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**day after day:
the diaristic impulse**

February 5 through April 6, 2013

University Art Museum
University at Albany
State University of New York

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Foreword

Janet Riker, Director

Each of the works in *Day After Day* possesses an immediacy that is quite personal; one can easily imagine sitting next to the artist at work, on the New York subway, in an adult home in Canarsie, or in a villa in Rome. Thus *Day After Day* acknowledges the human instinct to document events and feelings and to give concrete form to the passing moment. Not only scholars and historians have relied on this habit of mind to shed light on past events: the notion of “writing what you know” is a frequent starting point for creative writing exercises, and popular psychology often incorporates the cataloguing of events or thoughts as a means to explore a larger issue. Even the most mundane journal entry has an intimacy to it; the aggregate of such moments can have the unnerving ability to capture a life.

I am indebted to Kathryn Zox for her generosity in underwriting this exhibition. In retrospect, it seems logical that the theme would have particular resonance for Kathryn, a respected social worker with an M.S.W. from UAlbany and degrees in psychology and counseling from Boston University. Her keen interest in individuals, and her fascination with broader social phenomena, are evident in her *Voice America/World Talk* weekly radio show.

The University Art Museum is also grateful to Susan D. Phillips, provost and vice president for academic affairs, and to William B. Hedberg, senior vice provost and associate vice president for academic affairs, for their confidence in the museum’s programs. *Day After Day* will be the first exhibition under the leadership of Dr. Robert J. Jones, UAlbany’s nineteenth president, and we look forward to working with him in the years to come. A major grant from the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation in support of the museum’s publication program helped make this catalogue possible; additional assistance was provided by The University at Albany Foundation and University Auxiliary Services. It is a great gift to have donors and advocates who understand all that a university art museum can be.

I am fortunate to work with a museum staff that sets a high bar for itself, in alignment with the standards of our field. Thanks go to Zheng Hu for excellent catalogue and exhibition design; to Jeffrey Wright-Sedam, Darcie Abbatiello, and Ryan Parr for meeting every large and small installation challenge; to Naomi Lewis for keeping us on time and on target for exhibition and catalogue production; and to Joanne Lue for admirable administrative support.

Sincere thanks go to curator Corinna Ripps Schaming for the exhibition concept and for shepherding it through the shoals of the curatorial process to create an engaging and illuminating exhibition. I am grateful to essayist Claire Barliant for her insights, and to Ed Schwarzschild for his provocative short story. We are also grateful to the galleries, lenders, and others who have helped make this exhibition possible.

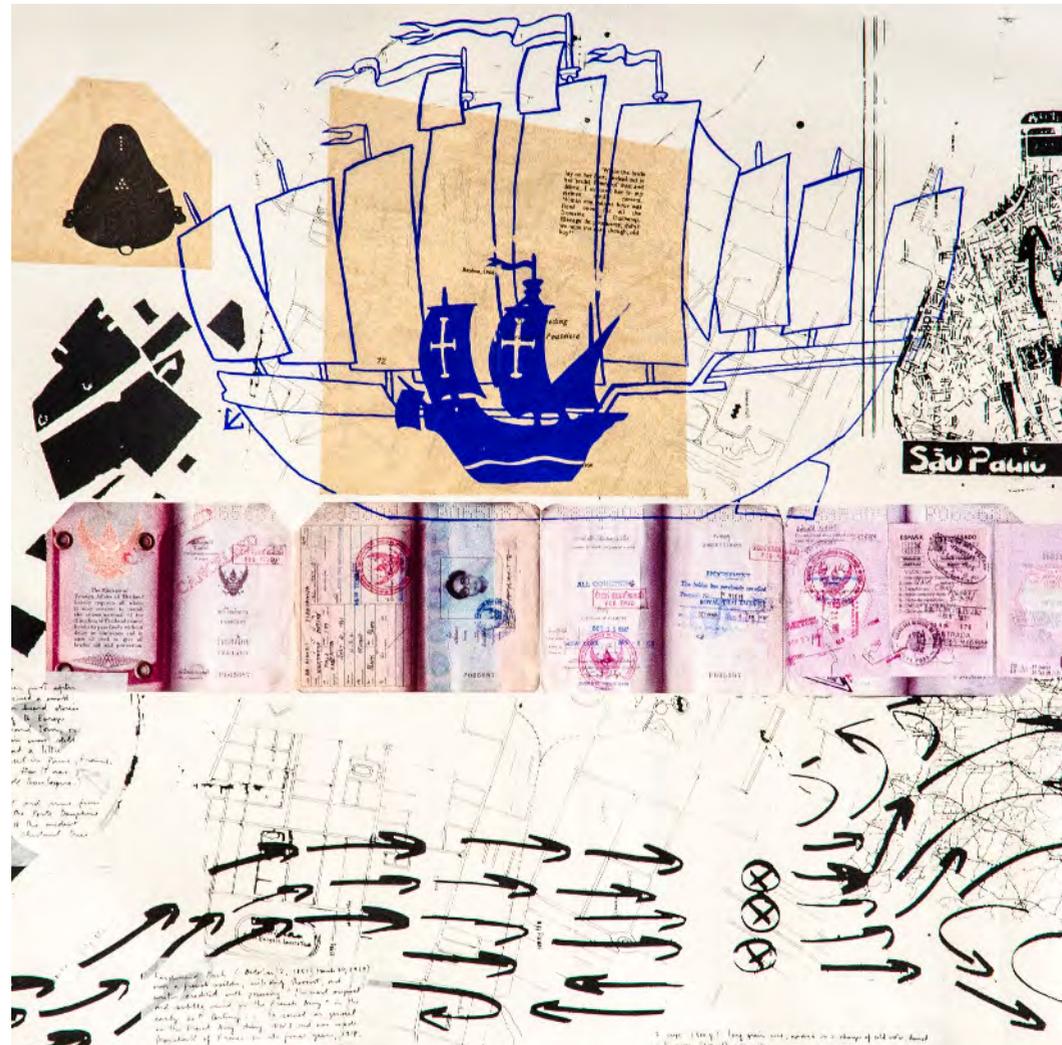
Finally, sincere thanks go to each of the exhibiting artists. Their record of days and cataloguing of moments have opened worlds for us to reflect upon, puzzle over, and enjoy.



Simon Evans
A Yearning Heart, 2009
Correction fluid, pressure-sensitive tape, pen, paper, wood, metal
13 x 9½ x 9½ inches

Attending to the Theater of Life

Claire Barliant



Rirkrit Tiravanija
Untitled 2008–2011
(the map of the land of feeling), I (detail),
2008–2011
Inkjet prints, offset
lithography, chine collé,
color silkscreen
3 x 84 feet

I've kept a diary, on and off, since about age seven. I still have that first book. It's small, about four by two-and-a-half inches, and features a photograph of a teddy bear, a pink bow tied around his neck, sitting on a bed with ruffled pillows and a brass headboard. For about ten pages I dutifully give an account of my day, addressing the book as "Dear Diary," anthropomorphizing it. Then I quit. Here is one of the last entries, dated March 8, 1983, penciled in laborious script:

Dear Diary, I learned calligraphy today. Here is my name: "Claire." Mom taught me. She was a real grouch today. I was so angry at her, I wanted to kill myself. I didn't though. I got sick today. So I had to stay home. I'll never get sick on Thursday. It's Mom's cleaning day. Love, Claire.

Here are the diaristic fundamentals: documenting the present through quotidian details (Thursday is "Mom's cleaning day"; my illness), developing plans for the future ("I'll never get sick on Thursday"), and, often, reflecting on the past. I have graduated from diary to journal, but I still unleash on its pages the same solipsistic stew of self-pity, petty gripes, and matricidal fury. (Though not, alas, with the same brutal efficiency.) In fact, I have filled notebook after notebook with such drivel. Why did I enforce a formal epistolary format on writing that theoretically—and hopefully—nobody else would ever read? The answer seems obvious: because they *would* read it, as proven by my sharing the entry above.

“One of the main (social) functions of a journal or diary is precisely to be read furtively by other people, the people (like parents + lovers) about whom one has been cruelly honest only in the journal,” wrote Susan Sontag in her journal on December 31, 1958.¹ Diaries are meant to be self-indulgent, a novel about our lives we write only for ourselves, but there always lingers the possibility of an audience. And as we write, we craft that audience, a phantom group that in turn contributes to the form of the diary. “In the journal I do not just express myself more openly than I could to any person,” Sontag declared. “I create myself.”² As Virginia Woolf, who wrote copious diaries (perhaps with the aim of eventually turning them into a memoir or autobiography), observed:

What sort of diary should I like mine to be? Something loose knit, & yet not slovenly, so elastic that it will embrace anything, solemn, slight or beautiful that comes into my mind. I should like it to resemble some deep old desk, or capacious hold-all, in which one flings a mass of odds & ends without looking them through...³

And yet Woolf can't quite bring herself to fully abandon form. She continues her description of the diary-writing process by admitting she has to balance her abdication of control and self-censorship by adhering to the diary's inherent structure, and the structure imposed by writing:

The main requisite, I think on re-reading my old volumes, is not to play the part of censor, but to write as the mood comes or of anything whatever; since I was curious to find how I went for things put in haphazard, & found the significance to lie where I never saw it at the time. But looseness quickly becomes slovenly. A little effort is needed to face a character or an incident which needs to be recorded. Nor can one let the pen write without guidance; for fear of becoming slack & untidy.⁴

It would be hard to find a better description of the artistic struggle between creative abandon and formal discipline. Diaries delicately balance the casual and uninhibited thought with the just-right *bon mot*. As brains work, so do diaries, lunging from selflessness to self-doubt to self-aggrandizement. We read diaries of famous people, such as Woolf and Sontag, hoping to catch a glimpse of their “real” character, conveniently overlooking that writing is already a form of mediation, distancing us from someone's “true” self. That self is probably best revealed in the lines that are crossed out or, as Woolf notes, in finding “the significance to lie where I never saw it at the time.” Journals give access

not to the true self, but the ideal self, as Sontag was aware:

The journal is a vehicle for my sense of selfhood. It represents me as emotionally and spiritually independent. Therefore (alas) it does not simply record my actual, daily life but rather—in many cases—offers an alternative to it.⁵

The truth is that a diary exists only *because* most of life is pretty mundane. A diary not only recounts “actual, daily life” but records our anxieties and hopes, emotions we only have the luxury to observe during moments when we are free to indulge in such introspection. If something great and wonderful occurs, we have long since finished rejoicing before we jot it down. The same is true of trauma or tragedy—our immediate misery is so intense that writing is often the last thing we want to do, even if it will ostensibly help alleviate some of the pain and intensity. We often need time to recover before we can take the necessary step back to immortalize the event. Complaints about perceived social slights, or frustration with a friend, romantic partner, or family member, far outnumber dramatic peripeteias or eye-opening revelations—as they should, because who could survive this world otherwise? Life is made up of events that are inconsequential, not earth-shattering. Sometimes, though, a revelation is sparked by an observance of something ordinary, as in Anne Truitt's journal, when she reflected on the sunrise on February 17, 1975:

At the beach a few days ago, sitting in my long wrapper and my Pooh Bear jacket on a round piling stump, steaming coffee mug in hand, facing across the pale sand into the rising sun, I thought of what to do with the sunrise. (Why, I incidentally ask myself, do I always feel compelled to turn everything into something else? A tiresome habit of my mind, I sometimes think.)⁶

Later in the same entry, she writes about the difference between writing and painting. In writing, Truitt notes, it is easy to describe the subtle shifts of color and atmosphere that make up a sunrise, but a painter has to settle on a single moment: “The delicate changes implicit in rising are so the essence of sunrise that this choice automatically enforces an almost fatal limitation.” The only option, then, is “a language of art as complicated as words.” But the problem with this, of course, is that the words may be foreign to most people. “So in the end my ability to convey my experience of the sunrise would depend, first, on my having mastered an abstract language and, second, on someone else's having mastered it too.”⁷

Truitt's offhand observation hits on a crucial point, that the avant-garde will continue to confuse and mystify until people are introduced to it properly, through education and exposure. One way to interpret what Truitt is saying is that *all* works of visual art are diaries. Each stroke of the brush captures a moment in time. That the record is abstract makes it no less real.

I recently visited the exhibition *Matisse: In Search of True Painting*, currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. For all of his greatness and success, Matisse had an insecure streak. He defended himself from critics supposedly accusing him of dashing off paintings in an hour by meticulously documenting every change he made to a single composition. He then exhibited the photographs along with the final work. The results are fascinatingly varied. A portrait titled *The Dream* (1940) features a woman asleep on a desk, head resting on her folded arms, her body relaxed and sinuous. He worked on it for a year. According to the photos, on one day Matisse gave her a luxurious head of hair; on another day he created a jungle of foliage in the background. In the final image, many of the finer lines and details are stripped away, leaving the mere suggestion of plants, paring down the figure to the bare essentials. As Matisse described the work to his son, it started out "very realistic, with a beautiful woman sleeping on a marble table amid fruit, [and it] has become an angel sleeping on a violet surface."⁸

So many works of art resemble diaries in this one crucial sense: it is finished only when the author abandons it or dies. "Day after day I sit in the theatre of my own life and watch the drama of my own history proceeding to its close W.N.P. Barbellion wrote. "Pray God the curtain falls at the right moment lest the play drag on into some long and tedious anticlimax."⁹ Seeing Matisse's photos together with his paintings, we know that each alternative outcome is embedded into the final product; buried under the final image, they are *pentimenti*—or maybe roads not taken—that, upon being revealed, make the author more human, more relatable, as flawed and anxious as we ourselves are.

Claire Barliant is a writer based in Brooklyn. She writes art listings for the "Goings On About Town" section of the *New Yorker*, and exhibition reviews and features for *Art in America*. Her writing has also appeared in *The Paris Review Blog*, *Triple Canopy*, *Artforum*, *Bookforum*, *Icon*, and other places. She has taught at the Rhode Island School of Design, New York University, Parsons, the New School, and was a visiting critic in the sculpture department at Yale University School of Art.

¹ Susan Sontag, "On Self," September 10, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/10/magazine/10sontag.html?pagewanted=all>. Retrieved on January 2, 2013.

² Ibid.

³ Virginia Woolf, quoted in Lawrence Rosenwald, *Emerson and the Art of the Diary* (Cary, North Carolina: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 24.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Sontag, "On Self."

⁶ Anne Truitt, *Daybook: The Journal of an Artist* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), pp. 132–133.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Rebecca Rabinow, "About the Exhibition *Matisse: In Search of True Painting*, Gallery Seven, The Matisse Exhibition at the Galerie Maeght, Paris, December 1945," n.d., <http://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2012/matisse/gallery-seven>. Retrieved on January 2, 2013.

⁹ W.N.P. Barbellion in Rosenwald, *Emerson and the Art of the Diary*, p. 24.

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For the Record

Edward Schwarzschild

The Other Day

My wife was coughing in the kitchen, practicing yoga while she waited for the water to boil. She'd been coughing for days. When she coughs, it can sound like there's an old lawn mower trying to escape from deep inside her lungs. As usual, she refused to see a doctor. She believes she coughs for a reason. Coughs go away when they're no longer necessary.

We both grew up in Philadelphia and lived there for a few years after our wedding, but we recently moved north to upstate New York because of our jobs. That's when the latest cough arrived. It's quieter up here. It's also lonelier.

"I need to jet," I said. "The mother-in-law's expecting me."

"I don't understand why you call her that," my wife said. "She's not my mother."

She wasn't wrong. Her parents and my parents have been dead for years. I call her a mother-in-law but she's actually my older (and only) brother's wife's mother. My older brother and his wife live in Holland these days and they say they won't come back to visit until this country passes meaningful gun control legislation. My brother's mother-in-law lives alone in Ventnor, on the New Jersey shore.

"Family is family," I said.

"Whatever the hell that means," my wife said. She inhaled deeply, lifted her left leg, and wrapped two fingers around her big toe. Then she released the breath and slowly extended the leg straight ahead. She looked almost like a

David Shapiro
February: 70 bills (detail),
2010
Ink, gouache, colored pencil
on vellum scroll
18 inches x 30 feet

corkscrew, but the position surely had a fancier name. In any case, her beauty and balance still floor me on a regular basis. And she never coughs while doing yoga.

"Where's the boy?" I asked, wondering if we had a window for some naked time.

"I thought he was with you."

"No," I said.

Our son is five years old. I listened for him. I swear he was three a second ago and before that you'd set him down somewhere and he couldn't move at all. It was a big deal if he managed to raise his head. Tummy time. Those were the days.

"Hello up there?" I called out.

He shouted down from his room. "I'm busy right now."

Then my wife stepped to the stove and returned to her coughing. It was a rhythmic beating I felt inside my forehead. She doesn't cover her mouth. If coughs are destiny, why should she? She poured the boiling water into a blue thermos, dropped in drops, mixed in honey and a handful of yellow crystals. It smelled like leather and garlic.

"What's that pose called?" I asked.

"Fingers around big toe with straight leg," she said.

"Everything should be so simple," I said.

A Few Years Back

My brother called me from San Francisco, where he'd been living. He didn't tell me about his marriage right away. Then he did tell me. Then he asked for a favor. "I need you to visit my mother-in-law," he said. "Could you do that for me?"

"We'll all go together?" I said. "Like a family reunion?"

"Have you looked at my bank statement lately?" he asked. "Do you know what it costs to live in this city? I'm miserable. I'm not going anywhere anytime soon. And now I'm married."

"I'm married, too," I reminded him. "Remember you came to the wedding?"

"That's different," he said.

"It sure is," I said. Our wedding was a serious shindig in downtown Philly, at Bookbinder's Seafood House. The restaurant has since gone out of business, but we're still paying that bill.

"She asked for you specifically."

"I ask for lots of things specifically."

"Does that mean you'll go?"

"We'll call it a wedding gift," I said. "And, by the way, congratulations."

I drove down to Ventnor one morning. The mother-in-law stepped onto the porch while I was parking. I saw a familiar wing chair by her front door. She set a small round coffee table next to it. "These are your brother's things," she said. "You can take them or leave them at the curb for the trash. He took my daughter away. Why should I store anything for him?"

"I understand," I said. But she didn't want to talk about it. I watched her hustle inside and heard the door lock behind her.

I happened to like those two pieces. I also liked knowing I wasn't the only one who resented my brother.

The Other Day (continued)

I wound up carting two boxes of my brother's books back from Ventnor. I figured I'd go through them, but I was busy trying to be a better father, husband, lab worker, and citizen. I left the boxes in the laundry room and forgot about them.

A Few Days Later

It was Saturday, we were out for a family drive, our son napping, my wife still coughing. In the car, the coughing sounded more percussive than usual, as if she were keeping the beat for an *uber-tough* girl band. Snare, snare, bash the high-hat. I offered a lozenge. She declined. Miraculously, the boy kept sleeping.

"I need to tell you something," my wife said.

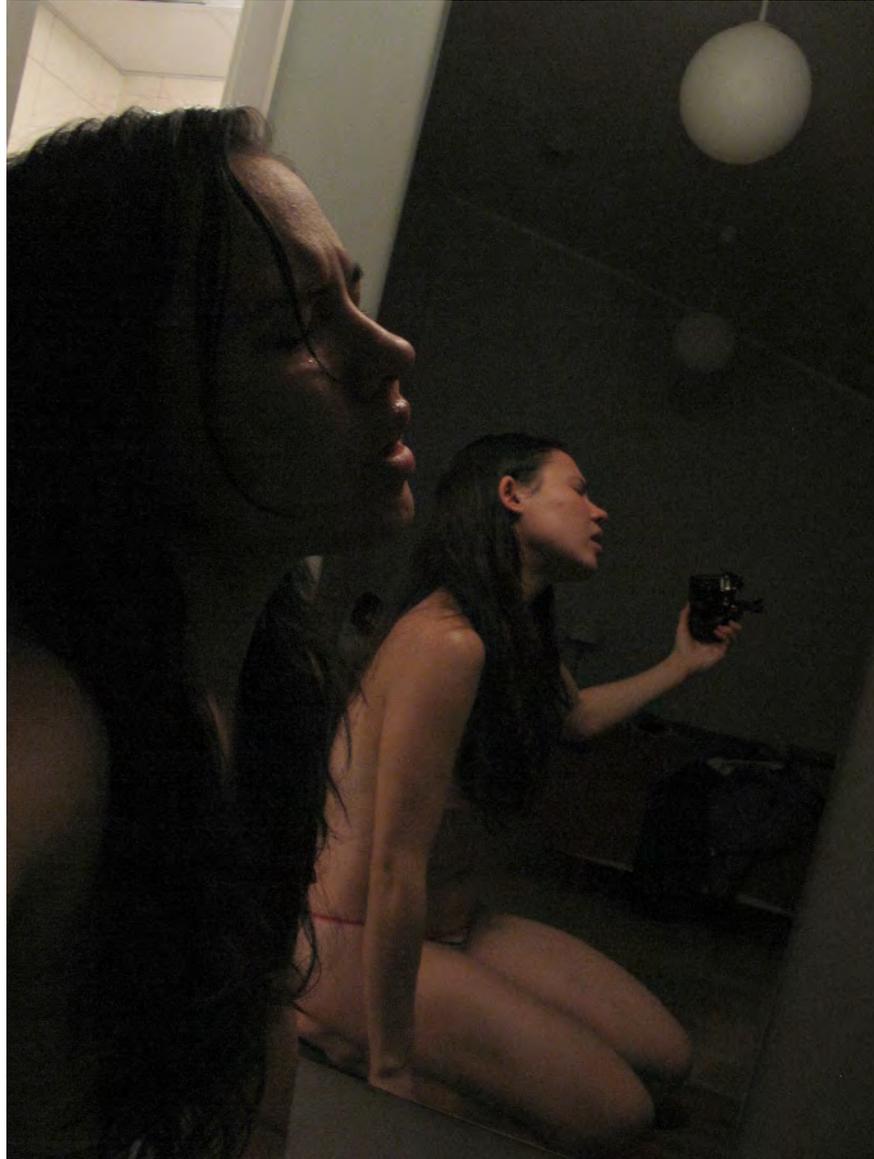
I tightened my grip on the steering wheel, but I wanted to stay loose. "Should I pull over?"

"It probably means the end of our marriage," she said. "We're probably doomed."

"At least I'm sitting down," I said.

"I read your journal," she said.

"That's terrible," I said. "How could you do that?" I stared through the windshield and tried to remember if I'd ever even kept a journal. Who has time to keep a journal? Before this journal, my journal for the last decade would have gone approximately like this: *When am I going to meet someone? Why can't I meet someone? Thank god I met somebody at last! I can't believe I finally met somebody! We're having a baby! Man, I sure am tired! I don't think I've ever been so tired! I need to sleep. When am I going to get some sleep?*



Laurel Nakadate
February 19, 2010, From
the Series 365 Days: A
Catalogue of Tears, 2011
Type-C print
50 x 40 inches

“I went through some of your old boxes,” she said.

“You found the journal in my old boxes?” I remembered my brother’s boxes from Ventnor. There could have been journals mixed in with the books. My handwriting wasn’t that different from his.

“I didn’t know you were so unhappy,” my wife said.

“Look,” I said. “I think there might be a misunderstanding—”

“I’m not ready to discuss it in detail,” she said. Then she coughed for almost a minute straight. I lowered my window to drown it out.

Sometimes when our son wakes up, he’s exceptionally contrarian. “When are we going to be there?” he asked as soon as the wind hit his face. Before I could answer, he shouted, “No, we’re not!” Then he started crying.

That Night

It’s easy to avoid talking with your spouse when there’s a kid around and you’re in a new town trying to settle in at a new job and you’re uncertain if you actively decided not to have another kid or if karma and/or human biology simply made that decision for you or if maybe, just maybe it’s still up in the air.

Which is to say, my wife went out with a new co-worker for drinks and I handled the boy’s bedtime. After the boy was asleep, I found my brother’s two boxes in the basement, the journal atop an imposing stack of self-help books. On the inside cover, I saw my last name and my brother’s attempt to deepen two standard fill-in-the-blank answers:

In case of loss, please return to: a state of innocence and begin again.

As a reward: \$ can be more punishment than anything else.

I didn’t know whether to be insulted or flattered that my wife thought me capable of such work.

For much of my life, though, I did believe my brother knew all the answers. And whatever he didn’t know, he would surely learn. He was a seeker, long before he headed west to San Francisco, or back to the old world of Europe.

I read the first page of the journal and was, once again, disappointed by him. “Werner Erhard tells it like it is,” my brother wrote, and then he’d copied out this quotation:

It isn’t going to work out. Really. It is not going to work out. This is all there is. This. This what you’ve got is what there is. Never mind the fairy tales. This is it. It is not going to work out because it has already worked out. This is the way it worked out. You don’t like that? Too bad.

Like any good Philly boy, I knew that old Werner was really just Johnny Rosenberg from Norristown, a fine salesman who moved to California, changed his name, created *est*, and became a truly great salesman.

I flipped through the pages and read a few passages describing how miserable my brother was. There were no dates, but I guessed the journal was from the San Francisco years. He was no doubt miserable in Holland, too, surrounded by windmills, canals, tulips, bike paths, and all the marijuana he could smoke.

Missing my brother and wishing I could count on him, I set the journal down. Then I searched the basement for a blank notebook.

The Beginning

The idea to start this journal first came to me during that earlier car ride. I wanted to write a journal my wife would enjoy. Who else in the world would ever bother to read it? Plus she could use a good laugh. I thought it would be nice to begin with a description of how the sound of my son's crying resembled the sound of my wife's coughing. I didn't want to write about the obvious similarities—the loudness, the penetrating pulse of it, the way the sounds could leave me feeling helpless. Then I faced the fact that description wasn't my strong suit. I wasn't even sure I had a strong suit. Still, I wanted to begin by focusing on the stunning beauty of my wife and son making loud noises together. Let it hereby be forever recorded and preserved: there is an everyday heart-racing human beauty to their shared sound. And, to prove I am not writing these lines merely to redeem myself, let me add: it was also an undeniable relief to lean my head out the car window and feel the wind roar into my ears.

Later

My wife came home and found me in the basement. She called from the top of the stairs. "What are you doing down there?"

"Writing in my journal," I said.

She came down and sat beside me. First I handed her the journal she'd read. "This is my brother's," I said. Then I handed over the journal I'd just begun. "This is mine."

While she read, I studied her face. We'd been together for nearly nine years. For too much of that time, I hadn't really seen her and I'd taken her for granted. Her and almost everything else. I wondered if I should have started this journal earlier, kept better track of how fortunate I am, practiced staying

in touch with the vivid details of the full life all around me.

"I feel like an idiot," she said.

The basement had lousy fluorescent lighting, but I could tell from the pink in her upper cheeks that she'd had two or three glasses of red wine. I could see her pale blue eyes glistening, not far from tears. Journal or no journal, I remain a plain old drone with plain old drone thoughts. It became clear my body was hoping for some naked time in the basement.

"My brother's the idiot," I said, putting a hand on her thigh. "That's what the mother-in-law says, too." I slid closer to her. "You're probably right about us being doomed, though," I said.

"What do you mean?"

I moved closer still. "Who isn't doomed," I said. "But at least we're doomed together." I bent forward for a kiss and she met me more than halfway. Then, after a few minutes, I tried to ease her down onto the floor.

"We're not that doomed," she said, standing up. Then she reached out to help me to my feet. "The bed will be way more comfortable," she said.

Afterwards

My wife insisted on calling my brother. "I read your journal by accident," she told him.

Though I was naked, right next to her, I didn't hear what he said.

"It's a long story," she went on. "But I just want to tell you one thing."

Again, I didn't hear what he said.

"Werner Erhard is full of shit," my wife said.

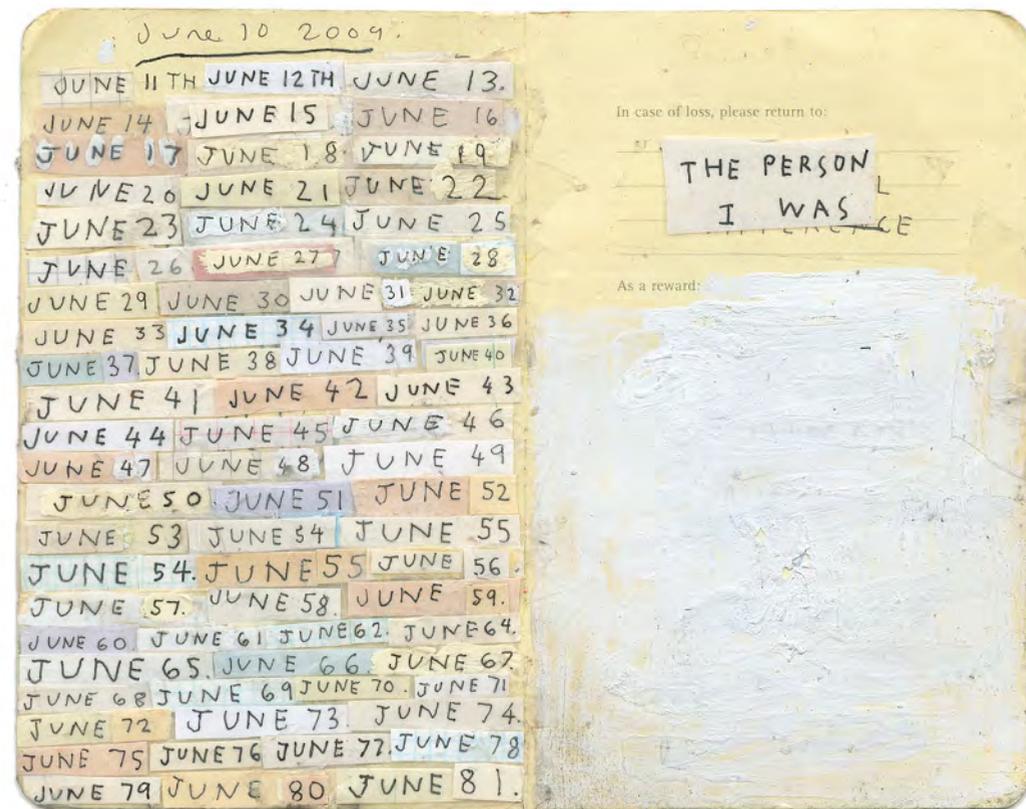
Maybe Werner is and maybe Werner isn't. I haven't read enough to know. Still, we should honor our fellow Philly boys, shouldn't we? The guy has done all right for himself. And so, I like to believe, have I.

No matter what, for the moment, the cough seemed to be gone.

Edward Schwarzschild is the author of the novel *Responsible Men* and the story collection *The Family Diamond*. He is an Associate Professor of English and Fellow of the New York State Writers Institute at University at Albany, State University of New York.

Day After Day

Corinna Ripps Schaming, Curator



This exhibition features artists whose obsessive desire to record day-to-day activities, document private worlds, or chart the passage of time is reflected in works that serve as either staging grounds for more ambitious projects or as ends in themselves. Presented in a range of media from journals and sketchbooks to video and painting, the works are at times confessional in tone; the artists draw upon self-imposed rituals, secret narratives, and personal longings to give tangible form to fleeting ideas, experiences, and emotions. Some artists present themselves as subjects through their use of self-portraiture, personal items, or their actual diaristic texts with visual and textual components, while other artists look outward for inspiration, using history and current events to create personal chronicles of the larger world.

All the artists in *Day After Day* are trying to reconstruct memory: to contain it and give it shape, contours, legibility. The diaristic impulse becomes the means by which they catalogue and affirm the human stuff of everyday existence: tears, yearnings, missteps, family obligations, rituals, routines. The impetus for multiple years of artistic exploration can be found in the seemingly mundane and often overlooked details of daily life: reading the news, looking out the window, paying the bills, mapping travels near and far. Through a sustained and cumulative effort, these details take on heightened significance as the artists take stock of all they survey and seek the connective tissue that extends from one day to the next—an effort that grows in meaning when viewed as a continuum. These are earnest explorations, devoid of irony, as the artists dig and scratch, make the temporal visible, and bear witness to their own mortality.

Simon Evans
Diary (detail), 2009
Paper, moleskin
notebook, invisible tape,
correction fluid, pen
31½ x 55 inches

Guy Ben-Ner

Guy Ben-Ner's *Stealing Beauty* (2007) is an eighteen-minute video recorded over a two-year period that documents the artist's family performing daily activities (without permission) in IKEA stores around the world. The stores' showrooms serve as a backdrop to these surreptitious, absurdist, and ultimately subversive acts. Awkward acting, stilted dialogue, quick jump cuts, and goofy music between scenes add a sitcom mood to the proceedings. With price tags dangling from the furniture and shoppers passing by the camera, the family sets up house. They take showers and wash dishes (there is no water flow), eat meals (there is no food), and watch television (the screens are blank). Many of their discussions center on excerpted passages from Friedrich Engels's *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). We watch as the father expounds on the difference between love and private property, using platitudes like "some things are not for sale" and "time is money." As he attempts to teach his children about the virtues of self-reliance, hard work, and the difference between right and wrong, the whole family performs its domestic routines as if all were normal. We watch husband and wife bicker in the bedroom; the varied décor is a result of having to shoot in new IKEA locales, but the disjunctive scene shifts hint at deeper instabilities.

There is nothing subtle in Ben-Ner's conflicted approach to surviving and recording the exigencies of modern living. This ersatz existence provides a comic sendup of how the routines of our daily lives inform much larger issues surrounding relationships, productivity, private and public boundaries, and the dynamics of family life.

Born in 1969 in Ramat Gan, Israel.
Lives and works in Tel Aviv, Israel.

Stealing Beauty, 2007
Single channel video,
17:40 minutes; color; sound



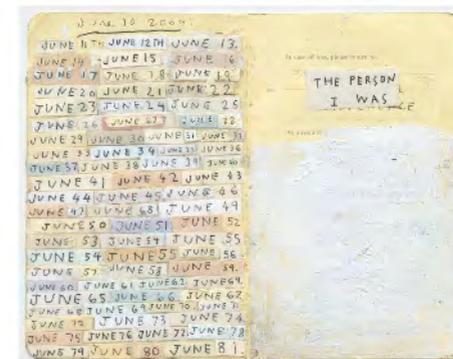
Simon Evans

Simon Evans lays bare his anxieties in delicate text-based works that are collaged and assembled from prosaic materials that include found paper, Scotch tape, colored pencil, and Wite-Out. His drawings and objects document the details, concerns, and yearnings of his daily life—an often cryptic, darkly humorous, restless journey into the heart of his existence. He catalogues his thoughts and obsessions in lists, charts, diagrams, inventories, diary entries, and imaginary cosmologies. An underlying *weltschmerz* permeates the work as he ruminates on survival priorities, or all the people he has ever known, or the person that he once was.

Navigating his past in exhaustive detail, Evans uses drawing and collage as vehicles to contain memories and give them tangible form. As he culls usable memories without being consumed by “the disease of looking back,” he often punctuates his text and images with blanks and voids. In these blank spaces, he evokes the fractured nature of recounting the past; the omissions represent both voids waiting to be filled and the humble (read: futile) quest to remember absolutely everything—a quest riddled with false starts and miscalculations. In an x-ray drawing of a cat, we see how Evans manages to turn everything inside out: the cat’s guts are transformed into a beautifully twisted map of the heart where love, loneliness, and survival morph into a “hunger for transcendence” and a touchstone for usable memories.

Born in 1972 in London.
Lives and works in Berlin.

Diary (detail), 2009
Paper, moleskin notebook, invisible
tape, correction fluid, pen
31½ x 55 inches



Ray Hamilton

After suffering a debilitating stroke at age seventy-one, self-taught artist Ray Hamilton continued to draw with his opposite hand. Seeking out objects that were within reach—apples, lemons, cups, raisin boxes, Oreo cookies, hands and feet—his drawing pad became the container for his experiences, the space in which he could organize and account for his increasingly confined world. Using ballpoint pen, china marker, and pencil, he traced his chosen subjects and filled them in with repetitive marks and incised, often agitated lines.

These accumulations are often randomly placed together on the same page and multiplied numerous times. Sometimes he has included repeating numbers and handwritten jottings, all part of an exhaustive lexicon of actual and remembered forms. Through his compositional command and acuity of hand and mind, his drawings transform these humble markings into emphatic patterns and diagrams that speak of survival, transcendence, hope, redemption, renewal, and purpose. The daily act of drawing reveals the strain of his reduced circumstances, but it also sparks a conversation about drawing itself. From one to the next, Hamilton's drawings serve as a continually fluid and immediate means of communication and affirmation of one's place in the world.

Born in 1919 in South Carolina.
Died in 1996 in Brooklyn,
New York.

Untitled, 1992-1993
Mixed media on paper
17 x 14 inches



Byron Kim

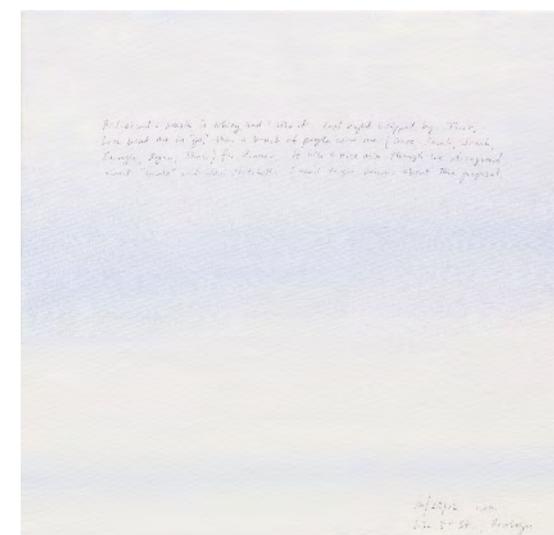
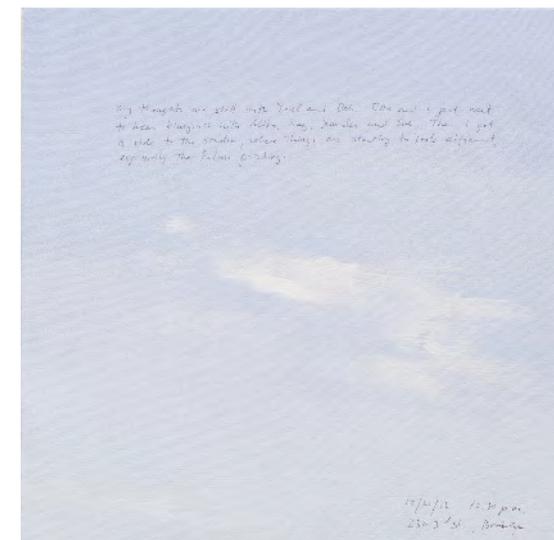
Byron Kim's richly hued works push the edges of what we understand as abstract painting by using the medium to develop an idea that is worked out over the course of an ongoing series or conceptual project. His *Sunday Paintings*, begun in 2001, have deep roots in the minimalist tradition of such serial explorations. Kim records a swatch of the daytime sky from wherever he finds himself each Sunday, and then writes a diaristic entry, along with location and time of day, directly over the image. The works are mostly monochromatic; an occasional breadth of white describes a cloud formation. At first glance they read as abstractions, but as with all of Kim's work, they are actually observed responses to real-world phenomena. While these rigorous exercises resemble nineteenth-century cloud studies by John Constable, they also speak to the resilient efforts of amateur artists who paint for only a few hours each week. By overlaying the grand tradition of landscape painting with the intimate details of daily routine, Kim's project sets up an ongoing dialogue between the infinite and the everyday. Lined up on the wall, these panels take on a cinematic quality—still frames in an ongoing film.

Kim will send a new *Sunday Painting* to the University Art Museum each week during the run of the exhibition.

Born in 1961 in La Jolla, California. Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.

Sunday Painting 9/30/12, 2012
Sunday Painting 10/21/12, 2012
Sunday Painting 12/23/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas
 mounted on panel
 14 x 14 inches each



Meridith McNeal

Meridith McNeal's life-size ink and watercolor paintings of window views from her studio at the American Academy in Rome were completed during a 2010 residency. Part window, part interior, they document the studio's views at different times of day from each of its eight windows. McNeal captures both the interior and exterior view with straightforward immediacy: chair, garden, radiator, telephone table, desk, dining room, front door. The window paintings are accompanied by smaller pen and ink drawings of everyday objects, titled *Magical Things*: ink bottles, brushes, orange slices on a brightly patterned orange tablecloth, a garden hose, a toaster.

McNeal continually pairs the mundane with the sublime. Her paintings serve to roundly document the spaces that she occupies and to commit them to permanent memory. We see all the drips and false starts inherent in working with watercolor and ink, especially on a large scale. McNeal does nothing to hide her mistakes; the downward drips and blots chronicle her hand as it moves across the paper's surface, conjuring the memory of the making. Recalling each drip, she can tell where her hand was and where she stood while painting—a means by which to internalize a new place and to claim it as her own, far beyond the duration of her stay.

Born in New Haven, Connecticut.
Lives and works in Brooklyn,
New York.

Roman Window: Villa, 2010
Ink and watercolor on paper
74 x 55 inches



Laurel Nakadate

Laurel Nakadate is known for her works in video, photography, and feature-length film. The exhibition will feature several large Type-C prints from *365 Days: A Catalogue of Tears* (2011), a series of photographs that documents a performance in which Nakadate photographed herself before, during, and after weeping each day from January 1 through December 31, 2010. The photographs were made in her New York apartment, in her childhood bedroom in Iowa, at the top of the Space Needle in Seattle, and on planes, trains, and in hotel rooms in such places as Tallinn, Estonia and Saratoga Springs, New York. Her performance was a disciplined, durational exercise that required her to “take part in sadness each day” during the normal course of her life.

Nakadate says that the photographs in *365 Days* were inspired by the “happy self-portraits people make day after day with their cell phone cameras and post on Facebook”—but at the same time she also dissects the increasingly popular practice of objectifying one’s interior life online via social media sites. In a recent review of the exhibition for the *New York Times*, Ken Johnson described the series as “tapping into a river of grief and loneliness running under the surface of American life.”

Born in 1975 in Austin, Texas.
Lives and works in
New York City.

*March 9, 2010, From the Series
365 Days: A Catalogue of Tears,
2011
Type-C print
40 x 50 inches*

*March 31, 2010, From the Series
365 Days: A Catalogue of Tears,
2011
Type-C print
40 x 50 inches*



David Shapiro

David Shapiro's year-long drawing project, *Money Is No Object*, includes thousands of meticulously rendered bills, checks, stubs, and receipts, right down to such details as barcodes, logos, and indicia—all rendered by the artist's fastidious hand in ink, colored pencil, and gouache on twelve vellum scrolls. A palette of pale yellows, pinks, blues, and grays (the colors of office paper stock) predominates. The palpable "everyman" quality of Shapiro's inventory plays out from one slip to the next, and the paper-based minutiae surrounding his day-to-day existence surrounds ours, too. The difference lies in Shapiro's impulse to record it all with an unwavering verisimilitude that borders on the fanatical.

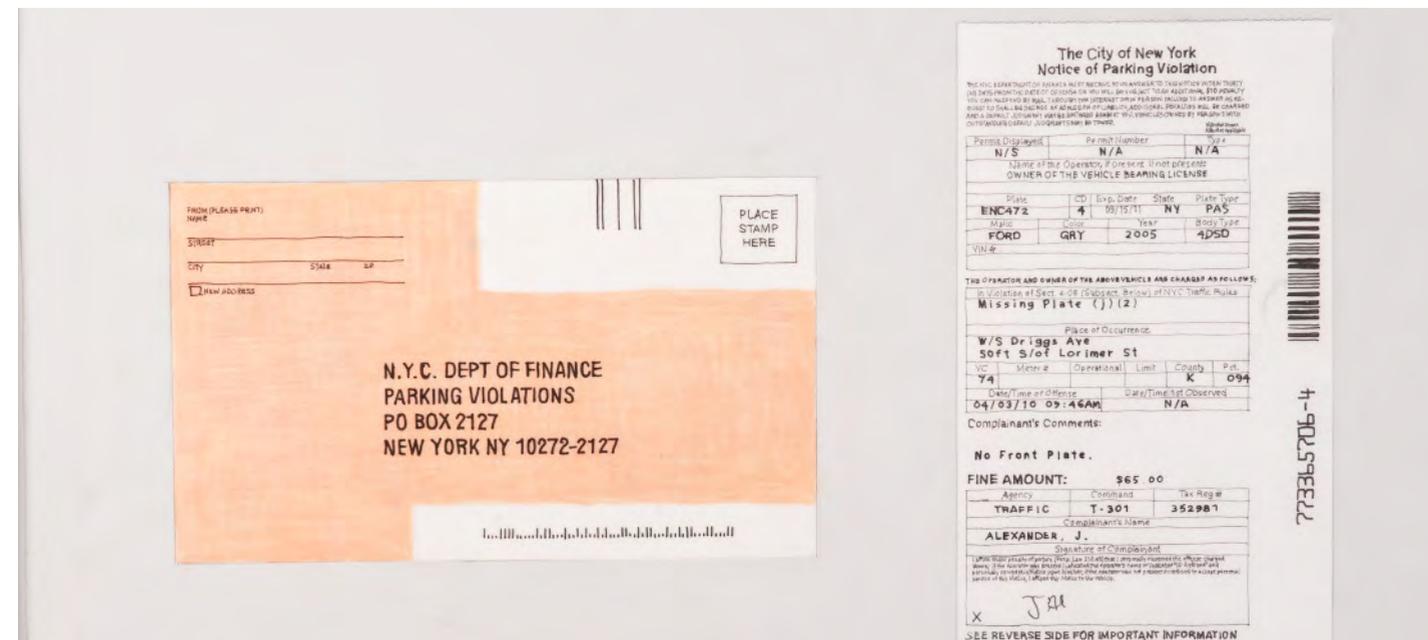
Retracing in painstaking detail a whole year's worth of missteps, miscalculations, obligations, indulgences, and debt leaves little room to hide from them. One could view this as a form of self-flagellation—or one could see it as an affirming and elegant gesture, a testament to existence itself. As such, Shapiro's endeavor takes on the elevated act of bearing witness.

Born in 1966 in New York City. Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.



Advantage Freedom Sapphire (July), 2010
Ink, gouache, colored pencil on vellum
17¾ x 49½ inches

No Front Plate, 2010
Ink, colored pencil on vellum
11 x 17 inches

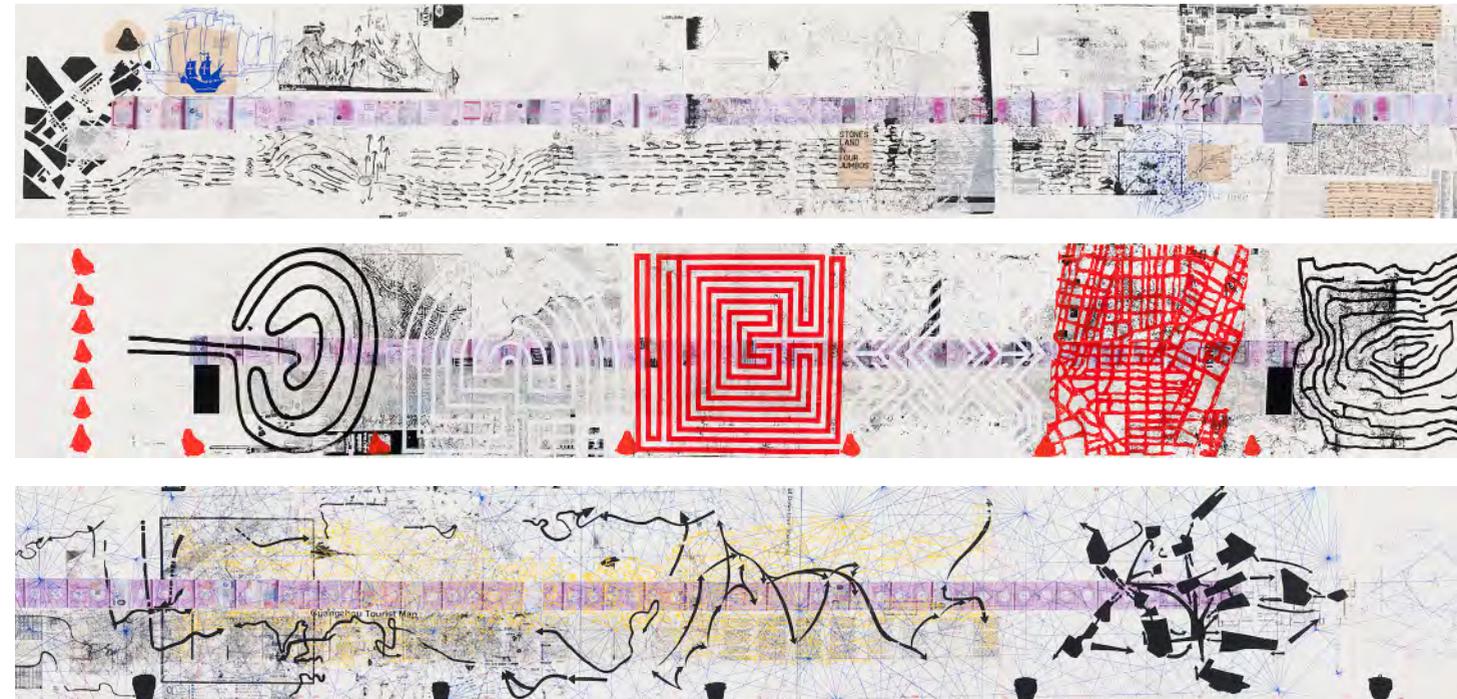


Rirkrit Tiravanija

Rirkrit Tiravanija's monumental print project, *Untitled 2008–2011 (the map of the land of feeling) I–III*, consists of three scrolls, each three feet high and eighty-four feet long. The project took three years to complete, aided by dozens of assistants. Running in a continuous strip through the middle of all three scrolls is a digital copy of the artist's passports from 1988 to 2008. The prints chronicle the intersection of Tiravanija's art career and daily life from those years by combining a variety of techniques that include screen-print, offset lithography, and inkjet print reproductions. In their epic proportions, the prints form a visual narrative of Tiravanija's global activities and movement through the world; exhibitions, foreign travels, and artist residencies are all documented. The passports serve as touchstones that trigger memory, capturing specific dates, times, and places, while the surrounding imagery corresponds to the passports over time and includes diary excerpts, arrows, time zones, recipes, and maps.

By his very nature, Tiravanija is a migratory being. The son of a diplomat, his travel and foreign residencies have always played a key part in his worldview. He is best known for his works that blend life and art by bringing everyday acts, such as serving and eating food, into the exhibition space. Interaction, exchange, and making social connections are central to his practice. As an extension of these activities, his print project reflects the cultural and social makeup of the places he has lived in and passed through. For example, the scrolls can be exhibited in several ways: fully unfurled, stacked, abbreviated. This flexible presentation conveys elapsed time (or the memory of time) as an elastic construct, and embodies Tiravanija's quest to connect everyday experience to a larger discourse about social patterns and exchange.

Born in 1961 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Lives and works in New York, Berlin, and Chiang Mai



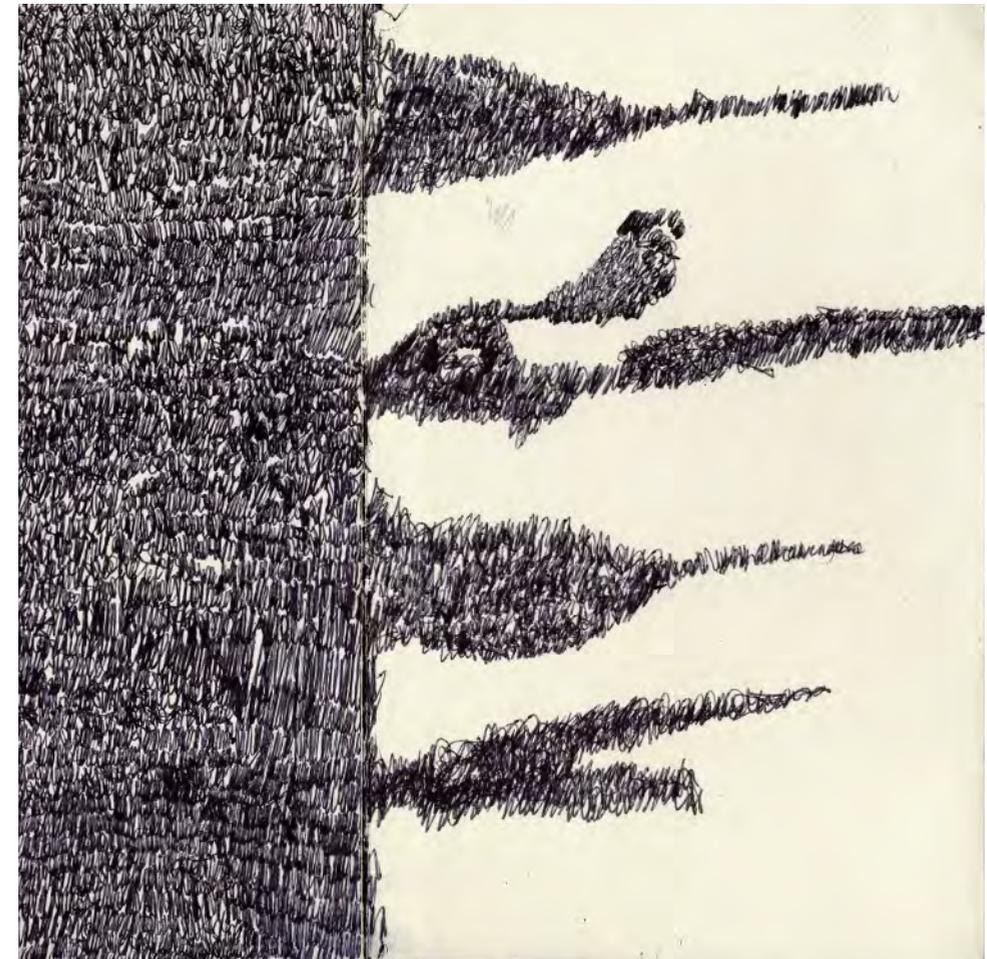
Untitled 2008–2011 (the map of the land of feeling), I–III (detail), 2008–2011
Inkjet prints, offset lithography, chine collé, color silkscreen
3 x 84 feet

Harvey Tulcensky

Harvey Tulcensky's *Notebook Project* brings together over nineteen accordion journals filled end-to-end with densely hatched ink lines. The journals are stacked and pinned directly to the wall. From one perspective, the notebooks serve as modular components, part of a serial arrangement that moves from an intimate to a grand scale; from another perspective, they form an interconnected single unit in which the shifting density of lines and the physicality of the pleated pages comprise an undulating, mural-like installation. Tulcensky sees each notebook as a discreet statement or phrase; stacking them on the wall creates a sea of such phrases. Their order is arbitrary; thus the focus is on his sustained effort and how, through the repetition of his marks, he is able to compress experience and convey the passage of time.

Tulcensky began the project as a way of carrying his studio with him. He takes his notebooks to work with him every day, and when a free moment arises he picks up where he left off and fills the pages with more tiny ink strokes. These obsessive marks are a literal means of marking time, a personal record by which the pace and rhythm of his days are permanently embedded in the page. Tulcensky also records thoughts, musings, and quotes that unexpectedly disrupt the obsessive fabric of the drawing. This freeform, spontaneous approach within the notebooks' contained framework allows him to work within and against the structure of an underlying grid and to avoid any overriding compositional themes, whether visual or verbal. Roaming, gathering, sorting, and ultimately displaying data from the minutiae of his quotidian existence is what drives the *Notebook Project*.

Born in 1948 in Detroit, Michigan.
Lives and works in New York City.



The Notebook Project (detail),
2011-2012
Nineteen notebooks: ballpoint
pen on paper
Approximately 110 x 96 inches

Martin Wilner

Martin Wilner's pen, ink, and graphite drawings center on two ongoing projects: *Journal of Evidence Weekly* and *Making History*. In the former, Wilner fills small sketchbooks with portraits of people he notices on the subway in New York on his way to and from his practice as a psychiatrist. In the latter, he fills in each box of a calendar with a drawing from that day's newspaper using elements of cartoon, calligraphy, cartography, and Surrealism to reconstruct stories of personal interest. On the verso of each drawing is descriptive text, which is integral to the work. The drawings also serve as self-portraits, a record of the trajectories of Wilner's consciousness tracing its own choices of what to draw on a given day. The tubes and lines weaving through the drawings are like the contours of a map—in this case, the map of the artist's mind as it shifts and connects ideas.

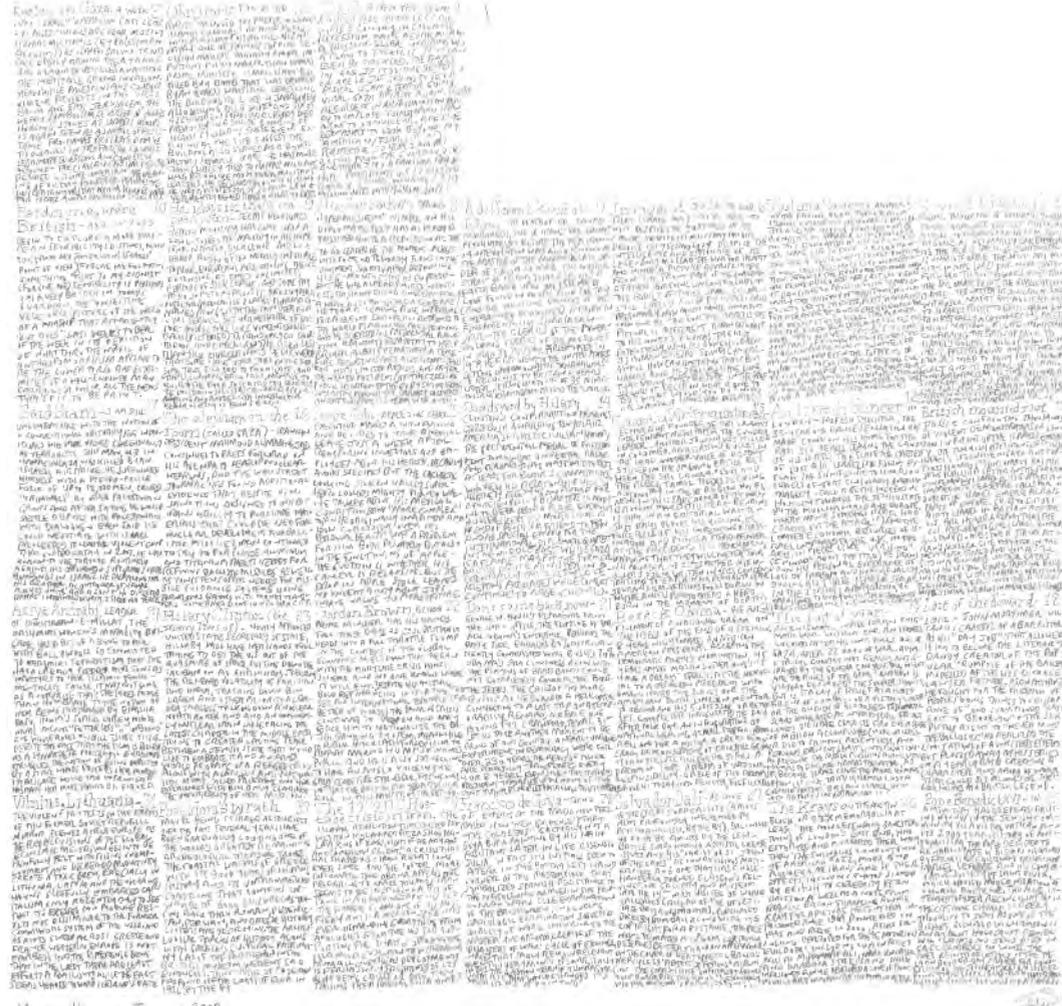
Wilner's daily drawing practice is fueled by his interest in Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis, Judaic beliefs, global events, and popular culture. Referring to his process as "a surrealistic stew restirred daily," he relies on the fixed parameters of the Roman calendar or an accordion-pleated sketchbook to corral the uncertainty of not knowing what he will draw on a given day until he sees the newspaper or sits down on the subway. He states that his work is about both the process and the journey, but he leaves the viewer to draw his or her own conclusions from the history or evidence on display.

Born in 1959 in New York City.
Lives and works in New York City.



Making History: January 2009,
2009
Double-sided drawing: ink and
graphite on paper
12¹³/₁₆ x 13¹/₂ inches

Exhibition Checklist



Martin Wilner
Making History: January 2009 (verso), 2009
 Double-sided drawing: ink and graphite on paper
 13½ x 12¹³/₁₆ inches

Guy Ben-Ner

Stealing Beauty, 2007
 Single channel video, 17:40
 minutes; color; sound
 Courtesy of Postmasters Gallery,
 New York

Simon Evans

A Yearning Heart, 2009
 Correction fluid, pressure-sensitive
 tape, pen, paper, wood, metal
 13 x 9½ x 9½ inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Diary

2009
 Paper, moleskin notebook, invisible
 tape, correction fluid, pen
 31½ x 55 inches
 Collection of Benjamin Sontheimer

Ray Hamilton

Untitled, 1992–1993
 Twelve mixed media drawings
 on paper
 17 x 14 inches each
 Courtesy of Kerry Schuss Gallery,
 New York

Byron Kim

Sunday Painting 9/23/12, 2012
 Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 9/30/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 10/7/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 10/14/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 10/21/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 10/28/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 11/8/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 11/11/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 11/25/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 12/9/12, 2012

Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted
 on panel
 14 x 14 inches
 Courtesy of the artist and
 James Cohan Gallery,
 New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 12/16/12, 2012
Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted on panel
14 x 14 inches
Courtesy of the artist and James Cohan Gallery, New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 12/23/12, 2012
Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted on panel
14 x 14 inches
Courtesy of the artist and James Cohan Gallery, New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 12/30/12, 2012
Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted on panel
14 x 14 inches
Courtesy of the artist and James Cohan Gallery, New York and Shanghai

Sunday Painting 1/6/13, 2013
Acrylic and pen on canvas mounted on panel
14 x 14 inches
Courtesy of the artist and James Cohan Gallery, New York and Shanghai

Sunday Paintings, 2013
Seven paintings to be produced during the run of the exhibition
14 x 14 inches
Courtesy of the artist and James Cohan Gallery, New York and Shanghai

Meridith McNeal

Roman Window: Desk, 2010
Ink and watercolor on paper
74 x 51 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Roman Window: Dining Room, 2010
Ink and watercolor on paper
74 x 55 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Roman Window: Front Door, 2010
Ink and watercolor on paper
74 x 55 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Roman Window: Villa, 2010
Ink and watercolor on paper
74 x 55 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Roman Window: Chair, 2011
Ink and watercolor on paper
74 x 55 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Roman Window: Garden, 2011
Ink and watercolor on paper
74 x 55 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Roman Window: Radiator, 2011
Ink and watercolor on paper
74 x 55 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Roman Window: Telephone Table, 2011
Ink and watercolor on paper
74 x 55 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Magical Things, 2009-2012
Ink and watercolor on paper
12 x 12 inches each
Courtesy of the artist

Laurel Nakadate

February 19, 2010, From the Series 365 Days: A Catalogue of Tears, 2011
Type-C print
50 x 40 inches
Courtesy of Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York

March 9, 2010, From the Series 365 Days: A Catalogue of Tears, 2011
Type-C print
40 x 50 inches
Courtesy of Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York

March 31, 2010, From the Series 365 Days: A Catalogue of Tears, 2011
Type-C print
40 x 50 inches
Courtesy of Leslie Tonkonow Artworks + Projects, New York

David Shapiro

February: 70 bills, 2010
Ink, gouache, colored pencil on vellum scroll
18 inches x 30 feet
Courtesy of the artist and Sue Scott Gallery, New York

Advantage Freedom Sapphire (July), 2010
Ink, gouache, colored pencil on vellum
17¾ x 49½ inches
Courtesy of the artist and Sue Scott Gallery, New York

September, 2010
Ink, gouache and colored pencil on vellum scroll
18 inches x 25 feet
Courtesy of the artist and Sue Scott Gallery, New York

No Front Plate, 2010
Ink, colored pencil on vellum
11 x 17 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Sue Scott Gallery, New York

Ofloxacin, 2010
Ink, gouache, colored pencil on vellum
18 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the artist and Sue Scott Gallery, New York

Rirkrit Tiravanija

Untitled 2008–2011 (the map of the land of feeling), I–III, 2008–2011
Inkjet prints, offset lithography, chine collé, color silkscreen
3 x 84 feet
Courtesy of LeRoy Neiman Center for Print Studies, Columbia University, New York

Harvey Tulcensky

The Notebook Project, 2011-2012
Nineteen notebooks: ballpoint pen on paper
Approximately 110 x 96 inches
Courtesy of the artist

Martin Wilner

Journal of Evidence Weekly, Vol. 130, 2006
Artist's book with 31 folded pages: pen and ink on paper
5⅞ x 116¾ inches
Private Collection

Making History: January through December 2009, 2009
Twelve double-sided drawings: ink and graphite on paper
12⅜ x 13½ inches each
Private Collection

Making History: January 2011, 2011
Double-sided drawing: ink and graphite on paper
12⅞ x 13½ inches
Courtesy of the artist and Sperone Westwater, New York

Making History: February 2011, 2011
Double-sided drawing: ink and graphite on paper
12⅞ x 13½ inches
Courtesy of the artist and Sperone Westwater, New York

Making History: October 2011, 2011
Double-sided drawing: ink and graphite on paper
12⅞ x 13½ inches
Courtesy of the artist and Sperone Westwater, New York

Making History: November 2011, 2011
Double-sided drawing: ink and graphite on paper
12⅞ x 13½ inches
Courtesy of the artist and Sperone Westwater, New York

Journal of Evidence Weekly, Vol. 157, 2010
Artist's book with 31 folded pages: pen and ink on paper
5⅞ x 116¾ inches
Courtesy of the artist and Sperone Westwater, New York

day after day: the diaristic impulse

February 5 through April 6, 2013

University Art Museum
University at Albany
State University of New York

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