meaning — or the converse idea that banal activities and events are meaningful — is the haunting essence and absence of the entire show." —I can't help feeling kind of defensive and self-conscious. Did we produce a show that only artists will "get"?
Danny

Hello All,
Well, I just read the review (thanks Amy, I don't get the TU were I live) Anyway, I don't have the same response as you Danny. It's probably not as personal to me...nevertheless, I don't read it as a negative review. I don't count myself as a articulate art critic,

Terminal Instructions, Four Walls, Brooklyn, New York

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Carter, Holland. “Art in Review,” *The New York Times*, August 8, 1995.

Lombardi, D. Dominick. “Works That Reveal Reactions to Family Ties,” *The New York Times*, April 23, 2000.

Moore, Alan. “Art Reviews,” *Cover*, January 1994.

David Kasdorf

Born in Blumenau, Brazil, 1958

Studied at Fresno Pacific College, California (BA, 1981); Hunter College, New York, New York (MFA, 1991)

Lives in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania

ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

2000 Lock Haven University, Pennsylvania
P.S. 122, New York, New York

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2000 Benefit show, Art Resources Transfer, Inc., New York, New York

1999 Group show, Sixth on Prince, New York, New York

1998 Benefit show, Momenta, Brooklyn, New York

Paper It: Works Made On, With and About Paper, Sideshow Gallery, Brooklyn, New York

1997 *Susquehanna Valley Invitational Show*, Augenbaugh Gallery, Messiah College, Grantham, Pennsylvania

Three-person show, Pennsylvania School of Art and Design, Lancaster

1995 Gallery-represented artists, Metaphor Fine Arts, New York, New York

1994 Gallery-represented artists, Metaphor Fine Arts, New York, New York

1992 *Mennonite and Amish Art*, Canton Art Institute, Ohio

Mark Lombardi

Born in Syracuse, New York, 1951

Studied at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York (BA, 1974)

Died in Brooklyn, New York, 2000

ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

2000 *Mark Lombardi: Silent Partners*, Sorenson Center for the Arts, Babson Park, Massachusetts
Mark Lombardi: In Memory, Gallery Joe, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1999 *Vicious Circles: Drawings*, Deven Golden Fine Art, New York, New York

1998 *Silent Partners*, Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York

Museum of Contemporary Art, Washington, D.C.

1996 *Over the Line: Drawings 1994–6*, Lawndale Art and Performance Center, Houston, Texas

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2000 *Blurry Lines*, Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Errant Gestures: Visual and Verbal Correspondences, Apex Art, New York, New York

Out of Order: Mapping Social Space, curated by Pamela Auchincloss, CU Art Galleries, University of Colorado, Boulder (travelling nationally for one year)

Multiple Sensations, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, California

A Selective Survey of Political Art, John Weber Gallery, New York, New York

Greater New York, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York

1999 *Touring the Frame*, Rosamund Felsen Gallery, Santa Monica, California

Brooklyn: New Work, curated by Joe Amrhein and Dave Brown, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio

Altoid’s Collection, Clementine Gallery, New York, New York; Centre Gallery, Miami-Dade College, Florida; Inside Art, Chicago, Illinois; Robert Berman Gallery, Santa Monica, California; Walter/McBean Gallery, San Francisco Art Institute, California

The Other Side of New York, Galleria Maze, Turin, Italy

Rage For Art, Pierogi, Brooklyn, New York

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Cotter, Holland. “NY Contemporary, Defined 150 Ways,” *The New York Times*, March 6, 2000.

Johnson, Ken. “Lombardi at Deven Golden Fine Art,” *The New York Times*, November 5, 1999.

Moshkovits, Boris. “Lombardi at Pierogi 2000,” *Flash Art*, May 1999.

Smith, Roberta. “Rage For Art; Pierogi Reborn,” *The New York Times*, February 19, 1999.

John Menick

Born in White Plains, New York, 1976

Studied at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York, New York (BFA, 1998)

Lives in Brooklyn, New York

ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

2000 *Rampe 003*, in collaboration with Ayreen Anastas, Utopian Public Radio, Berlin, Germany

1999 *The John Menick Foundation: Two Restorations*, The P.S.1 Center for Contemporary Art, Long Island City, New York

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2000 *Greater New York: New Art in New York Now*, P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York
Parasite Archive at the Swiss Institute, The Swiss Institute, New York, New York

1998 *Parasite Presents*, The Drawing Center, New York, New York
Parasite Presents, The Clocktower Gallery, New York, New York

1997–1998
Member of the artist-run organization *Parasite*

Joshua Singer

Born in Point Pleasant, New Jersey, 1965

Studied at Studio Arts Center International, Florence, Italy (1987); Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts (BFA, 1988); Hunter College, New York, New York (MFA, 1991)

Lives in San Francisco, California

ONE-ARTIST EXHIBITIONS

1990 Julian Pretto Gallery, New York, New York

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2000 Venue 9, San Francisco, California (performance)

1999 Momenta Art, Brooklyn, New York

1998 Manhattan Cable Channel 17, Momenta Art, New York, New York
Gen Art, San Francisco, California

1997 *Worldwide Video Festival*, Melkweg, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Current Undercurrent: Working in Brooklyn, Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York

Intersections: An Interdisciplinary Conference, University of California, San Diego

Almanac, Art on Television, Channel One, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

1996 Artists Television Access, San Francisco, California
Simpler, Gavin Brown, New York, New York

1995 Momenta Art at Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York, New York

1994 *Artychoke, TV*, Manhattan Cable Channel 17, New York, New York

Night of 1000 Drawings, Artists Space, New York, New York

Pain, Schipper and Krone Gallery, Cologne, Germany
Pat Hearn Gallery, New York, New York (performance)

1993 *The Naming of the Colors*, White Columns, New York, New York

Futura Book Collection, Air de Paris, Nice, France

Friendly, Dooley La Cappelaine Gallery, New York, New York

1992 *National Contemporary Painting Competition*, Cheekwood Museum of Art, Nashville, Tennessee

1991 *Process and Material*, curated by Julian Pretto, William Patterson College, Wayne, New Jersey

Richard Wager

Born in Bakersfield, California, 1964
Studied at University of Arizona, Tucson (BFA, 1997); graduate studies in Art History and Art

Anatomy, Arizona State University, Tempe (spring 1995); Studio Semester Program, Empire State College, New York, New York (1999); University at Albany, State University of New York (MFA, 2000)

Lives in Brooklyn, New York

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2000 *Mohawk Hudson Regional Exhibition*, University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York
MFA Thesis Exhibition, University Art Museum, University at Albany, State University of New York

1999 *Two Small Jumps*, Empire State College, New York, New York
WAR, Postmasters, New York, New York

1998 *iEAR*, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York
New Directions, Barrett Art Center, Poughkeepsie, New York

Uannex/3D, The Rice Gallery, Albany, New York

PASB, Vine Street Gallery, Gloversville, New York

1997 *To Fog a Mirror*, No B.I.A.S., Bennington, Vermont

Arizona Biennial, statewide juried exhibition, Tucson Museum of Art, Arizona

The Addication, 11 E. Ashland Independent Art Space, Phoenix, Arizona

7th Biennial, seven-state juried exhibition, Dinnerware Contemporary Art Gallery, Tucson, Arizona

and I could not possibly discuss what connection this show has with the currents of today art world, I just don’t respond to art in those terms. What I read was a writer trying to put everything into a nice tidy box of explanations, something I never do. Its still about experiencing the work - good, bad or blank...That seems to describe “work” to me, both in the museum and the outside work-a-day world. For what it worth... Jeffrey

All,

Just a quick update:

We’re all working frantically on the catalog now and it is coming along nicely. Making the predictable compromises here and there to contain it within budget, but it is going to be terrific. Also slicking up the website to include some additional media (Quicktime movies and QTVR panoramas and objects) and images from each artist.

Wanted to announce that Amy and I are having a party following the opening reception to which you are all invited. It is at our place in Slingerlands (not as far as it sounds).

We’ll distribute maps at the reception. Hope you can make it.

BTW, I plan to retire the listserv following the reception. I’m sure you’ll get over it. Danny
Thanks D.G.
Jeffrey

All,

This is just a note to let you know I am killing the list this evening. Next message you recieve will be your “unsubscribe” notification from the bot. Thanks for your participation and for allowing us to reproduce the discussions in the catalog. Speaking of same, although we are terribly behind schedule, the catalog IS to be a reality. All the text is done and off to the editor, and we are finalizing image layouts. I’ll contact you individually if we need any other information, otherwise we will send out 10 copies per artist once they are printed.

Bye for now,

Danny

P.S.: thanks for schlepping out for the party. What fun.





In a world where most people around us seem to be overworked, it is not surprising that the connotation of the word “work” assumes a sense of tedium, monotony, and forced obligation. This exhibition, to the contrary, uses a refreshing angle to trace and reveal the ancient origin of what work means, a definition that has often been deeply buried in our collective psyche over the course of human evolution. The original impulse of work can be as simple as an uncontrollable urge to “do something about it,” not unlike a human version of a “call of the wild.” To me, this very urge defines humanity. Like a self-renewing source of energy, the impulse propels us to persist, both in defiance of and in harmony with the environment in which we find ourselves. As a species, humans have labored to learn this balancing act, which is illustriously embodied in the series of *Vermont* and *Saratoga Springs* photographs by Meighan Gale in the exhibition. It is, in fact, this underlying perpetual motion to be, to do, and to become that unifies all the art objects that constitute the exhibit.

The process of organizing the exhibition itself has also demonstrated a true spirit of work and collaboration. Everyone involved in the process reached beyond his or her normal sphere of duty. With his most amazing acrobatic skills, Danny Goodwin acted as a photographer, digital lab technician, listserv administrator, and artists’ collaborator as well as curator. Corinna Ripps wrote the essay for the catalog, but she also compiled and wrote the press kit, contacted the artists, and collaborated in curatorship of the exhibit. As the museum’s preparator, Jeffrey Wright-Sedam not only directed the production of a show of complexity and elegance, he also actively participated in designing space, lighting, and graphics while providing his expert support to the artists. Amy Griffin, who served as registrar, editor, and key liaison between all the communications, kept everything running smoothly. I want to thank all the museum staff and Joanne Lue especially for their constant care and support.

I want to extend my appreciation to the four artists, Tara Fracalossi, Dexter Buell, David Kasdorf, and James Cullinane, who installed their works onsite, for their impeccable spirit of cooperation, diligence, and dedication. They were ably assisted in various demanding projects by many of our graduate and undergraduate students, alumni artists, and students from Hudson Valley Community College. Without them, finishing an installation of this scale and complexity in a timely manner would have been simply unimaginable. Cullinane’s piece alone involved pounding into the wall over 50,000 pushpins! My warm thanks go to all the student assistants, and to Donald Rains and Gabrielle Palmatier in particular, for their extraordinary contributions throughout the entire installation process. My congratulations also go to the museum’s graduate intern Sairam Chinnam, who singlehandedly created the website for the exhibition.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to museum director Marijo Dougherty for her understanding, professionalism, and thoughtful support during every stage of the exhibition. She provided a free space for the curators and artists to conceive and realize the exhibit, and a firm foundation for its ultimate success.

Zheng Hu
Exhibition Designer and Co-curator

