
FLEX

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RICHARD **ARTSCHWAGER**

MATH **BASS**

JAMES LEE **BYARS**

GUY **de COINTET**

MARCEL **DUCHAMP**

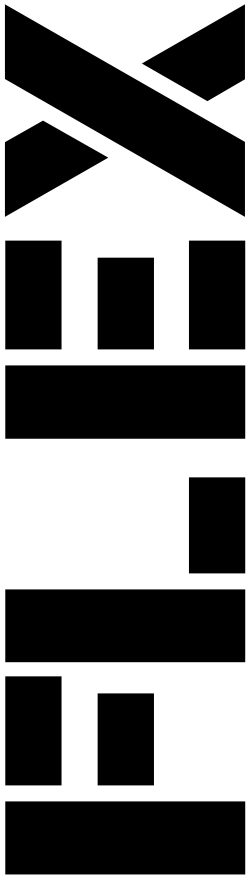
DAN **FINSEL**

GORDON **HALL**

MOLLY **LOWE**

ROBERT **MORRIS**

MYRON **STOUT**



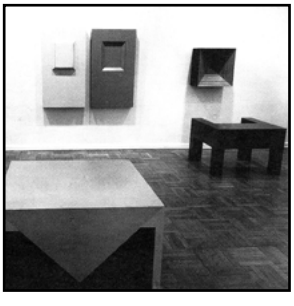
SEPTEMBER 5 — OCTOBER 31, 2014

EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

1

Richard Artschwager. *Walker*. 1964. Formica on wood, unique. 26 1/8 x 38 1/4 x 35 1/16" (66 x 96.5 x 88.9 cm.).

***Exhibited:* Artschwager. *Leo Castelli Gallery, New York, January 30 – February 24, 1965.* Richard Artschwager's Theme(s). *Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York. July 6 – August 12, 1979; Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, October 16 – November 18, 1979; La Jolla Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, January 18 – March 2, 1980.* Artschwager, Richard. *Curated by Richard Armstrong. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. January – April, 1988; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, June – August 1988; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, September 1988 – January 1989; Palacia de Velazquez, Madrid, February 10 – April 2, 1989; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, May – June 1989. Stadtische Kunsthalle, Dusseldorf, October – December 1989.* Richard Artschwager: Paintings, Sculptures, Multiples 1962-89. *Galerie Neuendorf, Frankfurt, June 5 – July 27 1990. Literature: Delehanty, Susan. Cathcart, Linda. Armstrong, Richard. "Richard Artschwager's Theme(s)". Buffalo: Albright-Knox Art Gallery, 1979. (ill. p. 32). Armstrong, Richard. Artschwager, Richard. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988. Catalogue # 10 (ill. p. 54). Kord, Catherine.* Richard Artschwager: Paintings, Sculptures, Multiples 1962–89. *Frankfurt: Galerie Neuendork, 1990. (ill. in color p. 14-15).*




1. RICHARD ARTSCHWAGER, *ARTSCHWAGER*, INSTALLATION, LEO CASTELLI GALLERY, NEW YORK, 1965 (*WALKER* [1964] ON FLOOR RIGHT). 2. MATH BASS, VIDEO INSTALLATION, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, LOS ANGELES, 2014. 3. MATH BASS, COURTESY OF OVERDUIN & CO., *LIES INSIDE*, INSTALLATION VIEW AT OVERDUIN & CO., LOS ANGELES, 2014. 4. MATH BASS, COURTESY OF OVERDUIN & CO., *LIES INSIDE*, INSTALLATION VIEW AT OVERDUIN & CO., LOS ANGELES, 2014.

2

Math Bass. *Pass the Line*. 2012. Video. 5 minutes 2 seconds.

3

Math Bass. *Sleep on it*. 2014. Video. 1 minute 13 seconds

4

Math Bass. *Newz! And Its Shadow*. 2014. Waxed steel and gouache on canvas. 180 x 24 x 23.5" (454.6 x 61 x 59.1 cm.).

5

Math Bass. *Newz! And Its Shadow.* 2014. Waxed steel and gouache on canvas. 42.5 x 24.5 x 24" (105.4 x 62.2 x 61 cm.).

6

Math Bass. *Newz! And Its Shadow.* 2014. Waxed steel and gouache on canvas. 34.5 x 20.75 x 12" (87.6 x 52.7 x 30.5 cm.).

7

James Lee Byars. *The Philosophical Nail.* 1986. Gilded iron. 10.75 x 1.25 x 1.25" (27 x 3 x 3 cm.).

Provenance: Estate of James Lee Byars. Exhibitions: "James Lee Byars: The Palace of Good Luck", Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Rivoli, 11 April – 2 July 1989. "State of the Art: Recent Gifts and Acquisitions", Walker Art Center, 22 July – 8 October 2000 (similar artwork). "The Materialization of Sensibility: Art and Alchemy", Leslie Tonkonow Artworks and Projects, New York, 8 September – 14 October 2006 (similar artwork). Literature: "James Lee Byars. The Perfect Moment." Valencia: IVAM Centre del Carme, 1995. (p. 76). Michely, Viola Maria. "Glück in der Kunst? Das Werk von James Lee Byars." Berlin: Reimer, 1999. (ill. p. 25). Haenlein, Carl (ed.). "James Lee Byars. The Epitaph of Con.Art is which Questions have disappeared?" Hannover: Kestner Gesellschaft, 1999 (ill. p. 19).

8

James Lee Byars. *The Cube Book.* 1989. Marble. Two parts, overall: 9.75 x 9.75 x 9.75" (24.7 x 24.7 x 24.7 cm.).

Provenance: Estate of James Lee Byars. Exhibitions: "James Lee Byars: Recent Works", Michael Werner Gallery, New York, 2 December 1993 – 7 January 1994 (var.). "James Lee Byars: The Palace of Perfect", Museu de Arte Contemporanea de Serralves, Porto, 9 October – 7 December 1997. "James Lee Byars. Arbeiten von 1985 bis 1990", Maximilianverlag Münich, Münich, 29 June – 31 August 2000. "James Lee Byars: The Angel", Timothy Taylor Gallery, London, 20 March – 26 April 2002. "James Lee Byars: The Perfect Axis", Schloss Benrath, Düsseldorf, 10 September 2010 – 16 January 2011. "de Serralves, 1997. (p. 157). Heil, Heinrich (ed.). "James Lee Byars", Overduin & Kite, Los Angeles, 8 April – 12 May 2012. Literature: Hickey, Dave. "James Lee Byars: Works from the Sixties / Recent Works." Cologne: Michael Werner, 1994 (ill. 11). "James Lee Byars: The Palace of Perfect." Porto: Fundação de Serralves "James Lee Byars: I Give You Genius." Cologne: Walther König, 2011. (n.p.)

5. JAMES LEE BYARS, *BYARS AND BEUYS AT SAMMLUNG SPECK*, COURTESY OF MICHAEL WERNER, IMAGE © BENJAMIN KATZ. 6. JAMES LEE BYARS, COURTESY OF OVERDUIN & CO., LOS ANGELES, INSTALLATION VIEW AT OVERDUIN & CO. 7. GUY de COINTET AND ROBERT WHILITE, *ETHIOPIA*, PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION, BARNSDALL PARK THEATER, LOS ANGELES, 1976.

9

Guy de Cointet. *The Marriage of Electricity and Magnetism.* 1971. Ink and graphite on paper. 20 x 24.5" (50.8 x 62.23 cm.).
Exhibited: Linguistic Turn. Cardwell-Jimmerson Gallery. Los Angeles. August 21-September 25, 2010.

10

Guy de Cointet. *Fluid Moon*. 1971. Collage on paper. 20 x 24.5" (50.8 x 62.23 cm.).
Exhibited: Linguistic Turn, Cardwell-Jimmerson Gallery, Los Angeles, August 21 – September 25, 2010. Guy de Cointet: Tempo Rubato, Fundacion/Coleccion JUMEX, December 3, 2012 – February 24, 2013 Literature: "Guy de Cointet: Tempo Rubato." Fundación/Colección JUMEX, 2013. (ill. p. 92–93). Arriola, Magalí; de Brugerolle, Marie; Sanders, Jay.

11

Guy de Cointet. *The History of a Day is the History of a Life*. undated. Ink on paper. 48 x 62" (122 x 157.4 cm.).
Exhibited: Guy de Cointet: Tempo Rubato. Fundación/Colección JUMEX. December 3, 2012 – February 24, 2013. Literature: "Guy de Cointet: Tempo Rubato." Fundación/Colección JUMEX, 2013. (ill. p. 144–45). Arriola, Magalí; de Brugerolle, Marie; Sanders, Jay.

12

Guy de Cointet. *One day in my eagerness and impatience I pushed my way through the crowded weed . . .* 1978. Ink on paper. 25.75 x 25.25" (65.4 x 64.1 cm.).

13

Guy de Cointet. *This is the most important center for testing the guided missiles of the U.S.* 1982. Ink and graphite on arches paper. 40 x 25.5" (101.6 x 64.7 cm.).

Exhibited: Linguistic Turn. Cardwell-Jimmerson Gallery. Los Angeles. August 21 – September 25, 2010.

14

Guy de Cointet. *Sophie Rummel (4)*. 1974. Oil on canvas. 30" x 18" (76.2 x 45.72 cm.).
Exhibited: The Paintings of Sophie Rummel. Cirrus Eds. Los Angeles. 1974. Who's That Guy. The Musée d'Art Moderne and l' Contemporain. Geneva. 2004.

15

Marcel Duchamp. *Male and Female Laundress's Aprons*. 1959. Imitate Rectified Readymade: two potholders, cloth and fur. Male: 8 x 7 in., Female: 8 1/16 x 8 in. Included in *La Boîte Alert: Missives Lascives*, a deluxe edition of the catalogue accompanying "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme" at the Galerie Daniel Cordier, Paris, December 15, 1959 – February 15, 1960. Numbered in blue ink "*EX XIII*" under lid of box, (Edition of 20, numbered I – XX) assembled by Mimi Parent. Signed and dated by *Marcel Duchamp*.

La Boîte Alerte: Missives Lascives. André Breton and Marcel Duchamp. Paris: Galerie Daniel Cordier. 1959. 11 ¼ in. x 7 in. x 2 ½ in. Boîte Alerte was made as the deluxe catalogue for the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme, commonly known as "EROS", organized by André Breton and Marcel Duchamp, held at the Galerie Daniel Cordier, Paris, from 15 December 1959 to 29 February 1960. The work consists of a cardboard

8. GUY de COINTET, *VIVA PERFORMING SOPHIE RUMMEL (4)*, CIRRUS EDS., 1974, COURTESY OF DIANA ZLOTNICK. 9. GORDON HALL, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, *READ ME THAT PART A-GAIN, WHERE I DISIN-HERIT EVERYBODY*, WOOD, PAINT, AND PERFORMANCE-LECTURE WITH PROJECTED IMAGES AND COLORED LIGHT, 50 MIN, 2014, COMMISSIONED BY EMPAC / EXPERIMENTAL MEDIA AND PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, TROY, NEW YORK. 10. DAN FINSEL, COURTESY OF RICHARD TELLES FINE ART, *E-THAY INWARD-YAY OURNEY-JAY*, INSTALLATION VIEW AT RICHARD TELLES FINE ART, LOS ANGELES, IMAGE © FREDRIK NILSEN 2014. 11. DAN FINSEL, COURTESY OF RICHARD TELLES FINE ART, *E-THAY INWARD-YAY OURNEY-JAY*, INSTALLATION VIEW AT RICHARD TELLES FINE ART, LOS ANGELES, IMAGE © FREDRIK NILSEN 2014.

box covered in green paper on which the words "BOITE ALERTE" are printed on the front. Below them a white label reads "MISSIVES LASCIVES" (lustful letters) and printed on the left-hand side of the box are the words "EXPOSITION INTERNATIONALE DU SURREALISME".

Exhibitions: Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme. Galerie Daniel Cordier, Paris. December 15, 1959 – February 15, 1960. Duchamp Brothers and Sister. Francis M. Naumann Fine Art. New York. September 28 – November 23, 2012. The Duchamp Family. The Baker Museum, Naples, Florida. January 4 – April 6, 2014. Literature: Schwartz, Arturo. The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp. New York: Delano Greenidge Editions, 2000. Cat. no. 574, illus p. 822. Naumann, Francis. Marcel Duchamp: The Art of Making Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. New York: Harry Abrams Publishers, 1999. Cat. No. 7.41 and 7.43. Collections: Museum of Modern Art, New York, Tate Modern, London, Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, Israel Museum, Jerusalem

16

Dan Finsel. *Amily-fay Ulpture-scay: Ere-hay/Ow-nay, Others-bray*. 2014. Oak table and wet clay. 60 x 36.5 x 36.5". (152.4 x 92.7 x 92.7 cm.).

17

Gordon Hall. *STAND AND*. 2014. Wood, dyed fabric, cement and off-site performance. 2 tiled sculptures, each: 32 x 30 x 28" (81.2 x 76.2 x 71.2 cm.). 4 wood sculptures: 65.5 x 41 7/8" (166.37 x 105.9 cm.); 59.5 x 41 7/8" (151.1 x 105.9 cm.); 57.5 x 41 7/8" (146 x 105.9 cm.); 49.25 x 41 7/8" (125 x 105.9 cm.).

18

Molly Lowe. *Schelp and Shape*. 2014. Cloth, latex, wax, plaster, cotton, and paint. 3 sculptures, each: 42 x 42 x 24" (106.6 x 106.6 x 60.9 cm.).

19

Robert Morris. *Untitled (white felt)*. 1976. Felt and steel brackets. 96 x 72" (243.84 x 182.88 cm.).

20

Myron Stout. *Untitled*. 1950 (April 13). Oil on canvas board. 20 x 16" (50.8 x 40.6 cm.).

Exhibited: Myron Stout. Flynn Gallery, New York, October 6 – December 15, 1990. Myron Stout. Kent Fine Art, New York, October 11 – November 10, 1990. Myron Stout Paintings, c. 1950, Washburn Gallery, New York, January 29 – March 12, 1994. Myron Stout: Paintings & Drawings. Washburn Gallery, April 26 – June 29, 2007. Literature: "Myron Stout." New York: Richard Bellamy, Oil & Steel Gallery, Kent Fine Art, and Flynn Gallery, 1990. (ill. p. 23). Introduction by Geldzahler, Henry.

12. MOLLY LOWE, *SORRY, EXCUSE ME, THANK YOU*, INSTALLATION VIEW, MARCH 6 – MARCH 29, 2014, COURTESY OF THE SUZANNE GEISS COMPANY, NEW YORK, IMAGE © ADAM REICH. 13. MOLLY LOWE, *SORRY, EXCUSE ME, THANK YOU*, INSTALLATION VIEW, MARCH 6 – MARCH 29, 2014, COURTESY OF THE SUZANNE GEISS COMPANY, NEW YORK, IMAGE © ADAM REICH. 14. MYRON STOUT, STABLE GALLERY, NEW YORK, APRIL 5 – 24, 1954.

Abstraction has capacity. It is productive and proliferative. Rather than as an avoidance of representation, it must be considered an embrace of potentiality and a positing of the unforeclosed. It makes room. It is because of this capaciousness that abstraction has emerged as urgent for a growing number of queer and transgender artists. [1] It offers a position from which to imagine, recognize, or realize new possibilities.

In its earlier moments, abstraction was sometimes characterized as flight — a flight from representation, from narrative, from figuration, from the world, from the mundane, and from the recognizable. In these accounts, abstraction was cast as either distillation or enervation, ghosting the observable world of the everyday that it refuses. Abstraction's defenders buttressed its flight by declaring its superiority over that which it rejects and purges, be that "literary" content, recognizable representation, or the decorative. That is, whether the argument was spiritual or conceptual, abstraction's "purification" was often defined negatively and oppositionally. Erasure and negation underwrote its rhetorics. Today, about a century beyond when abstraction became an option, such defenses of abstraction's negation ring increasingly hollow. Abstraction and figuration rub shoulders in contemporary art, and many younger artists simply do not understand (or care to understand) the antagonistic rhetoric of the twentieth century that cast them as mutually exclusive opponents. Rather than seeing abstraction as erasure, it appears to many as plenitude. Increasingly, what is called for are more accounts of abstraction that are positively-defined, not negatively cast — accounts that ask how abstraction can perform and what it produces.

This isn't to say that abstraction isn't needful. Abstract art must be motivated by concerns outside of itself, and viewers and artists identify with and engage with abstraction because of the ways in which it spirals out to other associations and allusions. A primary way this happens is with the syntax created by the abstract work of art or practice. What, in other words, are the relations and patterns put forth by an abstract work? These can be internal, spatial, experiential, or otherwise, but the key question is how units establish relationality and organize themselves into iteration. While abstraction does sometimes have an iconography (x form stands for y idea/thing), most abstract artists would never rely on such easy routes as one-to-one symbolizations, decoder rings, legends (as on a map), or keys. Instead, investment is put into the relations, where priorities can be played out among forms and materials. Relations are meaningful, ethical, and political, and it is in its syntactical staging of relations that abstract art produces its engagements.

One of the most important of these relations is extrinsic: the embodied presence of the viewer who looks (or the artist who makes and also looks). Abstraction is produced in relation to the bodies of its beholders and creators. Everything has a scale, and we gauge scale through the proprioceptive knowledge of our own bodies and their particularity. Abstraction often accesses bodily scale and suggests memories of corporeal relations through its marshaling of non-depicting form and materials. This is especially the case with abstract sculpture, which even in its most rigorously minimal and unitary versions incites bodily response. In Michael Fried's infamous 1967 critique of Minimalism, he put forth an idea that has proven enduring and infectious when he criticized Tony Smith's *Die* (1962) by saying, "One way of describing what Smith was making might be something like a surrogate person — that is, a kind of statue." [2] This observation is newly relevant today as artists pursue geometric and reductive abstraction but direct it at bodily evocations and ethical relations. [3] In particular, artists who identify their practice as queer and transgender use this capacity of abstraction to invoke the body without imaging it, offering the abstract form as a receptor to the viewer's own identifications and empathies. Such a practice is generous, as it allows for each viewer to find their own analogies differently and anew. This is one of the lessons that the history of transgender experience teaches: to value mutability, to embrace successive states, and to cultivate both particularity and plurality.

Endnotes: [1] For further on transgender capacity, see David Getsy, "*Capacity*," TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly 1, no. 1-2 (2014): 47-49. [2] Michael Fried, "*Art and Objecthood*," Artforum 5, no. 10 (June 1967): 19. [3] See discussion in Jennifer Doyle and David Getsy, "*Queer Formalisms: Jennifer Doyle and David Getsy in Conversation*," Art Journal 72, no. [4] J. Jack Halberstam, "*In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives,*" New York: New York University Press, 2005, 121.

THE UNFORECLOSED
DAVID J. GETSY

David J. Getsy is the Goldabelle McComb Finn Distinguished Professor of Art History at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His books include Rodin: Sex and the Making of Modern Sculpture (2010), Scott Burton: Collected Writings on Art and Performance, 1965-1975 (2012), and forthcoming in 2015, Abstract Bodies: Sixties Sculpture in the Expanded Field of Gender.

The work of artists such as Math Bass and Gordon Hall, for example, demonstrates how emotions and politics can be evoked by simple forms. Bass's works oscillate between being bodies and buildings, barely visible from some angles and replete and weighty from others. Hall's sculptural work presents objects as sites of lavish care and articulation that easily go unseen by viewers who do not, themselves, take the time to invest and to pay attention and respect. Such work does not blurt its politics, and both artists instead create works that manifest for the viewer a critique of "common" sense and of normativity through their simple objects that encode transformability and demand to be seen for themselves. Only in the realm of abstraction can such work be most effective. They avoid the normate body and its representation in order to make room for divergent bodies and their temporalities. In addition to Bass and Hall, other artists such as Jonah Groeneboer, Heather Cassils, Amy Sillman, Ulrike Müller, Sadie Benning, Harmony Hammond, Linda Besemer, Shahryar Nashat, and Paul P. come to mind as examples of artists exploring such trans- and queer capacities of abstraction today.

As Jack Halberstam has earlier argued (with reference to Besemer), such artists "adapt the nonnarrative potential of abstract art into an oppositional practice."[4] These new abstractionists refuse the founding ideas of Modernist abstraction and its aspirations to purity and to universalism. Instead, they deploy it as a mode for declaring differences, uniqueness, and radical particularity. They provide evocations of bodies and of intimacy that exceed binary models of gender, looking to abstraction as a resource to visualize new inhabitations and potentialities. Representation is refused as a means to resist bodies' readability and the assumptions made about gender from visual clues. Instead, bodies and persons are invoked without anthropomorphism, and abstraction becomes both a political and a utopic strategy to reject the persistence of cultural marking.

Mobilized by trans- and queer priorities, abstraction appears to many as newly compelling and capacious. It has come to be the position from which to best visualize the unforeclosed.

NEW SPACE EDUCATION AND HOW IT WORKS

GORDON HALL & ORLANDO TIRADO IN CONVERSATION

Orlando Tirado is a writer, filmmaker, and curator living and working in New York. He was an NEA Fellow at the MacDowell Colony and a Yaddo Fellow in 2013. His most recent film, Medeas, written in collaboration with director Andrea Pallaoro, premiered at the 70th Venice Film Festival, has screened in over 30 international film festivals, and won various awards, including the Sergei Parajanov Award for Outstanding Poetic Vision at the Tbilisi International Film Festival. He holds an MFA in Art: Photography and Media from CalArts, an MA in Comparative Literature from SUNY-Binghamton, and a BA from Hampshire College. FLEX is his first curatorial project.

The following conversation between artist Gordon Hall and curator Orlando Tirado occurred on Thursday June 5, 2014, at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Workspace Studios at 1 Liberty St, as the topics, themes, and concepts of FLEX were under development. Both artists met as young contemporaries at Hampshire College, where they studied aesthetics, performance, and art, under the mentorship of the philosopher Monique Roelofs [1]. Over the past decade, their lives and work remained in conversation as their relationship evolved, across geographical distance and through radical shifts.

OT: I thought this conversation between you and I would be beneficial and instrumental, would allow you and I to think through various ideas—myself as a first time curator; yourself, in regards to your own art practice—in a very intimate and unfiltered way... Seeing as this is the first time that I've had the chance to gather various objects, formally, as curator, and seeing what conversations occur, acting like a link in a chain, I thought a good point of departure to begin with a discussion of your roles: as artist and as the Director of the Center for Experimental Lectures. Can you speak about the genesis of these roles?

GH: Certainly. The Center for Experimental Lectures was born out of a desire for dialogue with people I admire and whose work I am interested into have meetings and conversations with people who I thought were interesting. It gives us something to discuss collaboratively, an excuse to initiate the conversation, and a way to not be sealed-off in the studio when I don't want to be. When I think about the Center for Experimental Lectures (CEL) as an artwork and not as a curatorial project, I find the artwork of it in all the stuff that goes into making the lectures: the meetings and the emails and the traveling to go to see the people, all of that is part of it as a work. The finished lecture that the public sees is just one facet, while they are also aware that there is all of this other activity that they didn't witness but is invisibly present. At least that's my hope. I don't know how useful it is to define things in these terms anyway—this is a "curatorial project" and this is an "artwork" and this is... I think it matters less than ever to have to make these sorts of pronouncements.

OT: Do you see the Center for Experimental Lectures as a social practice?

GH: I've never used that term to describe it. I feel dubious about the term "participatory art" as I do about the term "social practice." Art is social practice. Art is also participatory, even when you are "just" looking at it because, à là John Dewey [2], the level of involvement that you should bring to spectatorship is not passivity at all, it's very interactive, so, I haven't used that term. But certainly it is social.

OT: How do you understand the relationship between the CEL and your sculptures and performances? For example, the works we find surrounding us now?

GH: I have spent the past few months exploring this, and the answer is a long one that sought to articulate in the lecture-performance I made with these objects at EMPAC last spring. Essentially, I understand my organizational work and by sculptural work as parts of the same project. I am not very interested in making clear distinctions between conceptual things and material things. I don't want to divide the world into the things you perceive and the ideas you have about them. To me, visible things and conceptual things are not different. I think all objects are virtual and all ideas have material and physical forms. Ideas are highly gestural and embodied. I am making these shapes, crafting them around the scale of my body referencing different objects like milk crates and soap boxes, podiums and stairs, and increasingly abstracted polygons like a triangle, a rectangle, a cylinder. And then I am sitting on them and moving around them and speaking on them and with them and to them, I am exploring these objects as platforms in a way that is the same as the way I am thinking about the lecture as a platform that can be explored and taken up and gotten up onto in various ways. If you have a podium, you are going to deal with that in a particular way, because the podium is teaching you how to be in relation to it. Architecture and objects are teaching us how to be and how to speak and how to move. And formats like lectures produce certain kinds of speech and logical structures and ways of formulating an argument, modes of writing, and modes of spectatorship, which—unless we intervene—will continue perpetuating themselves. Established formats are platforms like chairs…

OT: Are you trying to expand these expectations of what a lecture is?

GH: Yes (*pause*). For certain. I have not been walking around saying that no one should give academic lectures or chronological, slide-based artist talks anymore, but I do feel like artists, academics, especially those who study art or aesthetics, know, or should know, better than anybody, that how you do something is definitive of what it is you can do. I would love it if every time someone had to give an artist talk or conference paper they said, "I am expected to publically address a room of people, which is perhaps the requirement of this situation, but other than that, that's the only requirement and I am going to think through every other part of this and try to pick a way to do it that's the most appropriate for the meaning that I am trying to produce or communicate." I would love it if everybody thought about the format as seriously as they think about the content. Or, thought of the format and the content as coterminous. This is what I am hoping to do here: embody my meaning as much as explain my meaning.

OT: How do you see the body and voice as related? Also, what are your thoughts on the difference between voice and noise—and on the parameters of how meaning in constructed?

GH: I don't have my thoughts on this fully fleshed out, but I have encountered ideas that have challenged how I think and how I've been taught to think about the relation between the body, voice, and spoken language. One example being Merleau-Ponty's, "The Body As Expression and Speech" from *The Phenomenology of Perception*. His argument is that there are not ideas and then words that are signs for those ideas—the idea and the word are intertwined, and the word is fundamentally a spoken word, and a spoken word is spoken as gesture, with one's entire body. So, when I speak a word to you, my entire body is saying a word to your entire body and that is how the meaning is constructed. For Merleau-Ponty, writing is an extension of language as gesture. This is how I try to think about it, which is challenging to hold onto because it is not what I was taught and not how our language is structured, such that it tends to separate things that have to do with the body and things that pertain to the mind.

We can say things like, "I have a good relationship with my body."

But who is the "I" that has a relationship with "my" body? I don't believe in that, so why am I always producing sentences like that? Although, it can be very hard to say anything else…

OT: You started using the pronoun they…

GH: I use it because it is the only gender-neutral pronoun (that I know of) that is already a widely used word. It is grammatically incorrect, which bothers me, although there exists earlier precedent in the English language for using it singularly. I don't think it is a perfect solution, although I sometimes enjoy that I get to become plural, we all contain "multitudes." (laughs)

OT: So, do you conceive plurality in a post-feminist, post-colonial way?

GH: I can't give myself that much credit. It is really just an imperfect solution to a stupid problem.

OT: I am interested this new generation of queer and trans artists who are inspired by these minimalists from the 1960's and 70's, and how this past generation of artists have given way to new post-minimalist strategies employed by these artists. What is being problematized here, in terms of work that speaks about the body, but through the absence of the visual representation of the body, how this absence speaks to that form without totally erasing the body? Why do you think this is happening after so much time has been devoted to representing the self and identity in physical ways, in the 1980's for example?

GH: Indeed. There is a group of us doing this, and theorists who are thinking about these questions, like the art historian David Getsy, who was one of my mentors in Chicago. It seems to me that for a long time, the accepted verdict on minimalism/abstraction/formalism was that the assumed viewing subject of this kind of work is a universalized subject, and as such this work can't deal with particularities such as gender, race, and class, and so effectively erases or ignores these differences, which is bad politics. According to this logic, the way to make queer work is to utilize one of three strategies: make work that is auto-biographical from a queer subject position, show things that are metaphors or symbols for this positionality that the viewer will be able to recognize (what I refer to elsewhere as the "glitter problem"), or make work that displays queer bodies directly. I am not opposed to these strategies, but I do think there are many of us who find them to be excessively limiting. I am interested in work that teaches me phenomenologically how to move through the world and how to perceive differently, in ways that will make queerness and gender variety more possible. How can you change your mode of embodiment? I think we might conceive of it as a process of self-transformation that happens in relation to objects. I am thinking about objects pedagogically. Social politics happens on the level of objects. It is the way things and buildings are organized. If we think of objects as *that from which we learn*, could we learn less oppressive or different things from different objects? Or less oppressive or different things from the same objects? This is really what I am excited about. A phenomenological and embodied relationship to objects that does not use representation as its primary mode of address, and rather employs physical relationality as its mode of communication. This line of thinking frees up space to make work that might appear to have nothing to do with gender, race, or politics. But it can have to do with all these things, and deeply so. I am cautious about instrumentalizing art, about demanding that it make concrete political propositions. But I think this approach leaves space for abstraction to operate in more subtle but still potentially mobilizing way, through internalizing objects' non-conventional logics with our bodies.

OT: In terms of neutrality, these objects are ones that you would not spend time with because they are so rudimentary in their shape and form. What happens to a bodily relationship to time when it comes to these simplified forms?

GH: I think our culture associates attention with entertainment. It teaches us that the things we should enjoy looking at are pretty and complicated and immediately gratifying. I think a lot of this work we are discussing goes against these values of attention. Math Bass's steel pieces, for example, and the fences, ladders, etc. are interesting and engaging but I think it does involve going

against the pace at which we tend to look at things and the ways that we assign values to things and decide they are worth spending time with. I don't want to bore my audience but I do want to push them right up against the edge of boredom, in the interest of slowing down perception, or giving them less to look at as a way of helping them look closer. I think that people can have two experiences with the kind of objects we are describing: you either look at it, recognize what it is, and walk right by, or you can take a moment, pause and be with the thing and because it is not giving you very much to look at, you maybe are able to become more involved with it—with your body, as a shape, a relation. All minimal work always immediately loses half of its viewers because they are the ones that say, "that is a ____," and walk by. I don't blame them. We have to do that all day. Walking down the street in New York you can't engage with a bench in a meaningful way. You have to say, "That is a bench. I can either sit on it or walk past it." The problem is never that there is not enough interesting stuff; the problem is that there is *way* too much interesting stuff everywhere. We can't deal with it, so we close down. We recognize the thing as opposed to perceiving the thing, as John Dewey would say. We do a lot of that same kind of reading with people: "That's a woman, that's a gay man, that's a black man…" and that, in my mind, is related to saying "That's a triangle." But if we stay and we look at something or somebody longer there is a lot more complexity there. If my work can teach people to look closer at an object and tolerate a higher level of productive ambiguity, then maybe they would look at me or each other or themselves with that level of complexity and ambiguity as well?

OT: How do you think transgender bodies—in transition from one mode of embodiment to another—challenge definitions, static value systems, or the ability to name something a certain thing?

GH: The world I would like to live in is a world where there are lots and lots of different genders, many of which would be readable and many of which would be less readable and yet people would be comfortable with this unreadability. In the world that we live in now there is a kind of perpetual perceptual conflict; if you can't be read clearly as a particular gender or sexuality people often get very upset. They then decide they know what you are and assert that. Or potentially get so uncomfortable that they thought that you were one thing and it turns out that you are something else that they actually are violent towards you. That is a reality of trans life, this constant need everyone has to *know what you are*, and the ramifications of this not-knowing. What could this possibly have to do with abstract sculpture? The kind of multiplicity, ambiguity, and subtlety that one would need to employ in order to have a rich experience viewing the work we are discussing is the same kind of comfort with multiplicity and ambiguity that would make a more livable world for people with more complicated genders or sexualities. I've heard numerous trans people say that they started to transition thinking they would enjoy existing as a middle gender but instead ended up keeping going with it so they could pass as a readable gender, because it was so impossible to live in the middle, it made people so uncomfortable and made moving through the world so complicated. There are many people who transition in order to pass, and I don't discredit this experience at all. But I think there are many other people, including myself, who would really enjoy it if indeterminacy weren't made so exhausting by people's discomfort with it.

OT: You're talking about a utopic vision for gender—but there is resistance to that, which I think comes from a general cultural standpoint that is invested in very stable, old-world identity politics. How do you read these minimalist artists who have foregrounded this kind of post-minimalist queer work? How do you read their notions of sexuality and gender, and how do you negotiate that history in the context of your own practice? Do you think that Artschwager, for instance, was thinking about these issues?

GH: (Pause). Artschwager was thinking about ambiguity, formalism, and functionality and confusing our ability to distinguish between those things. He was thinking about surfaces in an interesting and complex way, and mimesis; a lot of things that are potentially very useful for thinking about gender and sexuality. I don't know definitively, but as far as I can tell there are no records of him specifically addressing anything about gender or sexuality. And I think that's okay. I think we can read these canonized artists in the ways that make sense to us, regardless of an artist's original intent. One thing I am interested in is the way art history lumps together artworks into a style or movement based on how they look formally. I wonder if there are other ways to unite artworks into histories,

based more on interests than visual similarities. I want to say that my work has more in common with the work of Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt than that of Donald Judd even though my work often looks more like Judd's. Just because things look similar does not mean that they are doing the same thing. That is something that is very useful for thinking about queerness. Imagine two couples having sex in the exact same way with the exact same body parts, and yet somehow it is completely different because of how they understand what they are doing, how they reached that place, or situate it in the world. Things that are the same as each other can also be completely different. While it is historically important to group things together along formal criteria I think that there are other ways of doing histories which would group together very visually dissimilar work based on a shared set of concerns. There are artists that I feel connected to whose work looks nothing like mine, such as Amber Hawk Swanson, for example. There are many people in my community who think about many of the same things I am thinking about when we make our work, but the work itself looks incredibly different.

OT: Nevertheless, I don't think minimalist artists ever intended for queer people to take on these particular strategies. I am surprised by it . . .

GH: Well, the minimalists were quite different from each other as well, and didn't necessarily want to be lumped together in the same group either. Some didn't even didn't like the word minimalism. Robert Morris, who I've been thinking a lot about this year, started making sculpture by making dances and works for theater. His objects, which have often been theorized as these disembodied monolithic shapes, were, in the beginning, objects for dance. These histories get really oversimplified and things get forgotten. Some of my writing about Fred Sandback and gender came from having a really powerful experience with my body with his works, an experience that felt relevant to gender that I needed to articulate, even if he was not thinking about these questions explicitly. He was thinking about facts and illusions as not oppositional, and he was thinking about creating these virtual windows that are also radically material when approached. This non-oppositional relation between virtuality and materiality is useful for thinking about trans embodiment, regardless of the fact that he didn't situate the work in this way.

OT: Let's go back to what you said at the beginning of this conversation, and address the visibility of the transgender body: When one is made visible what happens to language? How would you describe the relational that takes place within the body-language-representation dynamic?

GH: One thing that is troubling to me is that the dominant way that transgender experience has been theorized and understood by psychiatrists and doctors and trans people themselves is as an experience of being trapped in the wrong body. This implies that your gender is an idea that you know in your brain and your body is just this material that lines up with that idea, and that you have to modify in order to feel like your body-object is a good representation of your gender-concept. It blows my mind that we would be so reliant on such a deeply Cartesian way of describing ourselves. That is such an old idea! It is crazy to me that this is the predominant way it gets described. Which is not at all to say it is not true to people's experiences, but I also think that how we understand ourselves is a product of the concepts and language available to us in our culture.

OT: You didn't have that experience of feeling like your body wasn't the "right" body?

GH: I have made some modifications to my body, but I don't think of wanting to do these things coming from feeling trapped in the wrong body. I am a cyborg, this is my experience, the modification is part of my embodiment. Any idea of naturalness doesn't feel useful. We are all alive by virtue of numerous technological and medical interventions into our bodies that have kept us alive and changed us in lots of ways. I view my body more as an ongoing transforming situation, in which I make choices about how I want to feel and move through the world.

OT: That perspective sounds very fluid, which also means chaotic and unpredictable, yet it seems to give you great stability…

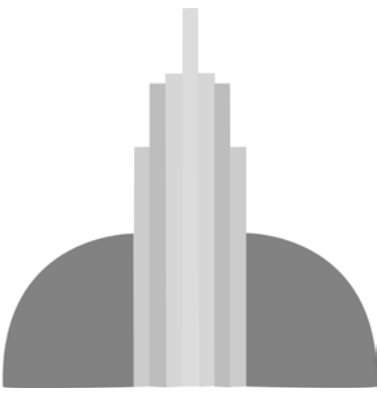
Endnotes: [1] Monique Roelofs, *The Cultural Promise of the Aesthetic*, Bloomsbury Academic, New York, 2014. [2] John Dewey wrote the seminal aesthetics text, *Art as Experience*, in 1934.

GH: I feel pretty stable… most days. (laughs) For me, living as a feminine woman proved to be untenable. Dishonest, but also impossible. In this world, at least. I deeply wish there were more and different options for gendered life that felt accessible to more people, that felt accessible to me earlier in life. Many people think that things have gotten better. In some ways. But I still see so many possibilities that remain unimaginable. Also, I'd like to note that my embrace of abstraction in my work took a long time to get to, and I really had to sweat it out. It felt so scary at the beginning, to try to make my work *do* rather than *speak*. And it coincided with the shifts in my gender towards greater ambiguity—the abstraction of the work helped sustain me in embracing the abstraction, or ambiguity, in myself and in my body. The objects became lenses through which I could see differently; they supported me.

OT: One final question about something I believe is important to address, for those of us who may not be used to the awkward quietude of minimalist aesthetics. In the stark, rudimentary shape of minimalist sculpture, what happens to emotions, feelings, passions, and desires?

GH: They well up inside you and hover in the room between you and the object and the other people and objects in the space! And follow you out onto the street when you leave! At least for me they do. Feelings are everywhere in the minimal work I love. I don't see an opposition between emotion and non-representational forms. I think that's something we have been taught that it's time to unlearn. And maybe the objects can help teach us.

STAND AND
GORDON HALL



SELF PORTRAIT
MARIO BELLATIN

Mario Bellatin is a novelist. He has over 40 books published, translated into numerous languages. He is the winner of the Xavier Villaurrutia National Book Award (Mazatlan), The Barbara Gitiings Literature Award, and the Antonin Artaud Award. In 2012, Bellatin was a curator of Documenta 13, Kassel. Among his most important projects, besides writing, are the Dynamic School of Writers, The Hundred Thousand Books of Bellatin, and the film Bola Negra the Cd. Juarez Musical.

Yo llegué a ser escritor porque provengo de una familia malvada, funesta, miserable, suelo afirmar en público. Mi padre solía dejarnos encerrados en el sótano durante días enteros y mi madre nos cocinaba cualquier alimaña que encontrara por allí.

Mis hermanos eran unos seres deformes y muchos de ellos carecían de uno o más dedos. El más inteligente de todos se consideraría un tarado en cualquier lado. Había una que en lugar de boca tenía una especie de trompa como la de un elefante —estoy exagerando—, y el menor era tan alto que siempre tenía que andar con la cabeza agachada para no tocar el cielorraso.

Sin embargo, yo era feliz viviendo en un hogar de esa naturaleza. Con el tiempo aprendí muchas cosas que jamás hubiera imaginado que existiesen si hubiera nacido en una familia normal.

Desde muy temprano en la mañana oía los trinos con los que mi padre intentaba despertarnos. Eran una mezcla de canto de gallo con cierta tonalidad de cantante de ópera. Mi madre le hacía el coro. En realidad daba de gritos. Afirmaba que ésa no era su familia, que sus hijos eran bellos y completos y no esos pequeños monstruos que dormían en el sótano cerrado con una tranca. Acto seguido regaba azúcar en el patio con el fin de que se llenara con las hormigas que luego nos daría como desayuno. No es malo comer insectos, decía mi madre, lo importante es saberlos preparar.

Yo dormía en un rincón. Al lado de un hermano tan gordo que casi no utilizaba las piernas para caminar. Se trataba de un ser que rodaba la mayor parte del tiempo. Contaba con unos pies tan pequeños que sus zapatos los usaba otro hermano para guardar en ellos sus ojos artificiales.

Antes de cerrar los ojos, yo imaginaba siempre que me encontraba en otro lugar de donde estaba acostado. A la esquina que tenía asignada dentro del sótano llegaba siempre un murmullo que me decía, escápate, escápate, aunque yo no tenía dónde ir realmente. Estaba feliz viviendo con mi familia. Sonándole de vez en cuando la trompa a mi hermana, desinflándole la panza con un alfiler al otro, curando las heridas que el gigante se hacía en la cabeza cuando quería pasar de una habitación a otra.

Sin embargo, sentía que algo me faltaba. Estoy seguro de que no era la luz del día, de la que carecíamos. Ni agua potable —nos teníamos que conformar con el agua de lluvia que mi padre juntaba utilizando un gran embudo de latón durante la época de verano—. Es por eso —para que el agua juntada de esa forma nos durara el año entero— que nuestra dosis diaria era de medio vaso de líquido.

Lo que sí llamaba mi atención —y me hacía querer escapar en algunas ocasiones— eran los relatos que mi padre a veces nos contaba después de sus cantos matinales, o los que nos expresaba nuestra madre mientras preparaba alguna de las alimañas con las que nos alimentaba. Historias de familias extrañas. De gente monstruosa que vivía más allá de nuestros dominios.

AUTORRETRATO

(English Translation by Orlando Tirado)

I became a writer because I was born into a malevolent family—tragic, miserable—I affirm this publicly. My father would leave us alone locked up in the basement for days on end, and my mother would cook up any insect she could find.

My brothers were deformed beings and many were missing one or more fingers. The most intelligent of all was considered a retard at best. There was one that instead of a mouth had a kind of trunk like an elephant's—I exaggerate—and the youngest was so tall he would walk with his head bowed down so as not to touch the ceiling.

Nevertheless, I was happy living in a home as such. With time, I learned about many things I wouldn't have known had I grown up in a normal household.

Very early in the mornings I would hear the trill of my father's wake-up call. It was a mix of a cock's crow with a certain tonality of an opera singer's. My mother would act as the choir. In reality, it was mostly screams. He would affirm that we were not his family; that his own children were beautiful, and complete, and not the diminutive monsters that slept locked in the basement, the door reinforced by a heavy, wooden beam. On a regular basis, he would sprinkle sugar on the patio with the purpose of gathering ants that would then serve as our breakfast. It's not bad to eat insects, my mother would say, the crucial thing is to know how to cook them.

I would sleep in a corner. Next to a brother who was so obese he could barely use his legs to walk. His was a matter of rolling himself the majority of the time. He had a pair of feet so small that my other brother used his shoes to store his prosthetic eyes.

Before closing my own eyes, I always imagined that I would find myself in another place where I was lying. Near the corner which I was assigned to, in the basement, I could hear a soft murmur that would tell me, escape, escape, escape, although I didn't have a place to go, really. I was content living with my family. Playing my sister's trunk from time to time, deflating my brother's stomach with a needle's prick, bandaging the injuries the giant was subject to when he would pass from one room to the other.

Nevertheless, I felt something was missing. I am sure that it was not the light of day, which we did lack. Nor potable water—we had to conform ourselves to the water that my father would collect using a brass funnel during the summer months—. It was because of this—so that the water would last us the entire year—that our daily dose was a mere cup and a half.

What I did consider—and what made me want to escape on a few occasions—were the stories my father would tell us after his morning song, or those that my mother would recount while she prepared some pest she'd found to feed us. Stories about strange families. Of truly monstrous people who lived beyond our very own dominion.

SCHELP AND SHAPE
MOLLY LOWE

lumpy line — edge defined — squatted straight — settled gate — solid squish — molded mush — hiked and hurt — flesh and dirt — polished fit — saggy tit — nook and nub — push and rub — wrinkled grid — here it hid

EXCERPTS FROM SEE DOG READ
AIMEE GOGUEN

Aimee Goguen is a rogue experimental animator and video artist living and working in Los Angeles. A selection of her videos recently screened at White Columns, New York, and at the 2014 Outfest Los Angeles. She is the author of See Dog Read, a collection of film treatments that inform her video works, published by Curse and Cherifa, New York.

MATTERHORN

The shape shifting dick is fast and hard shape shifting. At first the shape is simple. A shape we learn about in early math. In our childhood. We see the shape but we don't feel the shape. Shape shifting square dick to pentagon dick to octagon dick or rhombus dick to dodecahedron dick to pentagonal trapezohedron dick... disgusting. And then back to a square or circle. The shape shifting dick is fast and hard shape shifting inside my mouth or butthole. The shape shifting dick is that game you play of the bathtub. Washing off the geometry. Hot water and nice soaps rub you cleaner. A finger down and around your back spells out an imaginary letter or word. From "D" to "I" to "C" to "K." Angle – I want to fuck your dick, angle – I want you to fuck my dick, angle – your dick is so cool, angle – put your dick in my dick, angle – what if I bite your butthole? The right angle. All these angles and so many positions; face-to-face position, hands-and-knee position, horizontal position, handicapped position, the glowing triangle, magic mountain, pile driver position, plow, peg, pancake spin, pivot, pony mount, pop tart, punt, push-up, pillow pusher, couch surfer, double decking, docking, dip stick, kicking position, ghost rider position, the cat whisperer, chack, chacked, chacking, cherry flip, choke, split, spit, spreading, sphinx, spider position, hidden serpent, from behind, face down, human bridge, wheel barrow, rowing boat, and ship wrecked position. All these positions and so many surface areas (areas to cum on) kiss and cry area, seven minutes in heaven, in the basement, in the forest, skeletons in my closet, private parts, high-tops, Indian burn, rug rash, road rage, razor burn. All of these surface areas and so much glass in my mouth; pop, rocket pops, pop rocks, fun dips, kool-aid, big league chew, seed cake, birthday cake, wedding cake, and soul cake (spiced cake with raisins served on Halloween). When children are desperate to get their souls back.

TRIANGLE BORF

I took off my pants because my dick was hard but it was a square dick. I touch it. Square like a brick or a concrete slab or whatever and it feels good. I consider sticking it in but the only place to put it is a perfectly cut triangle . . . the most famous triangle.

FAR GONE
MATH BASS

Lyrics from the exhibition and performance Lies Inside at Overduin & Co., April 19, 2014.

You are far gone
you are far gone
you are far gone
you are far gone

and it takes
and it takes
and it takes the heat of you

and it breaks
and it breaks
and it breaks your back in two

and all after all you really really all you
all after all you really really all you

you are far gone
you are far gone

TALKING OBJECTS
EXCERPT FROM DE COINTET: A STUDY IN FOUR MOVES

CAT KRON

Cat Kron is a writer based in New York.

Within the limited critical discourse on Guy de Cointet, one observes a wide variation of terms used to describe the static elements in the plays he staged – the drawings, paintings and sculptures employed both as mise-en-scène and as subject for the plays themselves. These objects were widely exhibited separately from the artist's performances during and after his lifetime. De Cointet often referred to them as the object they were intended to invoke (i.e. the book, the rock, the bridge...). Later writers have sometimes used the French term *dessin*, which can refer both to drawings and to designs or patterns (an apt ambiguity, given the artist's proclivity for drafting compositions both for public viewing and in his private sketchbooks in preparation for upcoming performances.) However the pieces, as *Sophie Rummel (4)* first performed by Viva in 1974 and included in this exhibition, can also be understood as cryptographic keys via which the viewer navigates de Cointet's plays, which constituted the bulk of his practice from 1970 until his death in 1983.

Observing the objects at work in these performances, the viewer is constantly reminded of their intertwined relationship, in which an actress's words explain and validate a text-object, which is made of words or which bears their imprint. "It is a book indeed," the narrator affirms in the 1976 play *My Father's Diary*. "With pages and pages covered with texts, signs, diagrams, lively drawings... It starts with a text written, probably, in honor of a very special person [my father] was in love with..." The object she presents, much as librarians present picture books to kindergärtners, is strewn with signs as inscrutable as text must appear to small children.

Just as the narrator validates an object that barely resembles a book, the object gives the actress her reason for being onstage. Her act is performative in the sense that it persuades by saying, apropos J. L. Austin's notion of the perlocutionary act from *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). "It is a book indeed..." She is presenting the object to us as a diary and telling us its contents. Yet she describes a visual situation that does not correspond to her audience's observation, according to learned conventions of how text appears. She is ordering us to see it as she does. In this sense the power of command is recast as the power of the

narrator to determine the nature of events she is recounting. De Cointet's particular innovation is to set this description, stated as fact, against the immediate observable reality of that which is being described, such that the translation from event (the viewer's observation of the object) to representation (the descriptive account of this observation) is foregrounded. Additionally there exists the performative nature of this act in its more conventional sense, that of the actress presenting something she has rehearsed.

De Cointet asserts a symbiosis steeped in tautology. Both object and its performer state: This is a _____. It cannot be otherwise.

One can interpret the relationship between performer and object either straightforwardly: as through the proxy of the prop, the performer explains the artwork; or critically: this affirmation and validation attempts to circumvent the valuation of art critics, and to increase interest in the object by proffering its own reading, while simultaneously attaching a market value to the remnants of performance art (so notoriously difficult to finance). But while de Cointet's dual format of exhibiting both performances and traditional gallery shows put off some critics, it is misleading to claim that the plays actually prevent their being criticized. Rather, like the narrator in *My Father's Diary*, who illustrates how formal analysis can be used as an instrument of power, they highlight a hypothetical possibility: What if an artwork had the power of speech, the power to assert its own value?

Among his many odd graftings, de Cointet shuffled and recombined the roles of the participants assigning value to objects: His performers – now recast as critics and curators, whose appreciation is made to function both literally and in reevaluating the objects' worth. De Cointet himself, creator as archivist-collector—who forms mementos from ephemeral performances, and recycles old artworks as props in new organizational structures and new scenes. His critic as researcher—whose task is complicated by incomplete codes, unnamed citations, and the ephemeral moment in which a performance is experienced. And his objects, which would conventionally be cast either as relic of past performances or relegated to the sidelines in gallery exhibitions – here present both in performance and in subsequent gallery exhibition. Objects and actions form a reciprocal and densely threaded network, with determinations of legibility and value of one continually qualified by the other within the microcosm of de Cointet's oeuvre. By tracing this network, the viewer is able to navigate these translations.

In de Cointet's 1976 play *Ethiopia*, conceived in collaboration with Robert Wilhite, the character Julia confronts a towering facade, ten feet high and angular.

> Really it is a curious building. It's so definitely split in personality. There, in the south and westerly half the recently renovated Tudor part with the charming oriel window, and the complicated rooftop displaying a Baroque sort of beauty. And there in the southeast, ancient part, is a mighty structure of solid, medieval aspect. The land lies still and silent under a brilliant sun, already starting to set down...

The actress would later confirm the façade's silhouette and description as a portrayal of the de Cointet family estate near Versailles, which she had visited. The house, whose lineage can be traced back through several generations of de Cointets, is situated in the crook of a hairpin shaped ditch. This ravine was dug as part of a defensive system under Napoleon Bonaparte. It extends across the countryside and forms, if observed from above, the outline of a large star.

Within *Ethiopia*, the façade structure is revealed to be the character's childhood home, to which she and her brothers are returning. Julia has arrived in the middle of a storm. Battered by rain and wind she takes shelter outside the house, where she finds a note to her from her brother Peter. The note explains that he will be returning in the evening and that he is nearly finished with his book:

> As to the poetry I'm rather inclined to agree with you, but I reserve verses these days for those tiny mosaics which you can't do in prose, tight as diamonds and very brightly colored. Things like this economical lyric...

She proceeds to read aloud from Peter's poem, which has been scrambled beyond comprehension. As she does her body contorts with the struggle of the dissonant consonants, and she clutches the note upon which the poem has been written. The final four lines of the poem (all that I was able to decipher from de Cointet's notebook) are listed below the version Julia recited:

(from *Ethiopia* as Julia recited it)

REGGIN EROMREVEN ESAELER
LLIT EHT DLOG YAD NOIL ECNUOP
EKIRTS MY NUBIA HTIW ETIHW WAP
EW ERA HCUS ESOHW ETAF SI ECEELF

(unscrambled)

Nigger nevermore release
Till the gold day lion pounce
Strike my Nubia with white paw.
We are such whose fate is fleece.

In both *My Father's Diary* and *Ethiopia*, the performer circumvents logic and manipulates her own speech via the proxy of the object she describes. This object in space serves as a physical manifestation of her engagement with the text in space and time, as in Julia's oral skirmish with the tongue twister poem embodied by the poem-prop she clutches and thrusts across the stage as she reads her brother's poem. The relationship between prop and performance in these plays is one of spatialization of the text.

In loosely geometric terms, the reorganization of content from ditch to star is a transformation of scale, while that of the scrambled letters within *Ethiopia* is one of translation of proximity. In geometry, as in language, translations are transformations in which only the form's situation is changed. Unlike alterations of shape, contour, and size, which fundamentally change the altered's relationship to its original, translations retain a relationship of congruence. The artist's insertion of his childhood house within the fantasy script is, like the scrambled poem, an example of translation.

The translation act presupposes movement. However in linguistic conversions from one known or unknown system to another, its perambulatory nature is largely left implicit. Because the format of these artworks anticipates and accounts for an internal exchange of roles and positions, the shufflings of object, performer, creator and viewer, and alternating forms of communicative expression, can all be considered as translations within the work. De Cointet employs performance as a means of making visible the underlying movements that determine speech-content, speech as physical gesture in space.

THE HISTORY OF A DAY IS THE HISTORY OF A LIFE

GUY de COINTET

This excerpt is from the Guy de Cointet drawing, The History of a Day is the History of a Life (included in FLEX). de Cointet was known to use a mirror-writing effect. The excerpt is appropriated from Herman Melville's first work titled Typees: A Peep at Polynesian Life (1846), an exoticized autobiographical account about being captured by 'savages' on an island located in Southeast Indonesia .

Nothing can be more
Uniform and undiversified
Than the life of the
Typees; on tranquil
Day of ease and happiness
Follows another in quiet
Succession, and with
These unsophisticated people the history
Of a day is the history of
a life. I will therefore,
as briefly as I can,
describe one of our days in the valley.
To begin with the morning. We were not very early
Risers, the sun would be
Shooting his golden
Spikes above the Happar
Mountain, ___ I threw aside
My tappa robe, and

Guiding my long Tunic
About my waist,
Sallied out with Fayaway
And Kory-Kory, and
The rest of the household,
And bent my steps
Towards the stream.
Here we found congregated
All those who dwelt in
Our section of the valley;
And here we bathed
With them.
The fresh morning air and the cool flowing
waters put both soul and
body in a glow, and after
a half-hour employed
in this recreation,
we sauntered back to the
house; some of the young men laying the cocoanut trees. . .

On the second of this past May, the day an F train jumped the track at 65th Street and train service across the Queens Boulevard line was suspended in both directions, I was grading papers at my desk in Rego Park, completely unaware that thousands of commuters trying to make their way home after an exhausting day of work were stranded all across the borough. The first inkling I had that something was out of the ordinary, apart from the inordinate amount of honking coming from the street, was when the phone at my elbow buzzed with a text message from my friend Tom Quick, politely informing me that he was standing outside my door and didn't want to make a racket by ringing the bell.

Though Tom and I have known one another for over a decade, we have never been close friends—certainly not close enough to drop by one another's houses unannounced. We first met through my older brother and his high school friend Michael Paulson, who took Advanced French with Tom at Columbia. Their first English-language interaction came during Mike's junior year abroad in Florence, when he spotted Tom sitting by himself in the blue shade thrown by the Duomo—regarding the ancient building not in wonderment, like the rest of the tourists, but with the same piercing attention he gave to the professor in class. Whenever the four of us went for a beer, I was deeply by impressed by Tom's expert knowledge of all matters cultural, the unflinching lack of sentimentality in his assessments of national news and New York City politics, and above all, by the kindness he continued to show me even after my brother—the ostensible reason we would ever see one another—moved to Berlin. Coming from anyone else, the occasional invitation to a movie or a stroll around Prospect Park would hardly deserve mention; but then, for Tom, it was plain that such casual get-togethers were not gone into lightly. Every aspect of Tom's person, inside and out, showed aristocratic restraint. His blonde hair was always neatly parted; even in the most suffocating days of summer, he always wore a powder-blue oxford shirt tucked into a pair of pressed khakis; and, most noticeably, he always spoke slowly and dryly, enunciating and elongating every single syllable. For the first years I had known him, I assumed that Tom's monotone was a kind of self-abgnegation, having to do with some deeply restrictive Lutheran upbringing. But as I came to know him, I saw that there was a defiant pride to the way he spoke, an unyielding stoicism, a refusal to go at any pace but his own, like those Parisian aristocrats who would walk the crowded streets with a turtle on a leash, letting the reptile set their pace. When we shook hands in my foyer, he was completely unruffled by the borough-wide confusion. "It's a little hot out there," he allowed, "but I don't have all that much farther to go, I suppose."

Tom's patrician bearing, flaxen blonde hair and watery blue eyes had always led me to suspect that he was from a wealthy party of New England, or at least from the Mid-West. In fact, he came from a family modest means in Los Angeles, a city I heard him mention exactly once, over dinner at a Caribbean restaurant in Crown Heights, when he recalled watching local news coverage of the 1992 riots in South Central. The last that we spoke—this was at his wedding to his long-time girlfriend, Cassie—he had just taken a job teaching English at a high-school in Jamaica, Queens. (Hence his having to walk home that day.) There, at the reception in Greenpoint, looking up at the slender glass obelisks of the Manhattan skyline, Tom had evinced cautious optimism about teaching. Now, as I accompanied him to the 59 bus, he conceded that the job was not going as well as he had hoped. To be sure, Hillcrest, where he taught, was not as bad as the de facto segregated schools in Brownsville and Bushwick and East New York. But like every other public school in New York City, it was desperately overcrowded; altogether, Tom was responsible for 120 students, the majority of whom came from financially-squeezed single parent households, whose constant disruptions and degradations made even a passing commitment to their schoolwork all but impossible. The most recent unit, on *A Streetcar Named Desire*, had gone disastrously. Out of forty students, only eight had done the reading. (Tom included in the count one student who had found the *SparkNotes*.) What was worse, his most promising student, a quiet boy who had to turn down admission to Brooklyn Tech because the prestigious magnet school was too

far away, plagiarized his paper, forcing Tom to fail him. Shows of authority were deeply repugnant to Tom. It pained him (he said) to accept, finally, that his students did not see him as someone committed to their betterment, but as just another feature of the school's oppressive architecture, no different than the gratings on the windows or the shadow-less fluorescent lights. "On the plus side," he concluded, tilting his head slightly to see from this presumably brighter point of view, "the United Federation of Teachers signed a contract today, so the senior staff got a retroactive raise."

It struck me, as I listened, that Tom evinced neither unhappiness nor regret as he recounted this tale of personal and institutional failure. Even having a four-hour walk tacked on to what must have been a grueling day did not seem to perturb him—in fact, he had found the walk from Jamaica very nice. Going east to west, each successive neighborhood had impressed him more and more. He liked the bustle of Jamaica, the crowds going to civil court and the Social Security office. He had paused to admire the shady Veteran's Garden outside the borough hall in Kew Gardens and the Alpine-style houses in Forest Hills, built to look like thatched Black Forest cabins overlooking the Danube. Now, he concluded, Rego Park, with its red-brick six stories, was his favorite. "It's very nice how each building has its own little touch to set it apart from the others," he murmured, "its own little life, like the lives going on inside."

It speaks to the sharpness of Tom's eye, the quality of the program in architectural history at New York University that had granted him a Master's, and my own shortsightedness that I had never really paid much mind to the buildings I had passed by, day in, day out, every day of my entire life. Indeed, though each building was fundamentally the same six-story red brick design, divided into an east and a west wing, some city architect had gone through each design and added a tiny touch to differentiate each one. To our right, The Maryland had a barely perceptible ridge running down its west wing, forming a shallow bay window for the residents in that column of apartments. Farther down the street, the older Hampton House had two Grecian balustrades along its roof, each topped with a stone urn. My own building had a pointed lintel in the neoclassic style beneath a semi-circular balcony intended, apparently, to evoke

THE AT&T COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

MICHAEL LIPKIN

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the manor house of an antebellum plantation. All that April, the city had been lashed with sleet; now, in the May sunshine, the buildings, though modest, looked elegant, stately behind the elms and planes and locusts, newly-budded after a barren winter, lining the sidewalk. A block away, P.S. 139 had just let out, and the breeze carried the clanging sounds of basketballs and hollow pops of handballs and all the full-throated sounds of children playing right to us. Tom's thin blonde eyebrows arched in interest.

It was only after considerably prodding from me—and even then, the admission was prefaced with a conditional "We-ll"—that Tom confessed that his admiration was not merely disinterested aesthetic contemplation. Now, at the age of thirty-two, as a husband, it had become abundantly clear to Tom that the State Street apartment he shared with Cassie, with its low ceilings, listing floors, and expansive view of a brick-lined air shaft, was no home for two grown adults and, as was becoming increasingly probable, a child. His experience teaching had shown him first-hand the dispiriting effects that oppressive spaces had on children. What chance did a teacher have to reach his students when every gesture of goodwill and every word of encouragement was contradicted by the shabbiness of their desks, the building's drab concrete façade and the peeling linoleum floors, all of which bespoke a total indifference to the true needs of children—to the exercise of authority for its own sake? He couldn't blame them for trying to assert themselves, however quixotically, by scratching fuck mr quick into the desks, by fighting one another, or, most often, by sitting slumped down in their seats with their arms crossed, saying nothing, doing nothing. If he and Cassie were going to raise a child—a daughter, increasingly Tom found himself hoping for a daughter—it was absolutely imperative that they find somewhere she might feel at home, that she could be proud to return to, ideally in a district with an adequate school. "And it would be nice to have somewhere to put Cassie's bike, I suppose," he added gingerly, as though this was the greatest imposition of them all.

It was admittedly difficult to imagine two Ivy League graduates—and their child, whom I saw as a miniature version of the perennially boyish Tom—among the Central Asian Jews of the neighborhood, walking thirty minutes to the nearest cultural institution, the Midway Stadium 9 on Continental Avenue. Nonetheless, it pleased me greatly to hear the neighborhood where I had grown up—that had served as the screen for my most suffocating teenage desires, my most anxious college thoughts, and now was the respite of my adult life—praised by someone whose ethic and aesthetic judgment I held in high regard. The kind words were so welcome to me, that I actually found myself blushing, like someone whose practiced East Coast accent suddenly reveals a bit of Southern twang, when we turned at 62nd Street onto the most suburban and least appealing part of Queens Boulevard. Here, a Burger King abutted a car wash and a vacant strip club, which stood, in turn, beside the most chagrining building in the neighborhood: the AT&T Communications Center. Built to house the telephone company's gigantic 4ESS switches, its windowless granite walls would have attracted no notice in an office park in Farmingdale or on the side of a highway. Here, however, across from the modest apartment buildings Tom had just been admiring, everything about the industrial architecture appeared distended and distorted—massive, oppressive, grotesque, sinking the blocks around it—and all the people, myself included—with it into provincial ugliness.

I proposed that we loop back onto Saunders to take the "scenic" view, but Tom, to my surprise, held these buildings in no less regard than the residential ones. He stopped beneath the Communications Center to admire the marble embankments on which it had been built. These were topped with shrubbery that never greened in any season as far as I could remember—planted, presumably, to ward off pigeons and indigent people looking to bed down for the night out of sight of the police. Together with the oblong protrusions along its wall and the parapets along its roof, they gave the building a martial, fortress-like look, as though, at any moment, someone on its roof might scald us with boiling oil.

"Oh, this is very nice," said Tom, squinting up at its impassive

bulk. I pointed out that the building was so widely reviled that it served as a reliable landmark for taxi drivers when I was returning home late at night.

"Well, yes, it's ugly," Tom conceded. "But switches need to be housed. We do need to talk on the phone."

Wasn't it dispiriting, I insisted, that utility should take priority over what was pleasing to the eye and harmonious with the buildings around it? What was beauty, after all, but an assurance that the maker and the seer—here, the utility and the citizens it was supposed to serve—were in accord?

Tom produced a chamois cloth from his breast pocket, wiped his glasses, and looked back up at the building. "I've never had the heart to hate what's right in front of me—the solid brick, the polished stone. You can only hate, really hate at a distance. That's why the students haven't burnt down Hillcrest with all of us inside, even though it's what we deserve, and worse, I suppose." He looked up at the spherical streetlights installed by the company. "And I really do like these imitation gas-lamps here. I think they're very nice."

Just then, we heard the 59 rumbling down Queens Boulevard. Tom watched it pull into the station and announced regretfully that, as Cassie was already home, he had better get on. He thanked me for accompanying him, shook my hand cordially, and, with his blonde hair still perfectly in place, pressed himself into the crowd of gray-faced commuters on their way to Maspeth and Williamsburg. Once the door shut, he gave me a wave no less touching for being barely perceptible through the fogged-up glass. Then the bus sped off—squealing to a precarious stop when it reached the traffic half a block away. (Apart from a few e-mails, Tom and I have yet to speak since.)

By then, the sun had sunk beneath a bank of stormy-looking clouds, its rays dulled to a burnished shimmer. I stood looking up at the granite slab, trying to see the building as something other than an eyesore. In the narrow alley beside it, the children from the after-school program at the Lost Battalion Recreation Center were out at the jungle gym in back, waiting for their long-delayed parents to come and pick them up. The playground, which was in the shade thrown by an elm tree and the bulk of the phone building beside it, was supervised by a heavy-set woman with bleached hair, plainly frazzled from having to put in unpaid overtime. She sat smoking a cigarette on a nearby bench and carried on an animated conversation on her cell phone—it occurred to me that that call that was probably passing through the Communications Center that very moment. Eager to go home, the children were swarming over the jungle gym, yanking on one another's jackets, shoving one another and then running away to avoid reprisal. In time, I thought, they would be tormenting the high school teacher tasked with bringing them to heel.

I found it much harder to place the splinter group of children who had chosen to play over by the high marble embankments of the Communications Center. Under the leadership of a spirited little tomboy in white overalls and a gray baseball cap, they had been trying, unsuccessfully, to scale the purchaseless embankment to get to the shrubbery above. One by one, the graceless boys tried to scramble up the marble, but with nothing to hold onto, they slid straight down to the ground—one unlucky boy audibly cracked his head as he fell down to the ground, waited for a moment to realize that he was in pain, and then let out the most piteous, heart-rending wail. Undeterred, the girl had the boys around her give her a boost up the eight foot wall; when that failed, she tried taking a running start—to no avail. Finally, with every option exhausted, she stood at the base of the embankment, stretched out her arms and splayed herself against it, as though she were trying to press the whole edifice against her in one open-hearted embrace. Her cap had fallen to the ground; she began to bang her forehead against the smooth marble in a gesture that bespoke either indomitable perseverance or total resignation. Up above her, the last of the baggy-shirted, bow-backed men and women who worked the switches were filtering out of the Center's main entrance. Each time the glass door opened, the steady hum of the building's cooling systems was audible, followed by a deep mineral silence.

E-THAY AMILY-FAY ULPTURE-SCAY

Ere-whay our-yay ourney-jay egan-bay and-yay at-whay aggage-bay ou-yay ave-hay arried-cay rom-fay at-thay ime-tay.

En-whay ou-yay ere-way a-yay ild-chay ou-yay ot-gay a-yay ot-lay of-yay essages-may and-yay instructions-yay about-yay ow-hay o-tay e-bay ou-yay om-fray our-yay amily-fay. Ou-yay ot-nay only-yay earned-lay anners-may, ow-hay o-tay ess-dray, at-whay iends-fray o-tay oose-chay and-yay uch-say, ut-bay also-yay ou-yay icked-pay up-yay ome-say of-yay our-yay arents'-pay attitudes-yay owards-tay ife-lay, articularly-pay eir-thay iew-vay of-yay our-yay orth-way and-yay our-yay importance-yay or-yay ack-lay of-yay it-yay. One-yay ay-way of-yay exploring-yay at-whay ese-thay essages-may ere-way is-yay y-bay ulpting-scay at-whay our-yay amily-fay elt-fay ike-lay en-whay ou-yay ere-way owing-gray up-yay.

At-whay e-way are-yay investigating-yay in-yay is-thay apter-apter-chay is-yay ow-hay OU-YAY ame-cay o-tay ink-thay about-yay ourself-yay in-yay e-thay ays-way ou-yay o-day and-yay erhaps-pay imit-lay ourself-yay in-yay ays-way ou-yay o-day. Ou-yay ant-way o-tay ear-clay away-yay istortions-day icked-pay up-yay om-fray ow-hay other-yay eople-pay ave-hay iewed-vay ou-yay and-yay ow-hay ou-yay ave-hay esponded-ray in-yay order-yay o-tay each-ray e-thay ense-say of-yay ou-yay ow-nay eciding-day our-yay own-yay ate-fay, etting-say our-yay own-yay oals-gay.

E-THAY AMILY-FAY ULPTURE-SCAY

Aterials-may ou-yay ill-way eed-nay: a-yay ood-gay ouble-day, andful-hay of-yay ay-clay, aper-pay, and-yay encil-pay.

Irst-fay, ose-clay our-yay eyes-yay and-yay o-gay

ack-bay o-tay a-yay ime-tay in-yay our-yay ildhood-chay, omewhere-say etween-bay o-tway and-yay eight-yay ears-yay old-yay. Ink-thay about-yay e-thay embers-may in-yay our-yay amily-fay. O-whay as-way around-yay? Ow-hay old-yay ere-way ey-thay? Ow-hay id-day ou-yay eel-fay about-yay em-thay?

Ote-nay on-yay e-thay aper-pay o-tway or-yay ee-thray adjectives-yay escribing-day each-yay erson-pay. Ake-tay e-thay ay-clay and-yay ake-may a-yay ulpture-scay of-yay e-thay adjectives-yay escribing-day one-yay articular-pay erson-pay, e-yay.g-yay. if-yay ou-yay escribed-day Ad-day as-yay ***arm-way ut-bay itical-cray***, ou-yay ight-may ake-may ust-jay an-yay arm-yay eaching-ray out-yay om-fray a-yay all-bay ith-with a-yay ot-lay of-yay arp-shay oints-pay. E-thay idea-yay is-yay ot-nay o-tay ake-may a-yay igure-fay of-yay a-yay erson-pay, ut-bay omething-say at-thay ives-gay a-yay eeling-fay of-yay ow-hay at-thay erson-pay elt-fay o-tay ou-yay en-whay ou-yay ere-way ounger-yay.

En-whay ou-yay ave-hay ulpted-scay each-yay amily-fay ember-may in-yay urn-tay, ut-pay em-thay in-yay elation-ray o-tay each-yay other-yay o-tay ow-shay o-whay elt-fay ose-clay and-yay o-whay as-way ar-fay away-yay om-fray ou-yay emotionally-yay. Ou-yay ight-may ow-shay o-whay as-way on-yay op-tay and-yay o-whay as-way under-yay omeone-say else-yay in-yay e-thay amily-fay.

Ou-yay ow-nay ave-hay a-yay ulpture-scay at-thay ows-shay at-whay it-yay elt-fay ike-lay o-tay e-bay owing-gray up-yay in-yay e-thay amily-fay into-yay ich-whay ou-yay ere-way orn-bay. Ook-lay at-yay it-yay arefully-cay and-yay ense-say at-whay our-yay ulpture-scay ight-may indicate-yay at-thay ou-yay ad-hay ot-nay ought-thay of-yay efore-bay.

RICHARD ARTSCHWAGER

(b. 1923 WASHINGTON D.C.; d. 2013 ALBANY, NY)

Richard Artschwager once worked as a furniture-maker for The Workbench, in New York, in the early 1950s, as well as in other odd jobs. In 1960, he received a commission from the Catholic Church to construct portable altars for ships, which led him to consider how to transcend the utilitarianism of tables, chairs, and cabinets, seeking a mode of artistic expression more consistent with his identity as a craftsman. ***Walker*** (1964) exemplifies this departure towards his exploration and exploitation of the traditional functions and duties of architecture and furniture in space. Completely disfunctional ***Walker***, "with it's bloated knee-high stature, would frustrate the very movement it is suppose to assist," once wrote Richard Armstrong. An anonymous sheet of walnut-pattern Formica, what Artschwager termed "the memory of wood," is both itself and a depiction of a wooden plane; a table or chair is furniture, sculpture, and image all at once; and a painting or a sculpture can be a "multi-picture" or a "three-dimensional still life," or, in his own words, "a painting for the touch and a sculpture for the eye." Self-described as an "ambassador of space," Artschwager's approach focused on the structures of perception and delay, striving to conflate the world of images, which can be apprehended but not physically grasped, and the world of rudimentary objects that inhabit everyday space, using materials, such as Celotex, to create a 3-dimensional blurred vision effect. He returned to the same materials throughout his life, which recalled his belief that there are no true essences, but rather, that identities and relationships are in flux, and that objects are de-stabilized via their situation within seemingly stable contexts. Following many solo exhibitions with Leo Castelli, beginning in 1965, Artschwager's work has been the subject of many important surveys, including major touring retrospectives organized by the Albright Knox (1979), at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1988); which then traveled to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Museum of Contemporary Art (LA); Palacio de Valasquez, Madrid; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; and Stadtische Kunsthalle, Dusseldorf; Deutsche Guggenheim, Berlin; and Kunstmuseum Winterthur (2003). His third major retrospective, ***Richard Artschwager!*** was mounted at the Whitney in 2012, and traveled to the Hammer Museum (LA); Haus der Kunst, Munich; and Nouveau Musée National de Monaco, through 2014.

"*ARTSCHWAGER*," LEO CASTELLI GALLERY, NEW YORK, 1965 (*WALKER* [1964] ON FLOOR RIGHT).

MATH BASS

(b. 1981, NEW YORK, NY)

Math Bass lives and works in LA. Bass's practice encompasses sculpture and painting, as well as performance and video. Her paintings and sculptures employ a formalism suffused with a human presence through scale and the mimicry of utilitarian objects. As the expected function of Bass's images and objects are subverted, Bass considers a subjectivity that is unfixed. For the last ten years, Bass has developed an approach that combines voice with architectures, in which structures function to prop, or sustain, performative events. Bass has performed, screened, and exhibited at The Hammer Museum, Human Resources, REDCAT, Overduin and Co. (LA); Montehermoso Cultural Centre, Vitoria-Gasteiz (Spain); Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco); Leo Koening Inc. Projekte, Art in General, Anthology Film Archives, Wallspace Gallery (NY); Nikolaj Contemporary Art Center (Copenhagen, Denmark); and National Center for Contemporary Art (Moscow, Russia), among others. She holds a BA from Hampshire College and an MFA from UCLA.

MATH BASS. COURTESY OF OVERDUIN & CO. 2014. *DOGS AND FOG*. PERFORMANCE VIEW AT OVERDUIN & KITE. LOS ANGELES. JULY 17, 2011.

JAMES LEE BYARS

(b. 1932, DETROIT, MI; d. 1997, CAIRO, EGYPT)

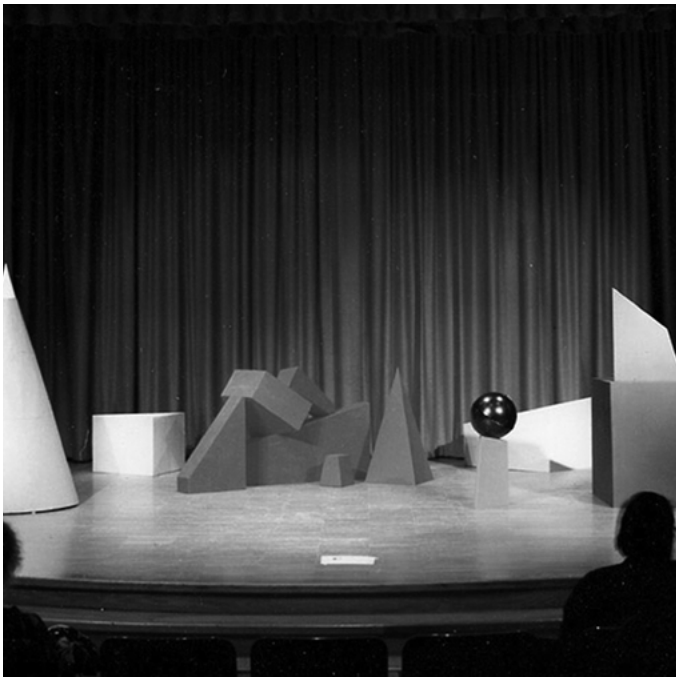
James Lee Byars has deeply influenced a new generation of artists working in installation and performance. *1/2 An Autobiography* was the inaugural exhibition at the Museo JUMEX, in Mexico City, now at MoMA PS1, and is the first major retrospective of the artist in the United States. A total enigma, Byars often wore an all-white suit and a black top hat, and adorned his environments with lavish and luxurious textiles, gold leaf, balls of red roses, granite, marble, and other natural elements, inspired by th perfection of Roman, Greek, and Egyptian temples and tombs. He constructed flamboyant, yet austere, costumes made of gold lamé, silks, and elegant plastics. He was interested in using the collective experience, and it was through it that he sought the perfect mode for the interrogation of the self, the other, and human nature. His art, which was largely conceptual in nature, referred to his own ghost, his absence, and triumphed questions over answers. He adopted a script that was illuminated by a proliferation of beautiful, hand-drawn gold stars, and used the postal service to relay messages, highly encrypted letters, and invitations to his shows. For his two-part exhibition at the infamous Eugenia Butler Gallery, once located on La Cienega Blvd. in LA (1968-71), the artist carved a tiny slit on the ceiling of the gallery, and painted the walls crimson. The tiny slit provided the only light source to the space; Mrs. Butler was barred from entering or opening the gallery; people were invited to descend into the red space through another hole and recall his presence by reading passages about the artist, mailed in from all over the world. The work was titled *This is the Ghost of James Lee Byars Calling*. He died in Cairo, just as he had always wished, facing the Great Pyramid and the Sphinx of Giza.

JAMES LEE BYARS, *BYARS AND BEUYS AT SAMMLUNG SPECK*, IMAGE © BENJAMIN KATZ

GUY de COINTET

(b. 1934, PARIS, FRANCE; d. 1983 VENICE BEACH, CA)

Guy de Cointet, the ambidextrous son of military code-breakers, collaborated with Robert Wilhite, Eric Orr, Viva Superstar, Billy Barty, to name a few, on plays, musical scores, and sets, throughout his life. His drawings and paintings—sometimes doubling as props—use language, shapes, and lines, to disrupt institutionalized hierarchies and reveal the fractured nature of words and letters in the face of human interpretation. The textuality in his work presents missing links, nonsensical poetics, noise-utterance, and metonymic structures that mirror, convey, and present radical alternatives to the experience of text, and the voice. Migrating from Algeria and Paris, to New York, and finally Los Angeles, he took inspiration from Mexican soap operas, melodramas, and the work of Raymond Roussel, to carve out the inner-workings of the language plays. The cosmos and their elements recur in his poems, and cryptograms—sometimes written backwards, in mirror-form—revealing other possibilities for inquiry, communication, and disagreement. While his works are seemingly systemic, there is often one crucial piece missing, a punctual link that whimsically disrupts, or perverts, what would otherwise be a rational system, and rather than civilize the speaker through speech, returns the speaker to a pre-intuitive, pre-cognitive, or savage-like, state. Public collections include MoMA (NY), MoCA and LACMA (LA), the Centre Pompidou (Paris), and the Museo JUMEX (Mexico City), among others.



GUY de COINTET and ROBERT WHILITE, *ETHIOPIA*, PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION, BARNSDALL PARK THEATER, LOS ANGELES, 1976

MARCEL DUCHAMP

(b. 1887 BLAINVILLE-CREVON, FRANCE;
d. 1968 NEUILLY-SUR-SEINE, FRANCE)

Marcel Duchamp is the ultimate avant-gardist whose subversive attitude continues to impact contemporary art. A daring non-traditionalist that refused to be categorized or associated, Duchamp worked in mechanographic ways, used word-play, and consistently referenced the machine, chance, and motion. An avid player of chess, Duchamp believed that life should be like a game in which people could be lazy, if they so wished—"there is enough vitality in man in general that he cannot stay lazy"—and where garbage collectors would be considered nobility. Duchamp preferred to work on a single piece for years, rather than the "quick art" that characterized the post-war period. Nevertheless, he is well-known for his ready-mades, most famously *Fountain* (1917) and *Bicycle Wheel* (1915), a standard bicycle wheel attached to a wooden stool, which came about "as a pleasure to have in my room… like a fire that is always burning." His ready-mades represent a challenging rupture for Modernism, radically shaking the foundations of originality and authorship. Duchamp thought of art as a "habit-forming drug," and by using carefully selected ready-mades to define art he avoided that tendency, recognizing that art needed the onlooker, or society, more than it needed the artist. In *The Afternoon Interviews*, by Calvin Tompkins, Duchamp talks about the dubious nature of causality, science, and God: "Because you light a match, you consider that a law. It's a very nice word, *law*, but it has no deep validity." In these interviews, Duchamp also talks about the fourth dimension, and the significance of phenomenological experience in relation to sculpture, the body, and to sex: "[…] To understand something in four dimensions, conceptually speaking, would amount to seeing around an object without having to move: to feel around it. For example, I noticed that when I hold a knife, a small knife, I get a feeling from all sides at once. And this is as close as it can be to a fourth-dimensional feeling. Of course from there I went on to the physical act of love, either as a woman or a man. Both have fourth-dimensional feelings. This is why love has been so respected!"

Public collections include Museum of Modern Art, New York; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Art Institute of Chicago; Menil Collection, Houston; Tate, London; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Musée d´Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; and Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Major retrospective exhibitions include Pasadena Museum of California Art (1963); Tate, London (1966); Philadelphia Museum of Art (1973); Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1977); and Palazzo Grassi, Venice (1993).

DAN FINSEL

(b. 1982, LEHIGHTON, PA)

Dan Finsel lives and works in Los Angeles. Through video, performance, and sculpture, the artist embodies a double, Dan Finsel, using his own body, or other foils of himself, fabrications, "self-boxes", and wet clay, to explore psycho-sexual manifestations and unfulfilled, or displaced, desire. His most recent iterations—a series of tables, drawings, and collages— invoke certain repressions, childhood traumas, and give way to formal permutations—all highly stylized—whose inspiration is derived from historical, or aesthetic, pastiche, and more specifically, from a self-oriented art therapy book titled *The Inward Journey*, by Margaret Keyes, found in his parents' library. His work was exhibited at the Hammer Museum, Richard Telles and Parker Jones, (LA), Artist Films International at Ballroom (Marfa, TX), Whitechapel Gallery and the ICA, (London), and group exhibitions at Francois Ghebaly Gallery (LA), and Clifton Benevento (NY). His project *Becoming Her, for Him, for He: Becoming Him, for Her, for She (Becoming Me, for Me, for Me.)* is currently on exhibition at CAPC, Musée d'Art Contemporain in Bordeaux. He holds an MFA from CalArts, and a BFA from Kutztown University, Pennsylvania.

DAN FINSEL, COURTESY OF RICHARD TELLES FINE ART, *E-THAY INWARD-YAY OURNEY-JAY, INSTALLATION VIEW AT RICHARD TELLES FINE ART, IMAGE* © 2014 FREDRIK NILSEN

GORDON HALL

(b. 1983, BOSTON, MA)

Gordon Hall is an artist based in New York. Hall has exhibited and performed at the Sculpture Center, The Kitchen, Movement Research, EMPAC, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, among others. Most recently, Hall's work has been exhibited at Night Club, in Chicago, and will be presented this Fall at the Brooklyn Museum and in a solo exhibition at Foxy Production, NewYork. Hall is the director of the Center for Experimental Lectures, a performative lecture series that has been hosted by MoMA PS1, Recess, The Shandaken Project, Alderman Exhibitions, and was hosted by the Whitney Museum of American Art, producing a series of lectures and seminars in conjunction with the 2014 Whitney Biennial. Hall's writing and interviews have been featured in a variety of publications including V Magazine, Randy, Bomb, Title Magazine, *What Is Power? Inquiries Into Contemporary Sculpture* (forthcoming, published by SculptureCenter) and in *Theorizing Visual Studies* (Routledge, 2012). Hall was awarded an LMCC Workspace Residency for 2013-14, attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2013, and the Fire Island Artist Residency in 2012. Hall holds an MFA and an MA in Visual and Critical Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a BA from Hampshire College.

GORDON HALL, *UP ON*, 2012. CONCRETE, PAINT, MOSAIC, PROJECTOR, AND PROJECTOR SCREEN FABRIC. PERFORMANCE: 15:18 MINS. PERFORMERS: CORRINE FITZPATRICK, JONAH GROENEBOER, GORDON HALL, AND SAVANNAH KNOOP. SCULPTURECENTER, NY. PHOTO BY MEGAN MANTIA.

MOLLY LOWE

(b. 1983, PALO ALTO, CA)

Molly Lowe has been included in exhibitions and residencies, both internationally and in the US, including Recess Art, Skowhegan, Elsewhere Museum, Hotel Maria Kapel, Tropical Lab, The Sculpture Center, and Performa 13. In her most recent show, titled *Sorry, Excuse me, Thank you*, at Suzanne Geiss Gallery, Lowe suspended a crowded matrix of over 100 soft sculptures which blurred the lines between the beautiful and the abject, the internal and external, to simulate the prosaic everydayness of anonymous nudges, squabbles, touches, and collisions between bodies in public space, as in a subway train, meat market, or bathhouse. Working intuitively, between sculpture, painting, photography, installation, and video, Lowe presents figures, shapes, and head-to-toe-swathed bodies that disturb the viewer towards a transformative self-consciousness, one that penetrates uncomfortably under the skin, and remains there. Impossible to shake off, this transformative experience invites the viewer to lovingly confront the particularities of the human body—moles, scars, deformities, amputations—awkward elements that would otherwise remain secret, shameful, or grotesque. She holds a BFA in Painting from the Rhode Island School of Design, and an MFA in Sculpture from Columbia University.

MOLLY LOWE, *LEG SCISSORS 2*, SPANDEX, COTTON, LATEX PAINT, RUBBER, 69 x 62 x 28" (175.26 x 157.48 x 71.12 CM.), 2014. PHOTO ADAM REICH. COURTESY OF THE SUZANNE GEISS COMPANY.

ROBERT MORRIS

(b. 1931, KANSAS CITY, MO)

Robert Morris emerged with the seminal exhibition *Primary Structures* at the Jewish Museum in 1966. In the 1970s, Morris's work was characterized by his use of ephemeral materials, such as heavy felt, mirrors, textiles, steam, and dirt in an effort to dematerialize the object, creating works that could be appreciated only briefly before they disappeared or were removed by the artist; for example *Untitled (Steam)* (1968–9). The photographic documentation of these works was often the only material trace of these attempts to negate the very physicality of the artistic gesture. Morris continued his involvement with performance art and movement, especially in relation to Simone Forti, with whom he was married then, as well as with collaborators Walter De Maria, Yvonne Rainer, and La Monte Young. One of the most significant iterations of these concerns was *bodyspace-motionthings*, which was exhibited at the Tate Gallery in 1971, then re-mounted in 2009 at the Tate Modern. Morris's early sculpture emphasizes a banal repertoire of form and subject matter, while attempting to investigate the role of language, movement, and duration. *Metered Bulb* (1962-63), in which a working light bulb is displayed with an electric company meter monotonously recording its expenditure, is typical of his early use of unconventional means. Morris used industrial felt to question the realm of sculpture—for its anatomical associations to the skin and to the body— which reflects his spiritual exploitation of natural laws, or gravity, as well as his distaste for the "well-built" aesthetic of Minimalism as a whole, as stated in his seminal essay "Anti-Form," (1968).

MYRON STOUT

(b. 1908, DENTON, TX; d. 1987, PROVINCETOWN, MA)

Myron Stout started exhibiting in the early 1950s at the height of the Abstract Expressionist movement pursuing his own style of small-scale, geometric, purist paintings, following in the tradition of Hofmann, who once said, "[Stout] had a fantastic kind of energy, and what he made you aware of was the way painting *is* energy." A soft-spoken and private man, Stout had his first one-man show in April 1954 at the Stable Gallery, New York, which was comprised of his multi-colored abstract paintings and several charcoal drawings. His second, and last, such exhibition was at the Hansa Gallery, New York, in 1957, which focused on the black and white works, in graphite, which he is most associated with. Stout was interested in mythology and music, and these influences are found in the titles of his paintings, for which he never used rulers, stencils, or tape. B.H. Friedman writes, "In Stout's paintings and drawings, there is always the touch of the human hand... What at first appears to be blunt, unaesthetic, lacking "touch" [...] is on closer examination, filled with Stout's own tender precision, thoughtful concreteness, passion for exactitude." Since his 1980 retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art, Stout has since been the subject of several shows including the collaboration between Kent Fine Art and Richard Bellamy in 1990 resulting in the second monograph on the artist's oeuvre. Stout always kept a journal, and on June 4, 1953, he wrote: "The life of a symbol is in its refusal to become fixed. It is through its metaphorical quality that it takes on a thousand meanings, meanings changing in time as you work, or afterward, as you contemplate, meanings changing in space, intraspatial meanings, meanings which take in new values as approached from varying standpoints, frames of mind- emotional and logical. The totality of the painting finally becomes a supreme metaphor."

MYRON STOUT, STABLE GALLERY, NEW YORK, APRIL 5 – 24, 1954.

ABOUT BRICA WILCOX

Brica Wilcox lives and works in Los Angeles. With a background in photography, her installations and other works are informed by ideas about photographic production and discourse. She is part of the collaborative project D-3, with Ali Prosch and Megan Cotts. She holds an MFA from CalArts in Art: Photo and Media and a BFA from the University of Arizona.

Her work has been exhibited at REDCAT, Gallery KM, Human Resources, Machine Project, and Compact Space (LA); Apothecary Gallery (Chattanooga, TN); CCS Gallery at UC Santa Barbara; Central-Trak Gallery (Dallas); the Museum of Contemporary Art (Tucson); and GlogauAIR Showcase (Berlin). She is on the editorial board of X-TRA Contemporary Art Quarterly.

ABOUT CARLO QUISPE

Carlo Quispe lives and works in New York. He creates narratives—through illustration, art books, and comics—in which politics and socialities touch. URANUS COMICS, his new magazine published by Printed Matter, creates narratives out of semi-imagined stories combined with portraits of friends, lovers and himself. Sometimes a street per
former, Quispe has been a working artist, since 1996, through collaborations, workshops, and activism. His humor comics like Political Will and The Everything Is Ok can be found in WW3 Illustrated, published by PM Press, and in the anthology QU33R, published by Northwest Press.
www.vranvs.blogspot.com

KENT