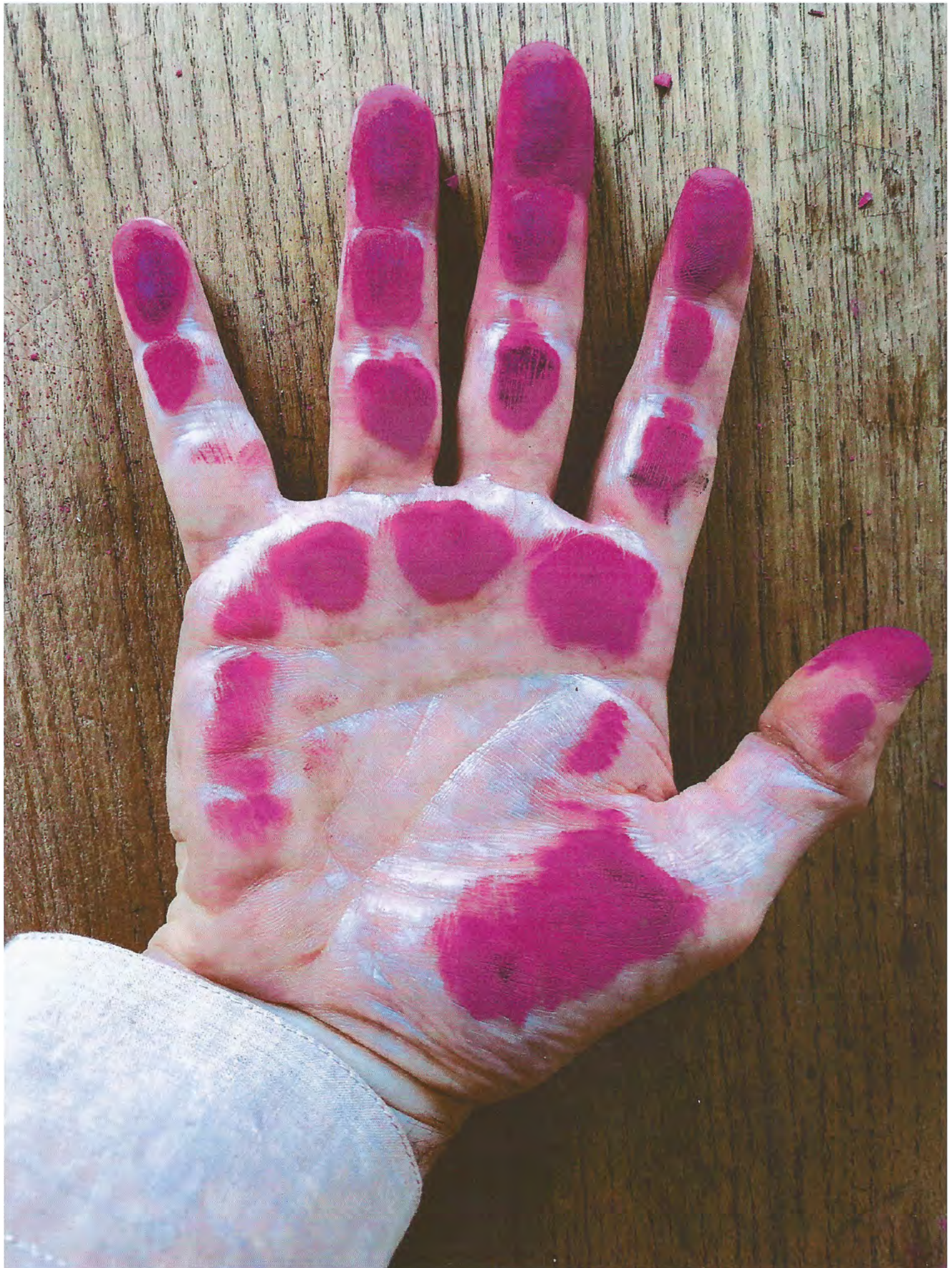


RADICAL INCOHERENCY

the art and times of Richard Dailey





# PRIVATE NOTES FOR AND ON RICHARD DAILEY

## *introduction by Adrian Dannatt*

So where can we begin with the world of Richard Dailey? Should one start in admiration of the box collages hung upon the wall or with the taste of those expert negronis, could we commence with the giant feather sculptures or the best coffee in Paris, begin with the typewriter poems or perhaps the sanded clouds hung from the ceiling, the delicious Moroccan dinners, photographs and texts, homemade cakes and scones, the literary salons. No, it is hard to know how to introduce this enchanted kingdom, to first creak open the doors to the domain of Dailey where the pleasure of his company, rich anecdotage, is inseparable from the fecund creativity on every side, where such friends, food, drink and conversation act as a potent extension, celebration, confirmation of the artist's *oeuvre*.

Thus in this most delightful of Parisian apartments one is greeted and guided by Dailey's manifold inspiration, not just the physical art works but the impressive evidence of a life well lived, meaning entirely devoted to the thinking and making of 'culture' in the very largest sense. Here an entire bookshelf can be given over to Dailey's varied volumes, a distinction being made, if necessary, between his handmade limited-edition books which were always intended as art works in themselves, and his novels, collections of poems, dreamjournals whose dissemination and reception remains more mainstream if not commercial.

Likewise on the flat screen we are welcomed by Dailey's equally protean audio-visual works which like his books might, if so obliged, be separated between the more experimental and artistic, for a smaller and more select audience, and the documentaries and feature films that happily play at cinemas and festivals around the world like any other independent movie. The issue of reception and

distribution is central to Dailey's work and as such has always toyed with the bifurcation between the rare and unique and the larger public, a practical exercise in Benjamin's 'work of art in an age of mechanical reproduction', both simultaneously generous in its availability and bold in its exclusivity.

Dailey's work spans thirty years and almost as many media; from vinyl 45 records to large-scale installations, objet trouvé assemblage and drawings, from avant-garde wallpaper to collages, from performance art to video and film shot on every sort of ratio and stock, books of every shape and size and printrun, photographs, sculptural objects, individual texts presented in myriad forms from wall plaques to red and black vintage typescript, and even Twitter messages transformed into elegant hand-stitched embroidery.

It seems Dailey has taken the entire world and synthesised and subverted its vast clamour, distilling the whole of contemporary life as if through the narrow funnel of an hourglass, turning our hubbub into the finest sand of cogitation, an alchemist channelling our reality into something far more refined, a final essence luminous and still in its glass. Yes, Dailey is a visual artist in the most old fashioned sense but he is also a film director, book designer, video maker, poet and novelist, and not least a publisher whose 'afterart' press has produced an exquisite array of art books, journals, chapbooks and higher ephemera including matchbooks.

Dailey has also played an important role as a catalyst in the Parisian cultural landscape, not just as a generous friend and occasional patron of a whole network of pleasingly bohemian characters but also simply by being one of the

best-read, wellinformed, constantly *au fait* connoisseur of everything that is currently happening in literature, film, theatre, contemporary art and music, relied upon by many as a sort of living barometer of all artistic tendencies and temperature.

As such he is reminiscent of those previous Americans-in-Paris, those intellectuals in exile who served as invaluable records of their times, whose omnivorous knowledge and unstinting counsel helped form whole generations of fellow travellers; from Thomas Jefferson as he extended his knowledge of liberal arts and science whilst absorbing the refinements of France, through Henry James to Kay Boyle and Robert McAlmon to George Whitman and Jim Haynes, our Dailey is clearly a central cog in this long Francophile lineage.

Indeed another artist-publisher-writer-entrepreneur to whom Dailey could be usefully compared might be William Copley, yet one more fellow American in Paris, who like Dailey generously exhibited the work of his contemporaries, founded the seminal journal 'Shit Must Stop' and his own publishing house 'The Letter Edged In Black Press' and only in later years found well deserved fame as an artist himself exhibiting under the name CPLY. Much of Copley's source imagery came from his celebrated vintage porn magazine collection, material that Dailey has successfully toyed with himself in his perverse 'Scenettes', both of them sharing a cosmopolitan dexterity when it comes to playing with the respective codes of their dual Transatlantic aesthetic. As Copley memorably put it in his memoir 'Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dealer', "Artists are defined by the language of others and if they appear on the pages of history it is something they never contemplated." Like Copley much of Dailey's energies have been devoted to active collaboration with others and also the straightforward support and promotion of his many friends own wide talents, artistic and literary.

Not least of his contributions in this domain was the creation of the 'Unpub-

lished Thursday' events which in retrospect, with the fish-eye lens of cultural history, may well prove to be one of the most important catalysts of new writing, predominantly in the English language, which Paris experienced in recent times. It was typical of Dailey, and also it should be very much added of his wife Marie, that these occasions not only allowed writers to rehearse and read from their as yet unpublished forthcoming works but they did so accompanied by the most delicious food and wine, the many rewards of these evenings as pleasingly culinary and bibulous as literary.

Interestingly this theme of exile is evinced in some of his oldest works, for amongst the very earliest entries in this exhaustive *catalogue raisonné* would be 'Principal Cities of the Old World', a three-dimensional collage contained in a wooden crate that originally held the finest French wine within which are hung varied points of the European continent plotted against the latitude of their North American equivalents, an homage to Joseph Cornell perhaps who likewise transliterated and juxtaposed the romance of the *ancien régime* with his own contemporary New York reality. From the same period would be Dailey's definitive first physical art work, 'The Spectator' from 1753 set off by Shakespeare's glasses and an open antiquarian book, nicely balanced by a broken vase from his antisemitic Jewish grandma, some sort of metaphor in itself. This was put together in 1989, exactly three decades ago, back in Manhattan before it was clear that Dailey would be moving permanently to Paris, such boxed assemblage suggesting both imminent travel, packed trunks, and an ordering of the past.

Another relatively early piece - 'relative' being the operative word- featured slave owner vintage tintype photographs and an old copy of 'The Pilgrim's Progress', this work from 1991 directly referencing Dailey's own slave-owning ancestors from the Deep South. For indeed Dailey's family background is fascinatingly rich, not just being some quarter Jewish from his long-concealed great-grandfather, a magnificently bearded banker with the

resonant surname 'Schnabele', but also a direct descendant of the famous Comer family of Alabama whose plantations were legion. Dailey himself grew up a living exemplar of David Lynch's dictum 'this whole wide world is wild at heart and weird on top', even as a tender teenager having his mind boggled by Bouguereau's 'Nymph & Satyrs' whilst wandering through the Clark Institute on acid, nearly being raped by an old-fashioned Mack Daddy in Alphabet City and generally taking industrial quantities of varied narcotics.

Amongst the first male intake at the fabled Bennington College, Dailey undoubtedly relished the friendliness of his many fellow female students but was already, in his own way, a serious intellectual. His dissertation was on Satan in Paradise Lost and he spent a full year reading it every day, a devotion he still continues by listening to it regularly as an audiobook. Dailey had also by now demonstrated his unfailing knack for finding the most interesting personalities in the vicinity, in this case the infamously cool philosophy professor Steven Harris whose courses on *Gravity's Rainbow* and Nietzsche transformed Dailey's thinking. As so often with Dailey such fandom came to work both ways, reciprocally, the same Harris having by now become an equally dedicated fan of Dailey's own writing, especially his recent novel 'Unplugged Yellow.'

By the time he left Bennington young Dailey was a determined bohemian, as committed to serious reading and writing as to the visual arts, and thanks to his brilliant friend Daniel Wolf who was already a precocious collector and dealer in the rarest vintage photography, well aware of the complex machinations and rewards of the grown-up art world. Not surprisingly Dailey threw himself fully into the downtown madness, arriving in New York in 1978, a very specific and unique 'scene' now perfectly captured in the aforementioned 'Unplugged Yellow.'

Dailey may claim he spent an entire first year in NYC lying in a hammock drinking rum and pineapple juice and awaiting

inspiration, living on Laight Street on a roof across from Joseph Beuys's star coyote, but the evidence of the novel suggests he was pretty busy, indeed 'plugged' into this whole creative zeitgeist with singular *savoir faire*. Just to survive that level of involvement with the 'No Wave' world was an achievement in itself and to Dailey's credit he then embarked on a Phd in literature at NYU with his next great mentor, the radical poetry critic M.L. Rosenthal; Dailey was the only student he ever granted an 'A', who lit his cigarettes for him, sat drinking wine with him all night, whilst tinkering away on his own thesis on comparative translations of Baudelaire.

Dailey went on to teach English literature at the prestigious Saint Ann's School in Brooklyn, whilst typically being intimately involved with the art department, always seemingly incapable of making any necessary distinction between poetry and visual art, fiction and sculpture, prose and painting. Whilst still teaching sporadically at Pratt and Wagner College, Dailey began practically commuting back and forth between New York and Europe, spending a year in Rome 'trying to write a poem' and feeling increasingly drawn to a full-time life in Paris. Having made this permanent transition by 1991 Dailey soon found himself as fully integrated and involved with the Parisian art world as that of Brooklyn and Manhattan, not least by having teamed up with the artist-musician Christophe Boutin who was looking for just such an active 'poet' to expand the practice.

Together Boutin and Dailey created 'one-star press' putting out a series of strictly limited handmade artist books, signed by them both as artists, ranging from prints runs of only one or two to twenty or six or even as many as 250. These publications, clearly art works in themselves, were not only defiantly discrete in their self-limited distribution but also almost clandestine, to the extent that they have never yet been exhibited in their totality or even entirely listed in a truly complete bibliography. A high-point of the long collaboration

with Boutin was the installation 'Loop the Loop' at the Isy Brachot Gallery in 1993 where Dailey's aphorisms circled the image of a dancer, both text and performer playing in loops.

Dailey's published texts are thick with references to the visual arts: 'In this poem Koons meets Keifer', and he is particularly sensitive to the contemporary reality of our digital domain, from dense social media to the fleeting blur of the image bank; 'Screens archived like Caravaggio meets/ Chuck Close in Taipei.' He remains determined to make no distinction between text and thought and image. But despite this it is still interesting to try and sift, to mine, his published writings for a clue as to the contours of his plastic arts practice, to garner glues as to its pertinent visual ambition. Thus in his recent selection of poems entitled 'Pay Dirt', put out in a limited edition of ten in 2018, we find the following admission of his creative activities, his jousting with the fake: 'My counterfeit Cy Twombly is an obscure joke but drôle/ I have other insider at jokes like a huge inflatable lobster/ My "Homard à Jeff Koons" I also have a Duchamp a pair/ Of elaborate gold earrings which hang on unseeable threads/ At ear level called "La femme invisible mise à nu" but enough/...so I give thanks which I trust my words/ Embody as my fake Cy Twombly incarnates his spirit just/ As much as a real Twombly which even I would sign.'

Likewise in the slim volume of 'Stanzas', published in an edition of just thirty, we can trace a revelatory hint of Dailey's larger hopes of posterity and immortality, that universal desire for posthumous eternity that he might not admit to in person. Here in the poem 'Wasting Time' he asks straightforwardly; 'Who never wanted to leave a slice of self/ As big as Bernini or Michelangelo ...And archived days beyond the fold.' Or in another entitled 'Roil and Churn' he puts it bluntly; 'Permanent as Rome, you outlast you.'

In searching amongst all these scattered clues for some conclusion, some final resolution, I pondered the possible anagrams which might be minted from those

assembled letters that make up that distinctive name of 'Richard Dailey' and liked what could be conjured; '*Heraldic Diary*' suggesting the grandeur of his everyday journal, '*A Diehard Lyric*' echoes his songwriting talents, '*Already Rich Id*' referring to his Freudian firmness, '*Arched Air Idly*' capturing his languid poise, '*Arch Daily Ride*' implying his bicycling over the bridges of Paris and '*Acid Rarely Hid*' obviously connected to his teenage penchant for psychedelics, which then leads to such Surreal non-sequiturs as '*Radial Icy Herd*' and '*Radar Chili Dye*'. And all of this makes perfect sense in the end when Dailey himself, sensing my almost impertinent curiosity, reaches for a draw and pulls out an object for my immediate inspection. It is a black radish nailed to white flooring and bears the appropriate title of 'Sentimental Nihilism.' Looking me in the eye our eternal artist raises a single brow to ask the ultimate question, "Now what possessed me?"

October 31, 2019

## Radical Incoherency

the art and times of Richard Dailey



I started writing poetry when I was a teenager. I lived in suburban New Jersey. Allen Ginsberg lived in New Jersey. He inspired me. William Carlos Williams lived in New Jersey. He inspired Me. There was no Internet. There was proximity.

Poetry became the dominant force in my life. I started a mimeographed magazine. I organised performances. I tried to burn down the school. I wrote and read poetry every day.

I moved to Paris.

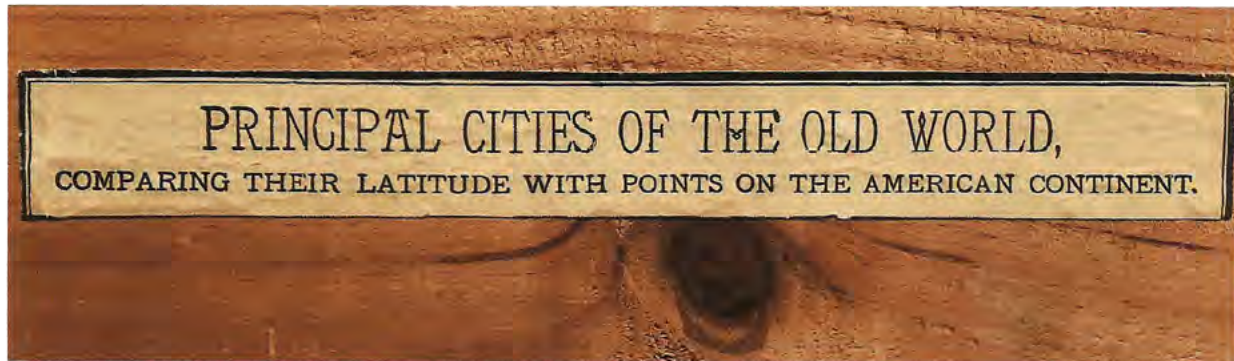


A DIEHARD LYRIC



Living in a city where I could not speak the language freed me from language and made me think hard for the first time about my obsessions and raptures, these Warholian preoccupations. I discovered that my obsessions and my raptures are isomorphic to the point of perfect congruency. I am a homomorphic artist. My art is automorphic.

I started making Cornelian assemblages, boxes, objects and collages. They are poetic. Some contain Language. But none are language based.



PRINCIPAL CITIES OF THE OLD WORLD wood, glue, tacks, thread, old maps  
26cm X 33cm X 10cm



SPECTATOR

18th Century book, old spectacles, wood, metal, glue, antique box  
 broken glass 17cm X 15cm X 13 cm



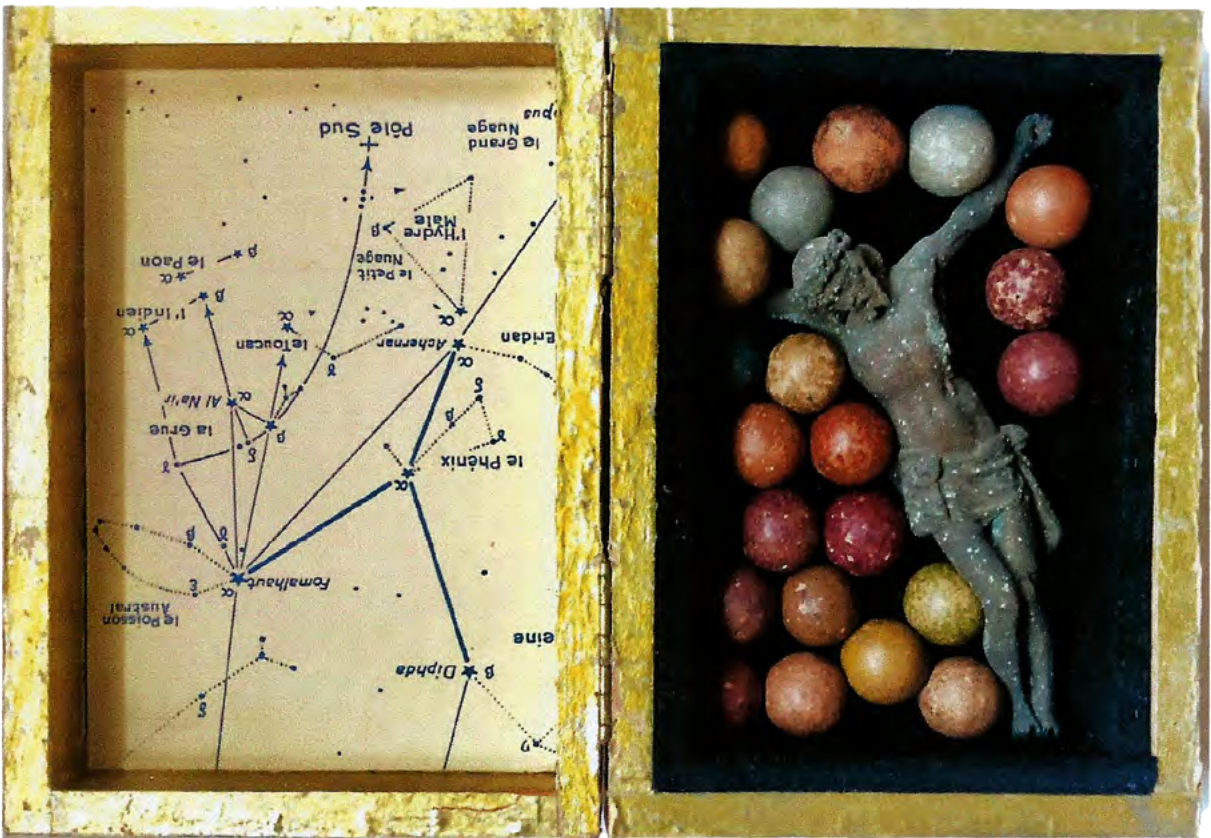
PILGRIMS PROGRESS

17th Century book, wood, glue, tin types  
54cm X 27cm X 3cm



BERNARD AND ROGER (PARIS EXPOSITION 1889)

wood box, gold leaf, photos, stellar maps, antique French marbles,  
broken glass, 17.5cm X 13.5cm X 7.5 cm



MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

box, musical score, star map, antique French marbles, felt, Christ, glue

14cm X 10cm X 4cm



DOUBLE CROSS

antique Christs, wire, pushpins  
31cm X 10cm X 3cm



QUALITY TIME

antique box, tin type, antique French marbles, pins

9.5cm X 9.5cm X 3cm



HA VANA SOUVENIR

OLD BOOK COVER, map, Cuban stamp, tin, silver, computer  
beard, wood, glue 63cm X 49cm X 4cm  
I99I spring NYC



### Waterfall Box

These are the only photographs existant of this box

I made it in NYC In the late 80s from old prints of Niagra Falls, a wine box, and brass and copper strips.

It was one of my favorite pieces .it really gave you a feeling of the falls.

I gave it to Christophe Boutin and Florence Loewy when I moved to Paris for "good". It hung on their livingroom wall on RenéCoty for years. Presumed lost or destroyed.

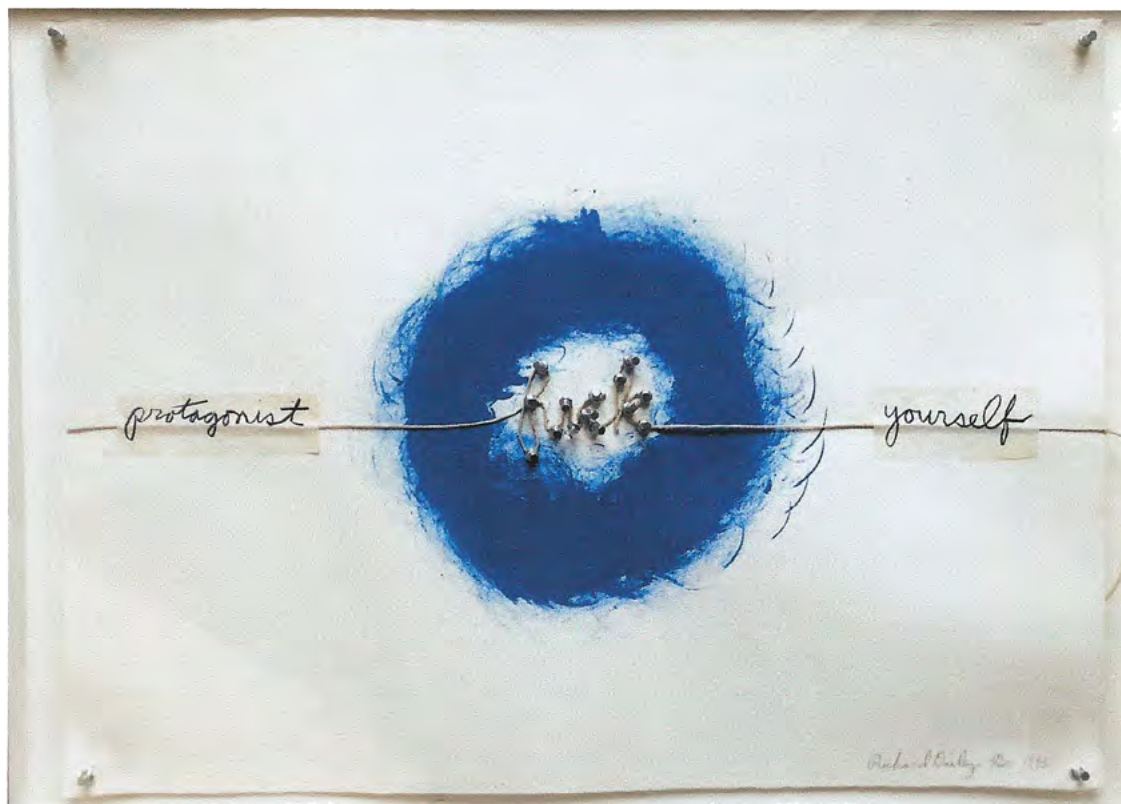


### Chinese Box



The only photo of this piece, another favorite.  
It's in storage. I'll get it out one day.

I discovered that I ha s a ccess to a poetic "norm" - a  
headspace and gestures (not assemblage) that produced work  
that didn't have it's origin in arrangements of the alphabet.  
It was work that didn't require thinking. It was process a nd  
n o t con ce pt, even if I would classify myself as a  
"conceptual" artist. The thinking was all done before and  
after. I made work that hovers between language and image.

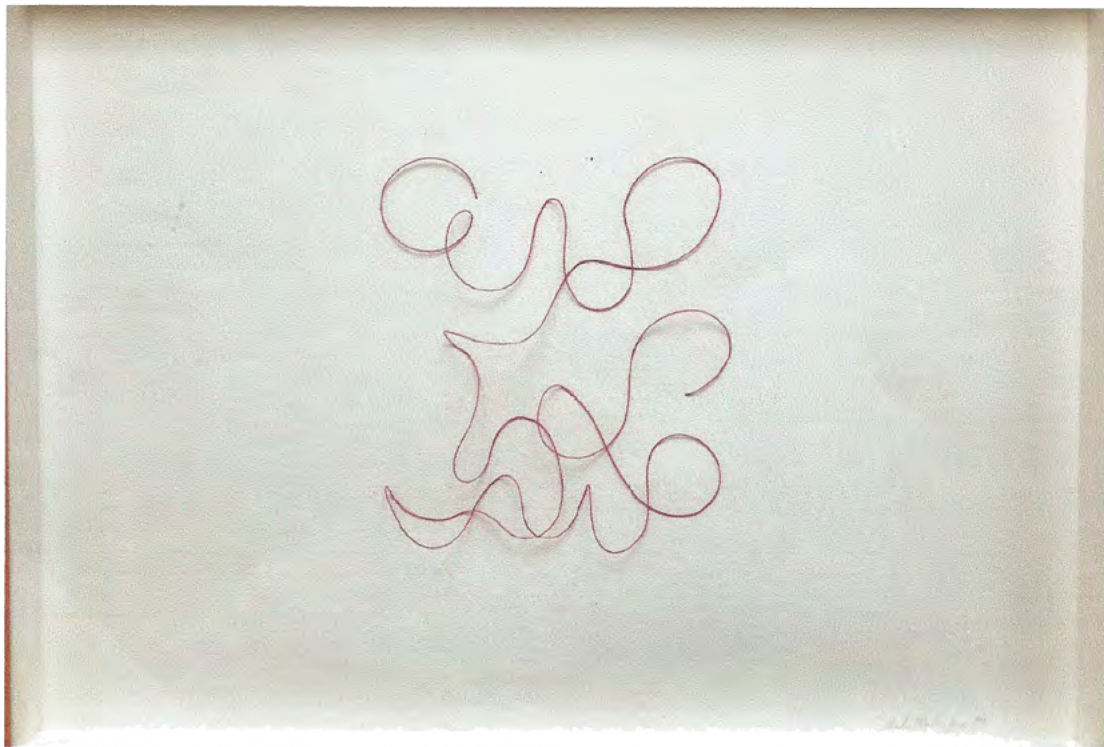


PROTAGONIST FUCK YOURSELF

paper, string, push pins , marker, acrylic paint

85cm X 65cm X 3.5cm Nov 1993

I made work that abandoned language altogether,  
but flirted with a ghostly alphabet.



STRING DRAWING

paper, s tring, glue

70cm X 58 cm X 5.5cm

June 1994

## INFINITE PARROTS

Richard Dailey

Parrots parrot parrots parroting parrots, etc. <sup>1</sup>  
What does parrot conception resemble? <sup>2</sup>  
Between parrot and parrot, find time. <sup>3</sup>  
Any parrot is more than the embellishment of parrots. <sup>4</sup>  
The parrots of Mexico elude the parrots of Paris. <sup>5</sup>  
The violence of parrots is abstract. <sup>6</sup>  
Accidental parrots are extinct. <sup>7</sup>  
No parrot is resolvable. <sup>8</sup>  
Each parrot is a fiction, which parrots know to be a fiction there being  
nothing else. <sup>9</sup>  
Two parrots existing at the same time are bound to coalesce. <sup>10</sup>  
Parrots parrot parrots parroting parrots, etc. <sup>11</sup>.

- 
1. *Parrots live in language loops.*
  2. *A parrot in a mirror.*
  3. *Time is the only parrot.*
  4. *Isn't it the desire of every parrot, instead of repeating what has been said before, however skillfully he may be able to do that, to take his station in the midst of circumstances in which parrots actually live and to endeavor to give them, as well as himself, the words that they need in those very circumstances?*
  5. *There is a sense in parrots beyond parrots.*
  6. *See ULTRARATIONAL HEAPS OF FEATHERS (A. Parrot, Guatemala U. press, 1905), p.13.*
  7. *Parrots are more like angels than apes.*
  8. *Parrots are unmotivated and enigmatic.*
  9. *Green parrots are not equal to blue parrots.*
  10. *Each of them invariably contains constellated aspects of the other.*
  11. *Language loops live in parrots.*

[Parrot ['pærot], s.m. (ornit.) pappagallo (anche fig.) (N.d.T)]



## THE CURSE OF THE KNAPPS

The 20 guillotines were the first time I asked someone to realise a piece for me. If I were not friends with Pascal Knapp I never would have conceived of the project, at least not in this form. Pascal was a sculptor or who worked in granite and steel. He had an atelier first in the warrens on rue Ramponeau, and when the city tore down the entire neighborhood, on rue St. Maur. It was in the back of a double series of courtyards, which at the time were invested with all kinds of people doing light manufacturing.

The really hard part of making the guillotines was welding the aluminium Us to the steel bases.

Pascal had a twin brother, Vincent, who became a successful commercial photographer. Their uncle was Peter Knapp, the famous fashion photographer from the 70s who took the first images of Twiggy in a miniskirt.

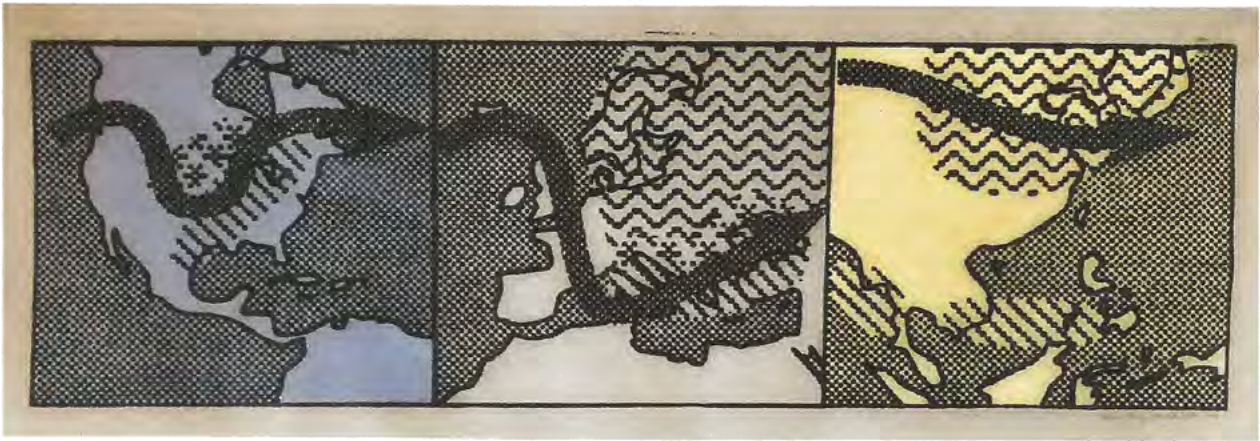
All of the Knapps seemed cursed in the same way to me - they were ~~xxx~~ first-rate artisans who aspired to be "artists" - I remember when the Cartier Fondation was in Jouy-en-Josas, where Peter Knapp lived at the time, they held a show called "BLUE" and invited a lot of artists to participate. Peter, retired from fashion photography and quite wealthy, was taking pictures of clouds in very blue skies - he was certain he 'd be invited to show - he lived next door! It would get him out of the string of third-rate exhibitions spaces, which were all he could find.

You guessed it - the Cartier Fondation snobbed him. "On ne veut pas de cette esprit là."

It's strange how unhappy really talented, successful people can be. Can make themselves.

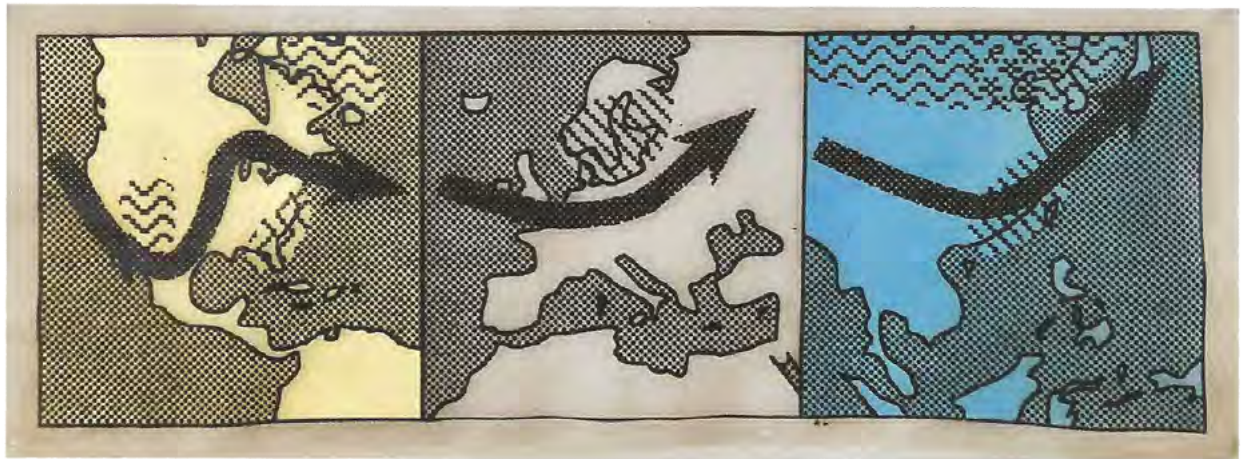
Pascal held great parties in his studio - he would park his pickup truck in front - kind of a tailgate party. We used to joke about how he should just work in styrofoam and plastic instead of granite and steel. It would look the same and be much lighter. The joke eventually found its way into my film LUNA & Ms. Y - in fact the whole basis of the two very different artists had its origin in our joke.

I remained good friends with Pascal and his twin brother Vincent for many years - Vincent died tragically just shy of his 50th birthday and Pascal disappeared into upstate NY.



Nov 17, 1998

170cm X 65cm



Oct 26, 1998

170cm X 65cm

The weather maps hybridize pop (Roy Lichtenstein) and conceptual (On Kawara) art. The maps appeared every day in the now defunct NY Herald Tribune. Each one is specific for its day. I cut them out, glued them to paper and signed them from 1996 to 1998. Occasionally I enlarged the very small newsprint images and photocopied them on translucent plastic ("polyester") and partially colorized them. Wall color shows through the translucent parts.



*Print Daily*  
Thursday, September 19,  
1996



October 5, 1998  
*Print Daily*



November 21, 1998  
(w)holes  
*Print Daily*



# TIM MAUL: PEEL OFF BACKING AND APPLY

*Talking Points on Richard Dailey's  
RADICAL INCOHERENCY*

Earlier this year I reread George Baker's 'The Artwork Caught By The Tail; Francis Picabia And Dada In Paris' (October Books, 2007) which coincided rather nicely with Richard Dailey's invitation to contribute a text to his own publication 'RADICAL INCOHERENCY'. Through a lens of critical theory, psychoanalysis, and semiotics Baker's scholarly tome scrutinizes the flurry of production primarily between Francis Picabia and Marcel Duchamp. Dada drawings, painting, photography, montage, cinema and performed events are argued for as not as merely 'tongue-in-cheek' in-jokes between one trust fund kid (Picabia) to another newly minted international artstar (Duchamp) but are convincingly positioned as precise meta-conversations that achieve nothing less than to hold modernism at bay in that brief moment before hard earned cubism fell victim to chic surrealism. Baker's meticulous translations of this material is like Dada itself, occasionally thrilling and sometime tedious. I wish I spoke French.

I do not have the critical chops to situate the sprawl of Dailey's project (which employs almost exactly the same media as Team Dada) among this band of long gone provocateurs but the correspondences resonate when introduced to Dailey's objects, images, works on paper, publications, fiction and feature length films. How do I approach this? When I received the file of 'RI' from Dailey a few weeks ago I scrolled down the one hundred-plus pages and jotted down immediate responses ("First word, best word") to the motley and challenging pageant of works and activities that make up Dailey's oeuvre. Then I paused a beat. In a recent conversation with a (close) art dealer friend I inquired how a new assistant was working out, if she helped with sales, etc. "No", he responded wistfully, "She can present work to clients but I have to give her talking points." Talking points...I like this idea in regard to 'RI' so I will return to this archive and elaborate on

my original responses, 'talking points', leaving their application to you.

1) 'RADICAL INCOHERENCY' is typed out in red capital letters on what I assume is an actual typewriter, very noir. It's a specific choice. Did he buy the ribbon online or did he know a shop? Paris has everything. The typewritten captions throughout 'RI' gives the project an period look like Kerouac's continuous scroll of 'On The Road'. The typewriter's urgent tapping sound has been mostly eliminated by the digital, like the 'click' of the camera which I sorely miss. The occasional off center 'typo' throughout 'RI' gives the text the urgency of the ransom note.

2) An American kid from the suburbs, like me. Long hair on men became more common in the 70's. In the 60's you could still get your ass kicked or be denied services when outside your personal orbit. If you are a certain kind of individual you flee the 'burbs as soon as you can. The prospect of having to return is a nightmare.

3) Cornellian boxes. RD lives in Paris. Does that still make you an expatriate in this era of streaming media and skypeing? Cy Twombly. Joyce. Kubrick. Lee Miller. Joan Mitchell Chris Marker. Joyce apparently inquired about all things Dublin whenever he encountered a countryman, a map of Dublin tattooed on his brain. Cornell was an obsessive Francophile, living the life resembling an ex-pat marooned in Flushing Queens. A scopophilic flaneur enjoying several deserts at the counter of Woolworths. Poets relate to his work. Why did RD re-approach it? Perhaps to comprehend it...I sometimes tell students if they don't understand why an artwork looks the way it does try making one yourself. Cornell's boxes were produced with a jaw dropping array of self taught craft skills. Nostalgia looms large here, but for what? The church maybe. Two antiquated crucifixes are better than one. RD's pieces have the aura of the reliquary and all the creepy occult stuff about religion, particularly Catholicism, now generally repressed except in post-colonial societies like the Philippines. "Must we always look to Rome?" inquired Robert Smithson. Desires in modern life are often separated from us by glass. Duchamp again. The mini-museum. Miniaturization. The shop



window as museum. Jack Smith's idea of 'pastiness' as located in old movies.

4) New Jersey. Diane Arbus loved it there, for her a convenient hybrid of New England and the South. Allen Ginsburg, William Carlos Williams, Patti Smith and Robert Smithson. Visionaries and romantics. And Ryan McGinley. And The Boss. There is a great deal of 'beat' in the improvised design, eros, and slight mysticism noted throughout 'RI', specifically in thinking back to Wallace Berman's sequential collages and his Semina magazine (1955-64).

5) Many works on paper. Poets who later made art; Vito Acconci, John Giorno, Rene Ricard, and Marcel Broodthaers (especially in regard to RD). If you can push words around a page you can push stuff around a canvas, wall, or room. Broodthaer's wish to produce 'insincere' art. 'Truly bad art is always sincere' stated Robert Hughes. RD's DIY aesthetic runs through everything here, the self published poems and especially the self financed films. Language in relation to image. THIS IS NOT A PIPE. Godard's 'Histoires'. Draw a word, write a picture. The destabilized correspondence between what you see and its caption as gateway drug.

6) 'String Drawing' Marcel's '3 standard stoppages'. Chance operations in art, incoherency? Harry Callahan's light drawings and Pollocks skeins of paint and enamels, each layer destroying the previous. Abstract expressionism; knowing when to step away and stop.

7) Parrots. Mimetic beings. Exotica. Parrot's 'parrot' in an endless loop. Watercolors like decor in a pleasant cafe. (Actually, much of RD's art while highly determined has a leisurely bent.) My friend Bill Beckley early in his career taught a raven to 'say' the word 'dark' and took photographs of the bird repeating it. Did parrots always mimic spoken language? Could that have caused domestic problems in the days prior to recording technologies?

8) I liked weather maps a lot when I was a kid. Directional pointing. I also pored over maps that documented invasions and troop movements like on D-Day.

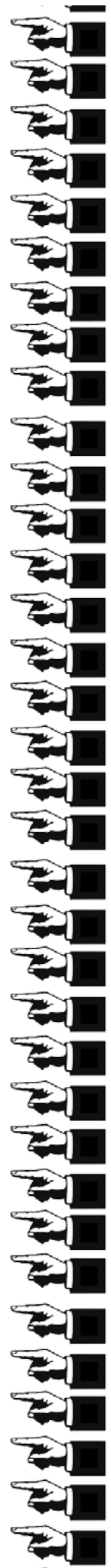
9) Whole and holes. Absence and presence, that mantra of the keen photographer. Addition or removal?

Orifice/portal or space to penetrate either by sight or by a physical act of probing and passage. Dailey's big 'holes' ambitious and belong on walls. There and not there the basic of mimetic forms. The cartoon mouse rapidly painting a 'hole' in the wall which he magically enters and which the cartoon cat naturally slams into.

10) Private parts in public places. Castrating vandals. Did sculptors really carve juvenile penises because they weren't considered erotic?

11) Afterart. Perhaps, as Danto believes, at least painting is dead, bumped off by Warhol's Brillo Box where the art object and its subject were relatively undistinguishable from each other. But like The Rolling Stones painting staggers on exploiting every pictorial device or resurrecting some neglected style making it new again briefly. I never visited the Afterart Cafe, was it like the Hotel California where 'you can check out anytime but you can ever leave'? RD was informed here by Al Ruppersberg's 'Al's Cafe' (1969) and other artist established clubs and hangouts in recent history like Martin Kippenburger's 80's Berlin space 'S.O.36' and Les Levine's earlier proposed rival to Max's Kansas City 'Levines', which I am not even sure was real. Afterart has overtones of Beckett (another ex-pat!) a purgatorial space of transition. I examine the polaroids for familiar faces and recognize one. Afterart for the waiting rooms of the afterlife.

12) Victor Burgin wrote of 'diagephobia' a supposed condition where one exchanges the commitment to finish a film or novel with perusing stills or reading reviews. I admit to this, and to the fact that as of this writing ever seen RD's films, which appear to be Indie projects not 'the cinema of installation' designated by Catherine David. The color stills appear populated with 'real' looking young people often in attitudes of one reverie or another. Amateurs? Local superstars? An acquaintance suggested RD may be the 'John Waters of Paris', high praise indeed. Revered and now mainstream Waters is a parodist, his targets being the American family and in the last several decades contemporary art channelling 'picture generation' figures like John Baldesarri and Richard Prince, naturally. Do RD's actors work out of im



prov like directors Ken Loach or Woody Allen or is a bare bones *mis en scene* introduced like JLG, Warhol, or true oddballs like Harry Jaglom or Milton Moses Ginsburg? (See, I do sort of know my stuff). I appreciate RD's risk taking, frugality, and the tenacious 'learning on the job' film making requires. RD's posters for his film (s) earn our attention: 'The Visit' (2010) is especially carnivalesque with its young cast featured in round inserts (holes? spotlights?) and in the use of 'psychedelic' lettering once favored by the Fillmore Auditorium and ubiquitous in counter-culture graphics of the 60's and beyond. Also of note is the image of a young shirtless man with an antler-cap who could be the generic hipster but in a distinctly Euro context, as the background of the apartment attests. 'Luna and Miss Y's' poster is a more contemporary pastiche that signals the 'foreign' arthouse film along with the distinct impression that anything goes. A camera held by one of the actors promises the voyeuristic.

13) Numerous works around 'feather types' illustrating the mildly erotic thread that runs through 'RI...Pudenda?', something akin to Beardsley and Art Nouveau here. And that studio. I remember an image of Man Ray's Paris atelier, long and narrow, not much light.

14) Clouds. Big pieces fitting the subject. Irregularly shaped plexiglass forms, the polar opposites of Stella's 'black' paintings. Clouds are moved along the sky in directions indicated in those earlier weather map arrows. The comic strip's 'thought balloon'.

15) 'Mythy Quck'. Anagram? Text projected on a nude woman striking arty 'studio photography' poses. Projections on female bodies always remind me of the credit sequence of movies about Bond, James Bond. A Onestar book.

16). Impoverished hand rendered language on several materials including foam core planks. The economic austerity of Fluxus present here, which is adored as both porto-relational and conceptual art that no one made a penny from in their lifetimes(s), except maybe Joseph Beuys (now banished) and Yoko Ono. Official Fluxus also had a passport-stamping administrative dimension that I believe was informed by George Maciuna's post war experiences as a refugee. Robert Filliou still my fave. And we cannot forget Ben Vautier.

17) RD stated that he came to photography a naif which is certainly possible. His images are a little rough on the eye, they fight back, resisting control, occasionally lurid and semi-de-

lirious. Intentional? I'm not comfortable with the term 'outsider' when it comes to art and I wonder if it even exists in photography after the digital democratized technology making everyone a 'pro'. The restless imbalance in some of RD's pictures almost suggest some occult or unknowable personal use or reasoning like Sigmar Polke's.

18) Risqué postcards from back in day, quite 'innocent' considering what was out there. Perhaps souvenirs of a trip to continent. Lovingly hand colored.

19) 'Harinezumi' photographs. A kind of camera. RD's have the grain and texture of the surveillance image. All photography is a form of time travel. Vintage camera's and processes may accomplish this without trading in nostalgia but it's rare.

20) Poetry and dreams. For some a dream diary is a necessity. I always transcribe any dream about an art object or photographic image, which happens with some regularity (Zolpidem). Dreams and the uncanny. Surrealism; a jazz age advertising agency for the selling of 'Dreams Money Can Buy' (Richter). RD dreamt about Lewis Baltz, another ex-pat I knew peripherally and whose photography I both admired and owned. Somewhat forgotten is my former instructor Jon Borofsky, who rendered crude versions of his dreams on small canvases in the 70's. He was later Mike Kelley's teacher at Calarts and I believe an influence. Jim Shaw does dreams. Jasper Johns dreamt of a flag.

21) Posters, surprising choices here. A certain degree of camp for the cinephile/collector. Woody Allen's apartment decor in 'Play It Again Sam'. Original matchbook design, again a bit risqué, something similar must have been provided by nightclubs like The Stork Club and Brown Derby back when 'Cigarette girls' working for tips. Striking a match to light another's smoke briefly illuminating his or her face.

22) Signage, who can resist? The overlap of seeing and reading. Jasper Johns got that ball rolling. The importance of the appropriate lettering or type font in conveying mood, attitude, and the volume in which it echoes in our heads.

23) 'Unplugged Yellow'. Desirous individuals during the feverish moment that was the 'East Village', '79-80ish. Everyone wanted something from somebody else. Nobodies became somebodies fast for an audience always seemed available. I didn't like the art particularly and hated

cliques of any kind (one of the reasons I moved to Manhattan in the first place in 1969). However I enjoyed going to all the openings on the weekend and dropping by the few clubs that felt simpatico. Danceteria was my favorite, I saw the Pogues there and performed there courtesy Michael Smith. Militant amateurism reigned. Radical Incoherency?

24) Apollinaire photocopies. Really authentic and among the more singular works included in 'RI'. A coloring book could/should be forthcoming. Picasso planned to erect a monument in Montparnasse to his poet friend but it never got off the ground.

25) 45 Records. Love this. More spinning information. Duchamp and autism. Listened to a Jack Goldstein record earlier this year on earphones in a gallery (in the East Village!). A continuous loop of someone drowning, flailing helplessly in the water.

26) Parrots again. Also scary dancing 'X's' like demons or imps illustrated in 19th century advertising for absinthe. Cartoons once put an 'X' over character's eyes to signify death. Chris Burden constructed a big 'X' in the desert and set it on fire. Negation(s).

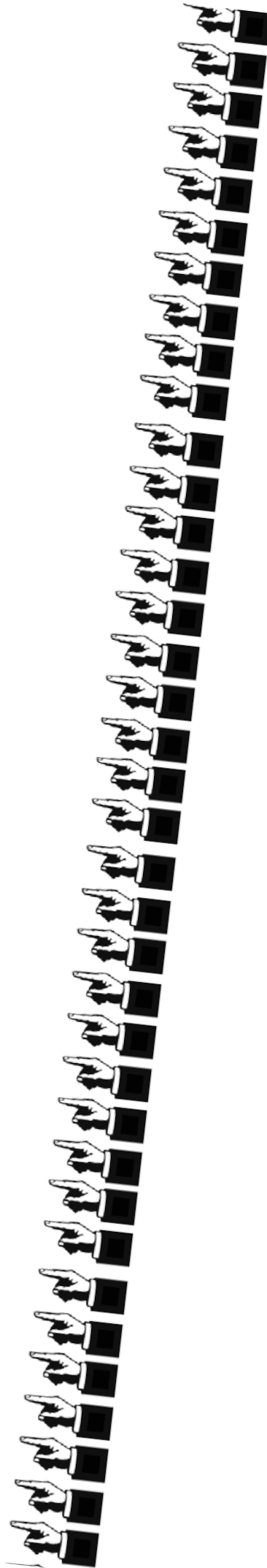
27) Spiral writing, either you or the picture has to move. MD's puns. Again, Smithson quoting Beckett..."Going nowhere, coming from nowhere..."

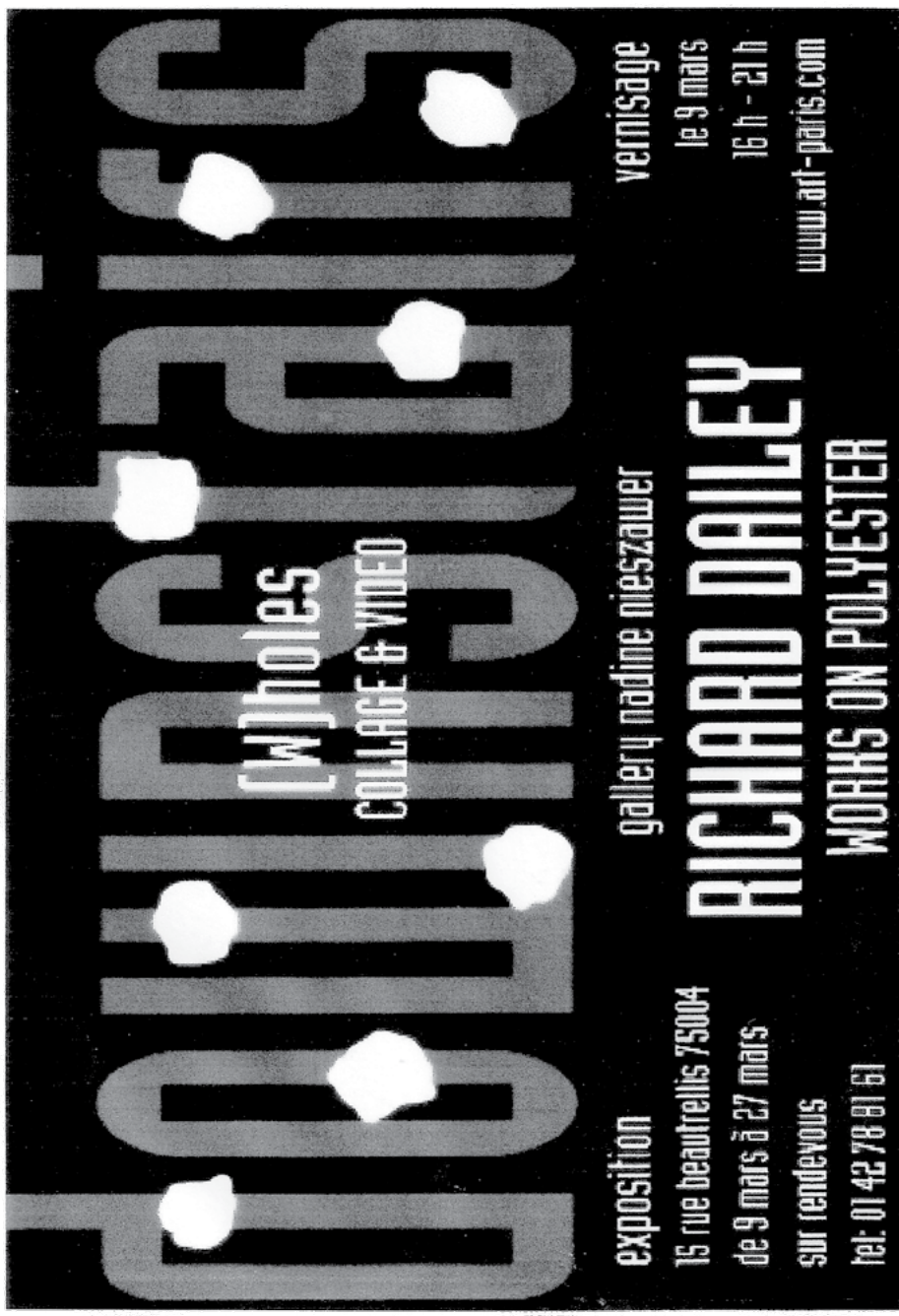
28) Homages. Duchamp, Twombly, and Weiner. Twombly in Rome. Duchamp as New Yorker with our 'amusing' plumbing (here Smithson not so amused). Weiner in Amsterdam, boats and water so prevalent in his vast output.

29) 'Selfies'. The divided self, hands 'painted' different colors. Whatever is touched turns to art. Did RD's camera get smudged? Didn't the ancient Pict's paint themselves blue before they went into battle? Did Yves Klein wear gloves when applying blue-stained women to canvases? (I'll look for the pictures of this....) And what of magenta?

Tim Maul 03/19/19

Tim Maul is an artist and art writer represented by Leslie Tonkonow Artworks & Projects (New York) and Florence Loewy (Paris)





# works

(W)holes  
COLLAGE & VIDEO

exposition  
15 rue beaurellis 75004  
de 9 mars à 27 mars  
sur rendezvous  
tel: 01 42 78 81 61

galerie nadine nieszawer  
**RICHARD DAILEY**  
WORKS ON POLYESTER

vernissage  
le 9 mars  
16 h - 21 h  
[www.art-paris.com](http://www.art-paris.com)

# *(w)holes*



Richard Dailey  
1998



The (w)hole you didn't leave



The (w)hole you could have left



The (w)hole you might have left



The (w)hole you would have left



The (w)hole you must have left



the (w)hole you may have left



The (w)hole you should have left

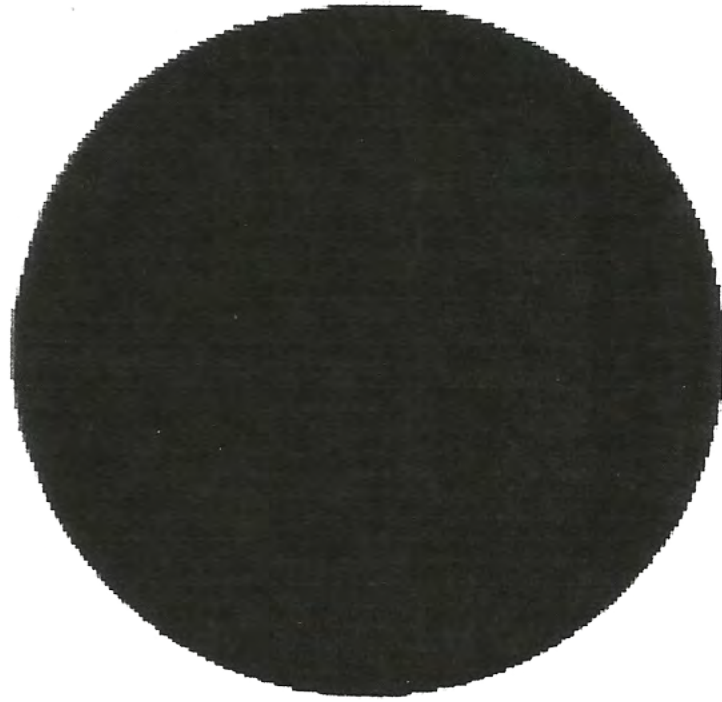


The (w)hole you shall have left



The (w)hole you will have left

*(w)holes* is a limited edition of 10 of a series of 11 images  
of text on translucent plastic 90cm X 60cm X 1.5cm



The (w)hole you could not leave



The (w)hole you left

## ART WORLD CRIMINALS

In 1995 I met Patrizia Cantelupo. She was a painter. The Galerie Rambert on Rue des Beaux Arts in the 6th was giving her a show. She wanted to make an artists book to accompany the event, which was her first solo show.

She asked me to do the text, a creative and poetic interaction with her work.

Patrizia was maybe 35. She was married to Philippe Loudmer, of the Loudmer dynasty of French auctioneering families - Guy was his father. Patrizia came from the Italian aristocracy. She owned one of the family castles, a noble pile perched on a mountain top in northern Italy. (it appeared in her work) She was beautiful, with that gorgeous auburn Italian renaissance hair curling in abundance down her back.

Her work was vague and pretty, sometimes verging on weird. I knew I could work with it. I culled some lines from my poems. Our friend Christophe Boutin digitalised everything and composed the book, integrating my words into Patricia's images. She was happy. I was happy. The gallery paid the bills and was happy.

Patrizia and Philippe lived in a 250 sq meter Haussmannian apartment on the Quai Henri IV overlooking the Seine with their three young boys. Patrizia's painting atelier was on the 6th floor and had an even better view.

They gave great parties with white-gloved waiters and endless champagne. I met many people there.

Phillipe, like his father Guy, was a commissaire-priseur, or auctioneer, with Drouot. at the time the French auction houses were run like fiefdoms, and the large international houses couldn't operate in France. Guy and Philippe were robbing their clients of millions, embezzling, setting up paper companies, ~~raising~~ ~~raising~~ this thing like mad. They got caught when they stole from the Bourdon family. The Bourdons were a gallery-owning couple and they had an enormous art collection of moderns.

Guy went to jail. Patrizia and Philippe and their children fled to Israel, which had no extradition treaty with France. They took only the clothes on their backs: not even their toothbrushes. They obviously had planned out this escape route and were prepared in case anything ever happened. I heard that Philippe had surgery to disguise himself. They were all on Interpol's wanted list.

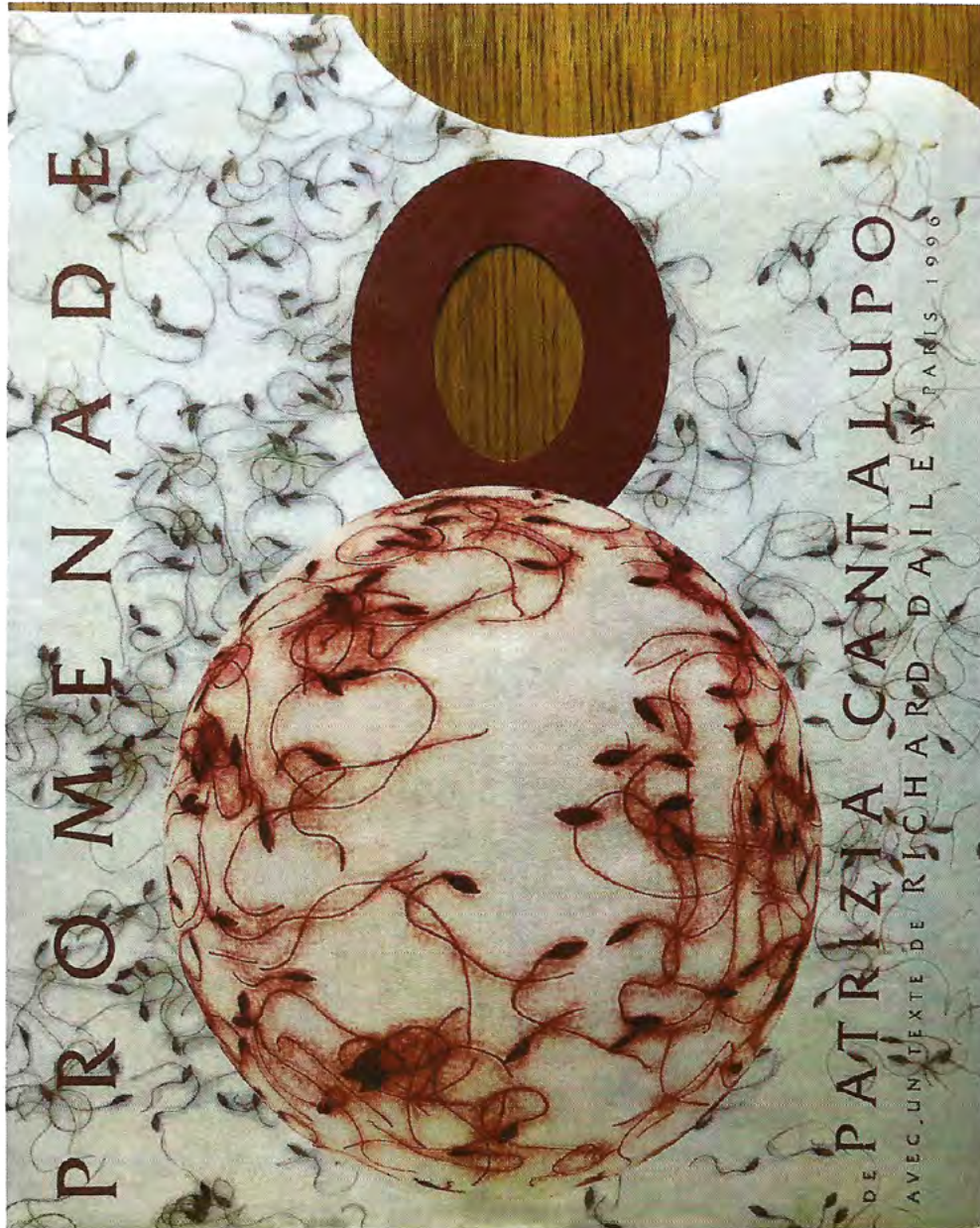
They moved to South Africa under a different name and moved to Italy when the statute of limitations expired.

I saw Guy once when he got out of jail, at an opening at Thaddaeus Ropac's gallery on rue Debelleye in the Marais. He was as debonaire as always. Charming.

"My hands are clean," he told me.

I wonder what happened to all the artists books. It was an edition of 500. If they sold 50 I'd be surprised.

Patrizia's book was beautifully designed and produced by Christophe Boutin. An artist's palette, with a hole through it. Waxy paper, luxurious printing, a heavy plastic cover in yellow to hold the unbound pages.





## DIGITAL FREEDOM

IN THE 90s I Started working digitally, when the medium became poor - jaggy and lossy at first, a look so valued today it is often faked, but also cheaper - acquisition tools, pixels, bytes, and software started coming down in price or were piratable : Digital Arte Povera. Photo - graphy and video in particular became cheap.



onestar press richard dailey details (private parts in public spaces)

Richard Dailey

# DETAILS

PRIVATE PARTS IN PUBLIC SPACES  
*A comparative study of antique sculpture*

OneStarPress

140 X 225 mm

150pages

cover : paperback, color, glossy finish

binding : glue bound

interior : black and white

edition limited to 250numbered copies



**DISCUS THROWER, CALLED "THE DISCOPHORE"**

Roman work from the Imperial Epoch

(1st - 2nd century A.D. ?)

*Athenian Marble*



FUNERAL AND HONORIFIC STATUE OF MARCELLUS

Approximately 20 B.C.  
*Marble*



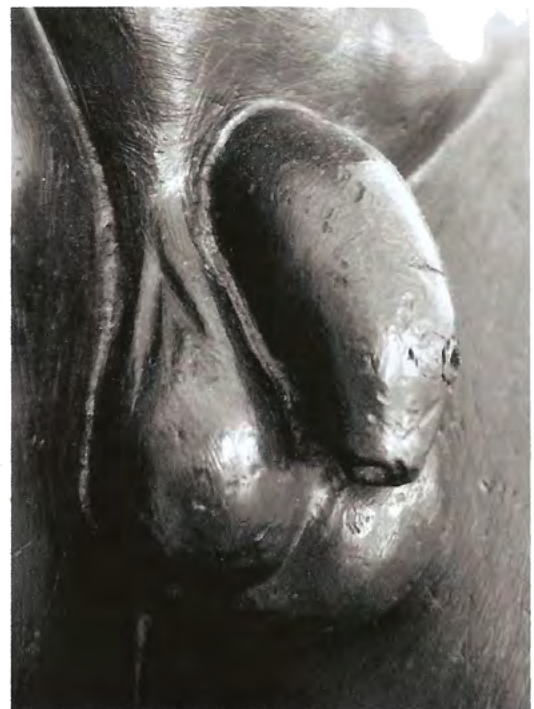
HERCULES COMBATTING THE HYDRA

Northern Italy, 2nd quarter of the 16th century  
*Bronze*



POURING SATYRE

After an original in bronze by Praxiteles  
Approximately 370 A.D.  
*Marble*



APOLLO VANQUISHING THE SERPENT PYTHON  
(ALSO CALLED "JASON KILLING THE DRAGON")

Italy, second quarter of the 16th century  
*Bronze*



STATUE OF THE HERO DIOMEDES

Roman work from the Imperial Epoch

(1st - 2nd century A.D. ?)

*Marble*

Framed black and white photograph  
2002 52 X 42 inches cm

edition of 30 numbered copies

The photo is accompanied by a signed and  
numbered certificate of authenticity by the artist

available from one star press

## CHILD'S PLAY

Early digital photos that I made into a short video with animated text. I was traveling around the south of France with Harvey Benge, the New Zealand photographer, and our families. This video features his daughter Lucy and Zoé. The text is by Epicurus, from 300 BC



The Gods can either take away evil



and will not  
or, being willing to do so cannot



or they neither can nor will

or, lastly, they are both able and willing.



If they have the will to remove evil and cannot



then they are not omnipotent.  
If they can, but will not,



then they are not benevolent.

If they are neither able nor willing, then



they are neither omnipotent nor benevolent.  
Lastly, if they are both willing and able



to annihilate evil,



how does it exist?

"How does it exist?"



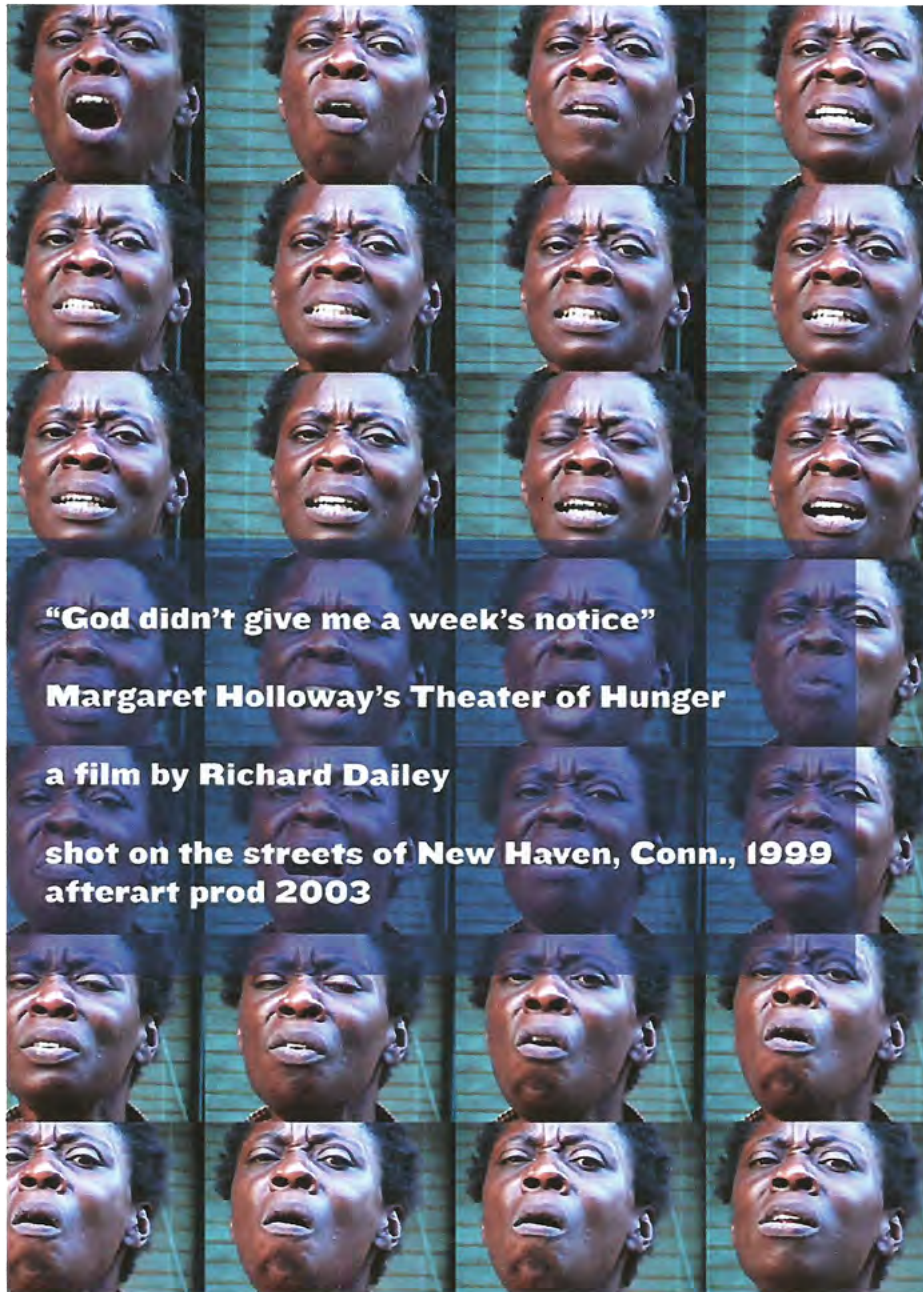
AFTERART

also in the late90s I trademarked the name A FTERART  
(I had been reading Arturo Da nto) to cover my  
increasingly muktidisciplinary practice.



I took the URL [www.afterart.com](http://www.afterart.com)

afterart's first film



[www.afterart.com/holloway.html](http://www.afterart.com/holloway.html)

poster by Christophe Boutin

WIKIPEDIA

# God Didn't Give Me a Week's Notice

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*God Didn't Give Me a Week's Notice* is a 15-minute documentary by Richard Dailey about **Margaret Holloway**, also known as "The Shakespeare Lady" of New Haven, Connecticut.

Richard Dailey attended Bennington College at the same time as Margaret Holloway. He was three years behind her and their acquaintance was casual. She was very talented and well known on campus. When he found that she was homeless and panhandling on Whitney Ave in New Haven, Connecticut, he asked if he could record her performances and she agreed. He and Holloway worked two weeks to produce a 15-minute documentary. He then spent the next six months editing the material from his home in Paris.

As reported in the *Yale Daily News*, December 7, 2001:

Set to jazzy music, the film features Holloway dramatically reciting several pieces from Euripides, Shakespeare and Chaucer. Dailey also recorded Margaret speaking about her life. Interspersed through the documentary are candid and telling stills of Holloway in various locations in New Haven.

Dailey made a handshake agreement with Holloway that any revenue produced by the film would be divided equally between the two of them. The Yale Daily News reported that the Dec. 9 2001 benefit screening at York Square Cinemas on Broadway was an exception. All of the proceeds from that show would be donated to Holloway. It is unknown how much money was raised.

In the documentary, lines from Holloway's 1980 thesis run sporadically across the bottom of the screen.

"Many artists have aspired to a theater of hunger," Holloway wrote.

"Many were imprisoned, driven insane, etc. These artists know that there is no separation between the quest toward a theater of hunger and a quest toward a way of life. We continue in this quest."

## References

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Yale Daily News Dec 7 2001 (<http://yaledailynews.com/weekend/2001/12/07/shakepeare-lady-gets-her-15-minutes-of-fame/>)

## External links

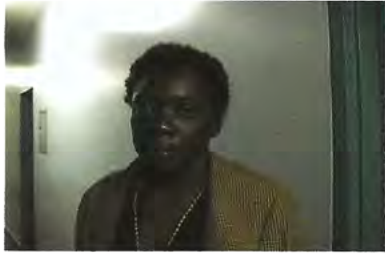
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- *God Didn't Give Me a Week's Notice* (<https://vimeo.com/7501821>) Vimeo

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This page was last edited on 21 August 2015, at 23:39 (UTC).

holloway stills





"I'm being raped. I'm being raped 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I have something that UCLA calls a tactile demon."

"Last night I seated beauty on my knee and found her sour."



"All the perfumes of Arabia cannot sweeten this little hand."



"When shall we meet again, in thunder, lightning or in rain?"



"I couldn't get over the fact that not only was my father a holiness minister, he was also a voodoo man."



afterart's 2<sup>nd</sup> film



Famille Lecoq  
une exception française  
scénario de Richard Dailey  
et Chris Burke  
réalisé par Richard Dailey  
chef opérateur  
Aleksander Kaufmann  
Musique La Belle Equipe  
avec Nicole Kaufmann,  
Jean-Michel Steinfort,  
Eugénie Alquezar,  
Pablo Melchor  
afterart prod 2003

a 26 mins pilot for a sitcom series • Video autofiction.

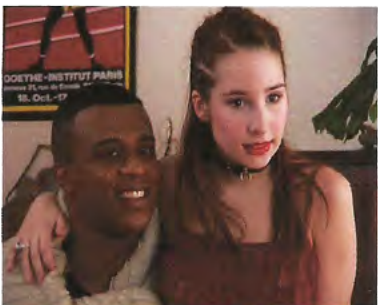
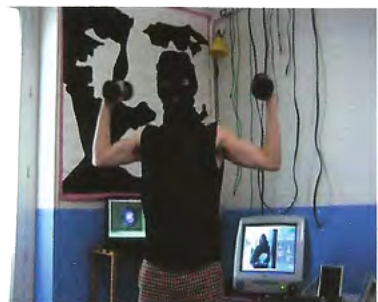
poster by Christophe Boutin

Fa mille Lecoq was my film school. I discovered that Parisian actors and film technicians will work for free when they are on the special unemployment for cultural performers and techies. They taught me about sound recording, camera axes, multiple takes at different ranges, light, make up, lenses; I learned when actors need help and when to leave them alone.

We filmed at my apartment - my wife and daughter and I moved to my studio to live for the duration. the windows need to be masked or the variations in daylight would make shooting a single scene over hours impossible.

I put all my artwork into the decor. Much of my life as well. For example, when Antoine, the father, is on the old telephone at the beginning he is phoning in his unemployment status to an automatic government service. I actually did that. Then Antoine gets up and does a little dance in his bathrobe while singing Hare Krishna and smoking a joint. I actually did that too. I felt like an anthropologist going native. The full 26 minutes, including food, make up, light rental, original music, animations, sound mixing and mastering, editing, ~~and~~ cost about 3,000 dollars to make.

famille lecoq stills



famille lecoq stills





"I hope he's not  
having an acid flashback!"



"But your mother isn't  
here!"



"You must be a good lay!"



"But Lily, la maison-  
c'est sacré!"



"Hey Big - that oxygen  
is completely crazy!"



"Tom, I'm sick of hearing  
about your prepuce!"

afterart's 3rd film

Scenario & réalisation Richard Dailey  
Image & montage Garret Linn  
Bande son originale Métal Urbain

avec Juliette Failevic & Agnès Roland

Eugénie Alquezar, Nancy Tate,  
Gaelle Billaut-Danno & Loïc Massicot

Deux artistes françaises se rencontrent

2005 afterart productions

# LUNA & MS Y



a lesbian art-world gore flick 90 mins

WARNING: Contains sexist clichés, fake blood,  
overbearing directorial decisions,  
questionable acting, representations  
of bad art, and undue effort on the  
part of the filmmakers.

Luna & Ms. Y was supposed to be 30 mins and it turned out 90. I wrote a script. Leslie McAllister did a storyboard which we later turned into a book with BOOK MACHINE at the Pompidou Center in Paris.



The film changed when Garret Linn arrived in Paris - he took over the art direction and brilliantly made use of my atelier (where much of the film was shot). It was because of Garret that we shot with Canon Powershots, the first, or one of the first, photo cameras to shoot video.

Garret also edited the film. At one point I went to NYC to work with him. We shot with 2 cameras, which was already complicated enough given the number of takes for each scene, but they also had to be linked to a 3rd camera in a different format that Ms. Y or her assistant Betty use continually.

Essentially the film is an art-world parody, a comic-tragic take on the absurdities and truths of the making and business of art.

All of my films use original music (except the first). Métal Urban, who did the music here, were a 4-man punk band in the late 70s/80s who were making a comeback. I took them to the Belle Equipe sound studio in Bagnolet to record.

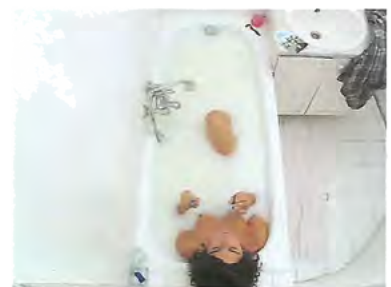
This film cost 10,000 dollars to make.

Luna & Ms. Y had its Première screening at Les Voutes in Paris and enjoyed a short life on the festival circuit. In 2018 I screened it every night for a week during my exhibition at sometimeStudio gallery on rue St. Claude in the Marais. In 2019 Spectacle Theater in Brooklyn screened it on 4 occasions.



poster by Garret Linn

Luna & M. Y stills



Luna & Ms. Y stills



"I appropriated the Y chromosome."



"What are you doing?"



"Now I know why you wanted to come."



"Do you like my ass?"




"The so-called art world is fucked up."



"Everything here is pixels."

# UPSTAIRS

**PLUMES**  
**FEATHER BOXES**



vernissage

le 9 mars

16 h - 21 h

[www.art-paris.com](http://www.art-paris.com)

gallery nadine meszawer

**RICHARD DAILEY**  
**WORKS ON POLYESTER**

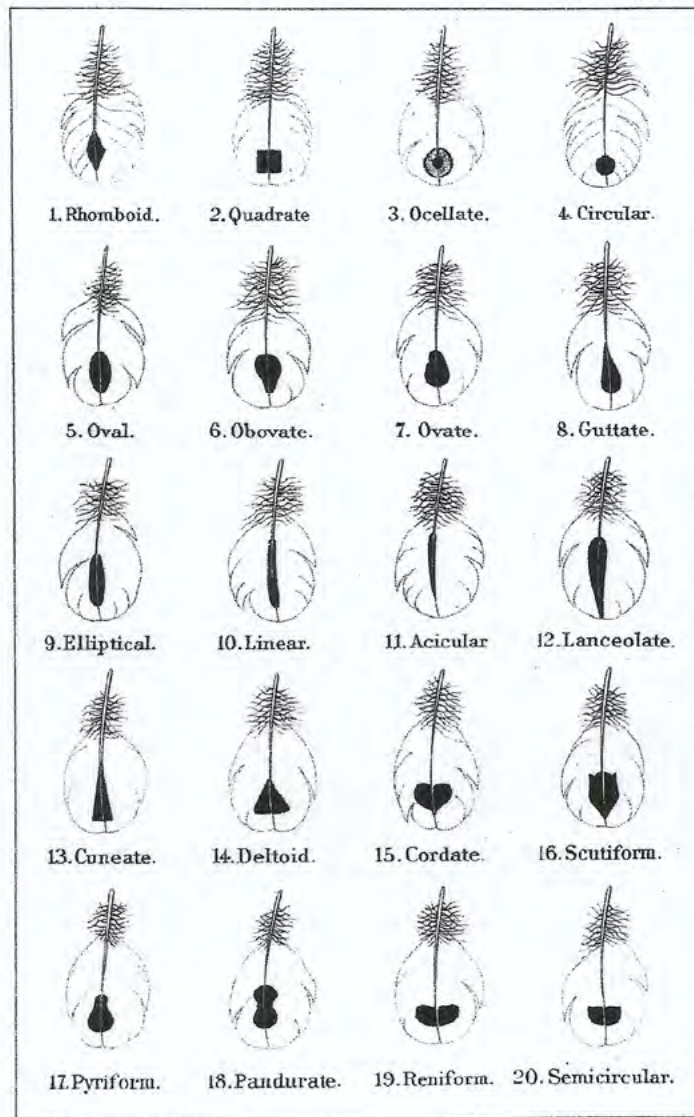
exposition

15 rue beautreillis 75004

de 9 mars à 27 mars

sur rendezvous

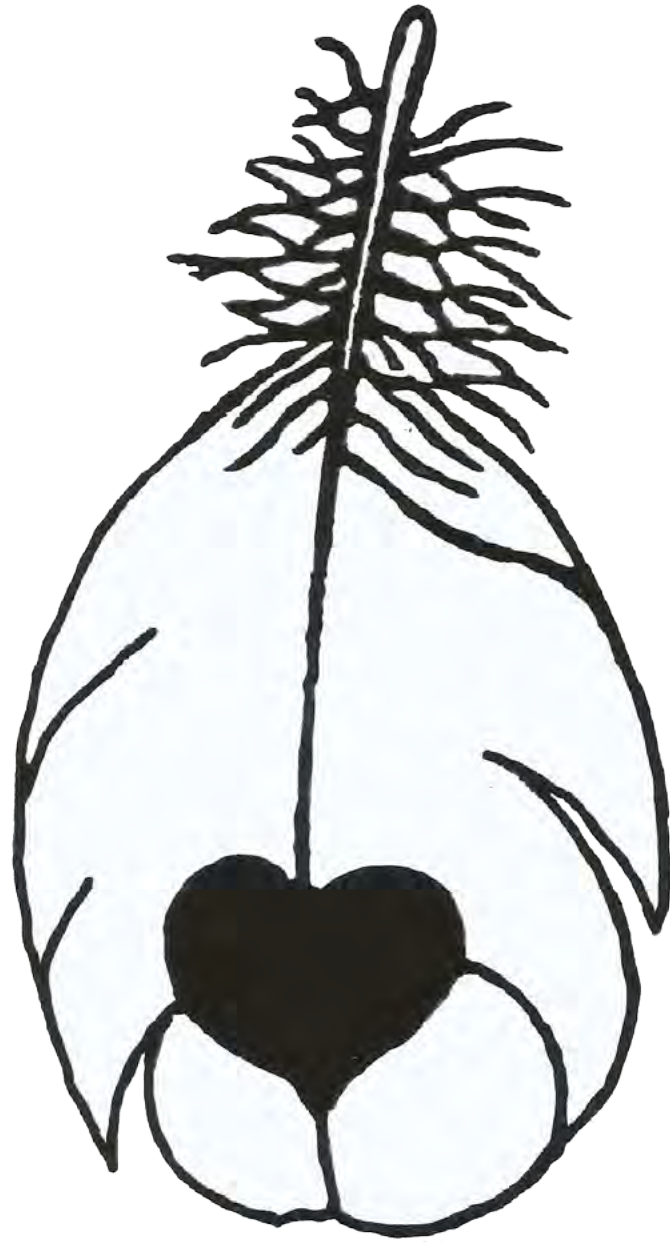
tel: 01 42 78 81 61



8.15 Feather types, from Ridgway's *Nomenclature of Colors* (1886).

This page of feather types from 1886 gave me a shock of recognition. I scanned the page and set about reproducing these feather types by photocopying them on polyester at various sizes, from 2 meters to very small. I cut away the excess plastic and with a scalpel removed the plastid from between the feathery upper parts: the whole feather would tremble in a slight wind.





I was profoundly moved to discover that there  
are birds with hearts on their feathers



These feather boxes were by far the most challenging art I have produced, with the exception of some films. They are in 3 sizes - 2meters by 1 meter (above) - 1 M X 1 M - below - and 1 m X 50 cm. The steel was difficult to treat; the lighting needed to be "cold" which made it complex - and each box contains miniatue fans which cause the feather to flutter.

photocopy on polyester, steel sheet, aluminum Us, strip lights, plexiglass, metal hooks, nails, wood, glass, magnets, fans



## Richard Dailey's Art after the End of Art

by Diana Quinby

Hanging across from each other in Richard Dailey's spacious, light-filled living room that overlooks the Boulevard du Temple in Paris are two impressive works, each one composed of a large, box-like frame and containing a giant black and white feather cut out of semitranslucent polyester paper. Imposing in scale, these *Feather Boxes* have a weightiness to them: the feathers themselves seem to hang like pendulums in their frames. They exude an odd sensuality, a physical presence. A coiled telephone cord with an electric plug on the end hangs down from the bottom of each of the frames. "I'm always amazed that these things still work<sup>1</sup>," says Dailey as he goes over to plug one of them in. The feather begins to quiver, as if being softly blown by a gentle breeze, and white tube lights that run along the inside of the frame turn on, infusing the box with a hazy glow.

Lightness and light. Light as a feather. These "light" boxes, made in 2003, are as hefty as antique display cabinets yet they showcase luminosity and the notion of weightlessness. Richard Dailey clearly takes pleasure in fabricating *things* of a poetic nature, assembling ideas and images, juxtaposing opposites and leading the imagination in several directions at once. While the word "poetic" is much overused in writing about art, perhaps as a way to avoid ascribing any fixed meaning to a particular work, in Dailey's case, it's precisely the right term for describing his multifiform artistic practice. Since his teenage years in the early 1970's, when he was particularly inspired by the Beats and the New York School, poetry has been the "dominant force" in his life<sup>2</sup>. Living in New York City after graduating from Bennington College in 1978, he composed his poems on a 19th century desktop let-

terpress, publishing occasionally and keeping close contact with the downtown art world. It wasn't until 1991, when he settled in Paris, a city where he didn't (yet) speak the language, and where he wouldn't have many English-speaking readers, that he began to consider how he might make poetry visually.

His first artworks pay homage to the Dada and Surrealist object, and especially to Joseph Cornell's boxes, in which an array of found objects, images, maps and recuperated materials coalesce into subtly composed and enigmatic tableaux. Dailey is also a scavenger, returning from his regular visits to the Parisian flea markets with old books, engravings, photographs, postcards, tintypes, maps, marbles, statuettes of the crucified Christ and a host of other objects that will be assembled, sometimes framed or arranged inside boxes. Language is present in many of these works, but words and text are dissociated from their original context, thus giving the spectator, and the artist, free interpretive rein leading to a highly personal yet open-ended association of meanings and emotions.

*Havana Souvenir*, from 1991, is particularly reminiscent of Cornell's "Bird Boxes". A small flock of tin bird ornaments, including two parrots on their perch and three other birds in flight, circle around and above a collaged background made from a splotchy pink book cover, a computer board, a map of Havana and a Cuban stamp. The book cover might be a nod to Hemingway, and its mold spots perhaps an evocation of the peeling and flaking paint of the city's brightly colored buildings. The birds suggest travel, or escape, to far away destinations, but more specifically they refer to Cornell's fascination with birds. Having lived a mostly reclusive life, rarely venturing from his home in Flushing, New York, Cor

<sup>1</sup> Author's conversation with Dailey, spring 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Dailey, *Radical Incoherency*, 2.

nell often used images of birds, which can be seen as symbols of freedom and the flight of the imagination, or as metaphors for his own "caged vitality" and his unrealized desire to travel. Parrots appear with particular frequency, namely in a series of boxes made in homage to Juan Gris. Captivated by Gris' *The Man in the Café*, a painting from 1914 shown at the Sidney Janis Gallery in Manhattan in 1953<sup>3</sup>, Cornell subsequently "parroted" the Spanish artist in several works, both literally and figuratively, mimicking his *papier-collé* technique as a way of expressing artistic kinship. By including parrots in *Havana Souvenir*, Dailey, in turn, has playfully parroted Cornell, thus paying tribute to the art of assemblage as visual poetry.

Richard Dailey has said that he doesn't paint or draw, that he doesn't actually "make" anything. Attracted to "things that cost no money", he intuitively recycles into art whatever he finds that resonates both with his creative thinking process and his daily life experience. For instance, the feathers that hang in the Feather Boxes were taken from a 19th century book found at a flea market: Robert Ridgway's *Nomenclature of Colors*. Struck by a plate of black and white illustrations showing different kinds of feathers, Dailey photocopied them several times and in varying sizes on polyester paper, enlarging them up to 2 meters high and then cutting them out. He then placed them in the boxes that he had custom-built and fitted with small fans and LED lights. He writes that when he first saw the illustrations of the feathers, he felt a "shock of recognition"<sup>4</sup>. Visually, the plate of feather types from Ridgway's book is not unlike a work he had produced a few years earlier. *(W)holes*, from 1998, is also something of a plate of illustrations, or a kind of system of classification of something utterly intangible. Comprised of a series flat, black shapes resembling ink blots, each (w)hole is accompanied by a caption such as "The (w)hole you didn't leave" or "The

(w)hole you might have left." The seeming arbitrariness of the shapes and the subtle play of language ushers forth a multiplicity of possible meanings both humorous and daunting. Perhaps the enchantingly symmetrical shapes found on bird feathers, -diamonds, squares, circles, hearts - appeared to Dailey as more perfected *(w)holes*, or as representing a poetic ideal towards which the artist is continuously striving.

Appropriating found images through photocopying, enlarging and reducing has been one of Dailey's preferred ways to create images. The *(W)holes* were made by cutting out shapes in black paper and photocopying them on to translucent plastic. But in spite of what he's said, Dailey has used paint and made drawings, and he continues to do so today. In the early 1990's, he began making string drawings in which the loops and curves of a piece of string glued to paper suggest flowing yet unreadable script, evoking the conundrum of the English-speaking poet in Paris. Perhaps what was most difficult for Dailey was to convince himself that he was a visual artist as much as he was a poet. His mixed-media string drawing from 1993, *Protagonist Fuck Yourself*, is case in point. The work seems to have been made in a fit of post-modern self-deprecation. A string bisects the sheet of paper, forming the word "fuck" right in the center, which is held together with push-pins and haloed by a donut of blue paint. The words "protagonist" and "yourself" are hand-written on pieces of masking tape that appear to hold the ends of the string in place. "That protagonist specifically is me trying to cast myself as a painter<sup>5</sup>," says the artist. While taking a swing at the autonomous Modernist subject and prohibiting himself from posturing as a painter, Dailey nevertheless enjoyed making an original work of art on paper.

Into the later 1990's and early 2000's, Dailey's creative practice became increasingly more diverse and experimental, expressing a connection with art

<sup>3</sup> See *Birds of a Feather: Joseph Cornell's Homage to Juan Gris*, an exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, January-April 2018.

<sup>4</sup> *Radical Incoherency*, 41.

<sup>5</sup> Interview with Stefano Chiodi, 15.

ists as different as Marcel Broodthaers and Barbara Kruger. As digital technology became more accessible, he began making photographs, artist's books, posters, videos and films while still writing poetry (in English). He began writing art criticism and fiction (also in English), publishing his first novel, *Unplugged Yellow*, a fast-moving account of the vicissitudes of love, sex, drugs and painting in the New York art world of 1980, in 2016. Looking through Dailey's homemade catalogue *raisonné*, provocatively titled *Radical Incoherency*, the viewer who's pressed for time may well have difficulty discerning the underlying connecting thread that must be charting its way through all of this artistic and literary output. Dailey himself seems to be asking whether or not such a thread even exists, but of course it does, and he has unequivocally stated: "[...] as diverse as everything I do is, and the way it is constantly morphing, in spite of that there is a unifying sensibility [...]"<sup>6</sup> While each different medium makes its own demands, what the artist decides to with that medium is inevitably deeply personal. So how to describe Dailey's "overarching sensibility"? His work reveals a fondness for things "retro" and their poetic potential, an erotic undercurrent and sometimes an unabashed delight in sexual humor, a penchant for unexpected juxtapositions and for staging narratives, an affection for bright colors, and a visible pleasure in exploring the visual possibilities of the drawn, written and printed word.

Dailey's photographs and films often represent or include the people and places he loves, providing a glimpse of his intimate self. His first film, *God didn't give me a week's notice*, is a short, poignant portrait of Margaret Holloway, a former acquaintance of his from Bennington and graduate of the Yale School of Drama. Impoverished and suffering from mental illness, Holloway came to be known as "The Shakespeare Lady", dramatically reciting passages from Euripides, Shakespeare and Chaucer on the streets

of New Haven where Dailey made the film in 1999. His close-up shots of Holloway capture the expressive intensity of her monologues, revealing a profound yet tragic example of the intertwining of art and life.

In an oddly self-referential film, *Luna & Ms Y*, the melding of art and life takes a cynical yet tragicomic turn. A parody of the Parisian art world shot in 2004, mostly in Dailey's studio in the eleventh arrondissement, the film explores notions of originality, authorship and the pangs of the creative process via the reuniting of two artists and ex-lesbian lovers. There are references to Dailey's artistic practice throughout, namely in Luna's (Dailey's) studio, in which his many photocopied and photographic works cover the walls.

•

At the end of the 1990's, as a way of circumscribing his multidisciplinary artistic and literary practice, Dailey trademarked the term *Afterart* to designate the entirety of his creative production, borrowing the expression from Arthur Danto's *After the End of Art*. "What's left after the end of art?" asks Dailey. "More art, of course, and we're going to have to live with it."<sup>7</sup> Danto had argued that Andy Warhol's *Brillo Boxes*, from 1964, being undistinguishable from real Brillo boxes, pushed the notion of visual representation to its outermost limit, ushering a crisis as to what art could be. "[T]here was no special way works of art had to look," writes Danto, "...anything could be a work of art [...]"<sup>8</sup> Throughout the 1970's and into the 1980's, a number of styles or short-lived artistic movements appeared one after the next, but no single defining movement came to the fore, leading to what the art critic and philosopher described as "the end of a certain narrative which has unfolded in art history over the centuries [...]"<sup>9</sup> Danto wasn't implying that there would be no more art, but rather that "the absence of direction was the defining trait of the new period [...]"<sup>10</sup> Given this tremen

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 10.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, p. 23.

<sup>8</sup> Arthur Danto, *After the End of Art : Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, (Princeton and Oxford : Princeton University Press, 1997), 13.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 37.

dous opening-up of artistic possibilities, of how to see, and of what constitutes a work of art, he personally felt that "the major artistic contribution of the decade [the 1970's] was the emergence of the appropriated image – the taking over of images with established meaning and identity and giving them a fresh meaning and identity<sup>11</sup>." This may well define much of Richard Dailey's art: the pleasure of reusing and quoting, of taking what's already there and passing it through his own personal filter.

"*Parrots parrot parrots parroting parrots, etc. [...] / Any parrot is more than the embellishment of parrots. [...]*"<sup>12</sup> Dailey's annotated poem from 1993, *Infinite Parrots*, almost reads as a panegyric in praise of the art of appropriation. "The parrot is a stand-in for the poet<sup>13</sup>," says Dailey, and parrots do appear throughout his oeuvre, from his early boxed assemblages up through a recent series of drawings inspired by Charles-Valentin Alkan's *Funeral March for a Dead Parrot*. Listening to the short musical composition over and over as he drew, and incorporating the repetitive lyrics into his drawings – (*As-tu déjeuné Jacquot? Eh, de quoi? Ah! / Polly want a cracker? Eh, what? Ah!*) – Dailey responded to Alkan's humor with his own, producing several portraits of parrots that express the jubilant pleasure of markmaking. These vibrant and jazzy parrots, drawn with watercolors, oil crayons and pastels, are surrounded by brightly colored squiggles that suggest scribbly, energetic handwriting. It's as if the parrots' mimetic powers were emanating from their plumage, recalling an earlier series of works on paper, *Apollinaire Trépané*, in which Dailey wrote out lines of Apollinaire's poetry on to a photocopy of Picasso's drawing of the poet after he'd been trepanned, giving the impression that the poems are flowing directly from the hole in Apollinaire's head. Dailey photocopied his "original" altered photocopy several times and painted over each one with watercolors, thus imparting a mag-

ical or psychedelic aura to the process of literary creation. A similar kind of playfulness also appears to be at work in the drawings of parrots. Dailey may well be attempting a kind of self-portraiture, freely parroting himself parroting, and enjoying every minute of it.

Diana Quinby 10/10/19

Diana Quinby is an artist and art writer represented by Galerie Arnaud Lefebvre (Paris)

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 13.

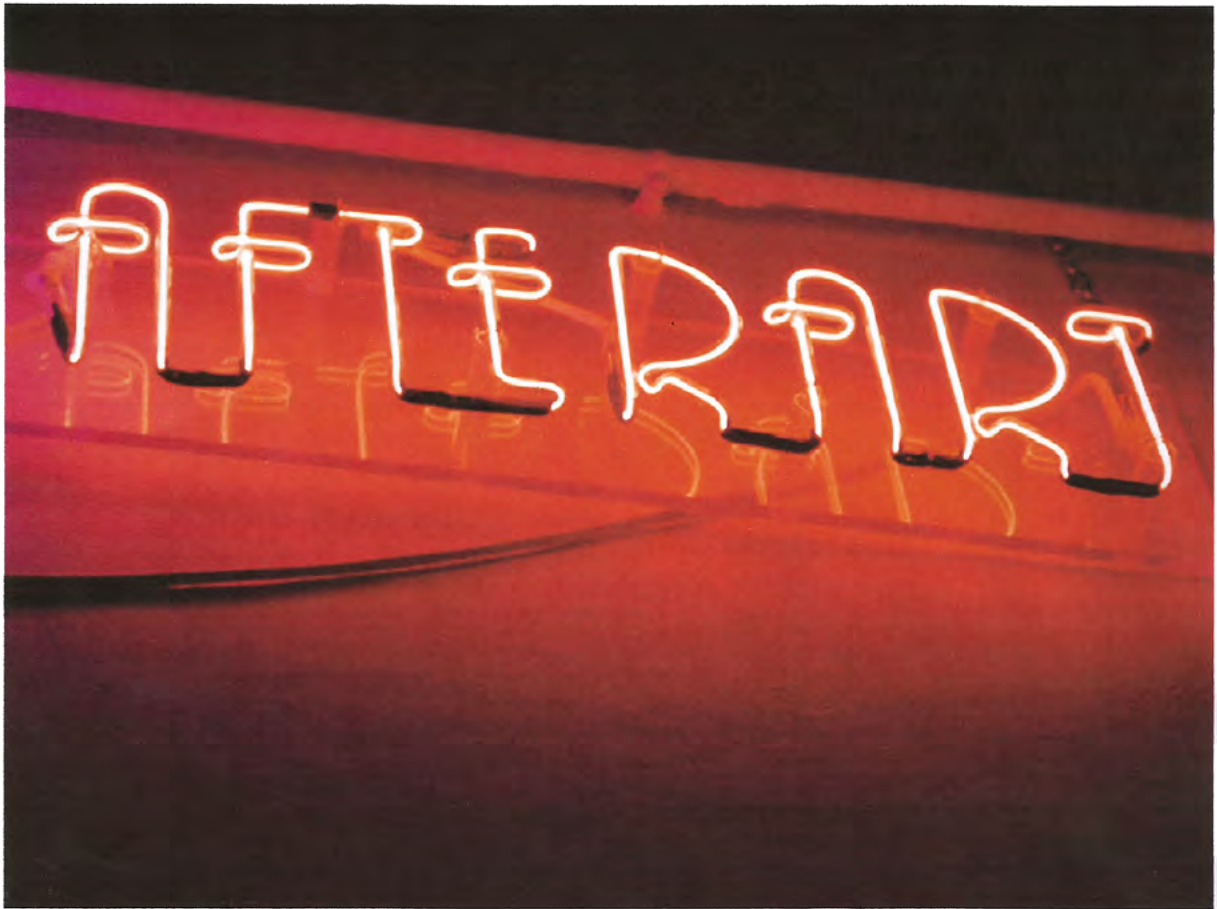
<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 15.

<sup>12</sup> Dailey, "Infinite Parrots", *Radical Incoherency*, 15.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Stefano Chiodi, 17.

ATELIER

My studio : 15 Rue Gambey 75011 Paris



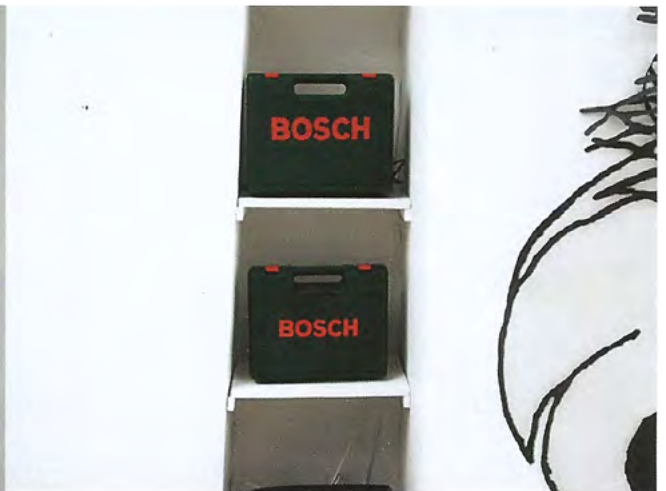
The following images show many of my projects in process.

(w)holes, feathers, etc

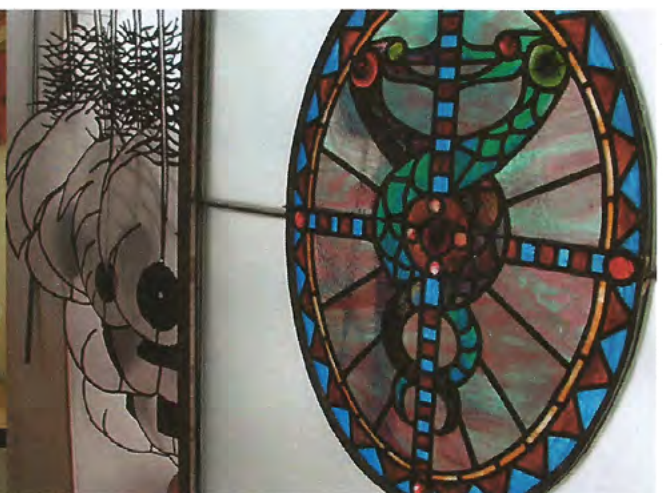
Also some new work: CLOUDS

NEON

LIGHT EXPERIMENTS







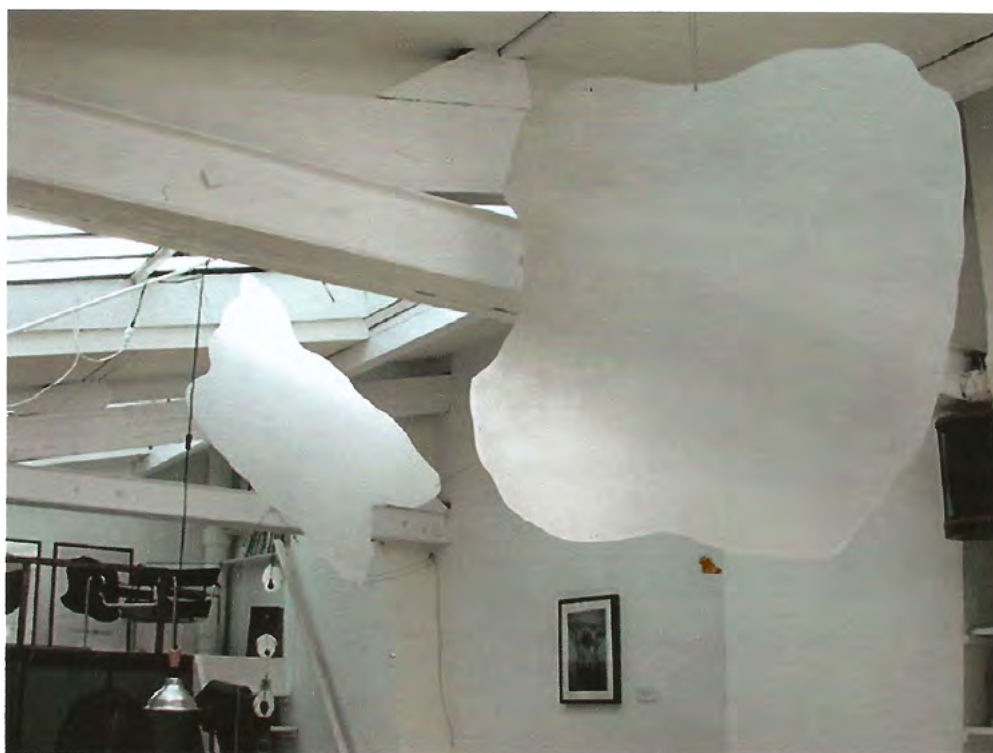


## CLOUDS

sha pes I cut out of 3/4 inch plexiglass and sanded. They are hung on steel cables. A friend



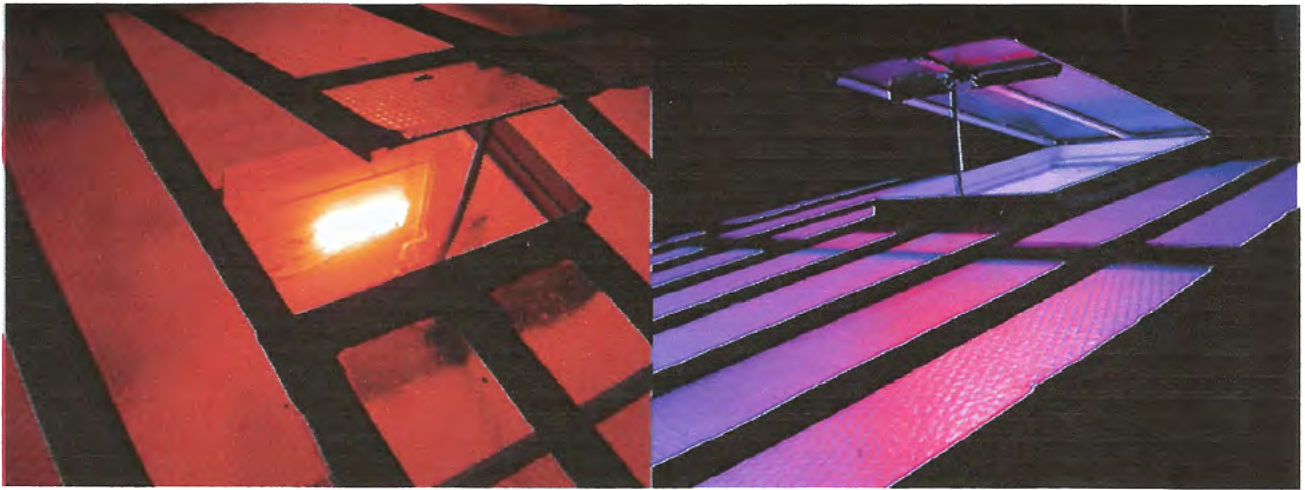
once said they looked like the ghosts of art.







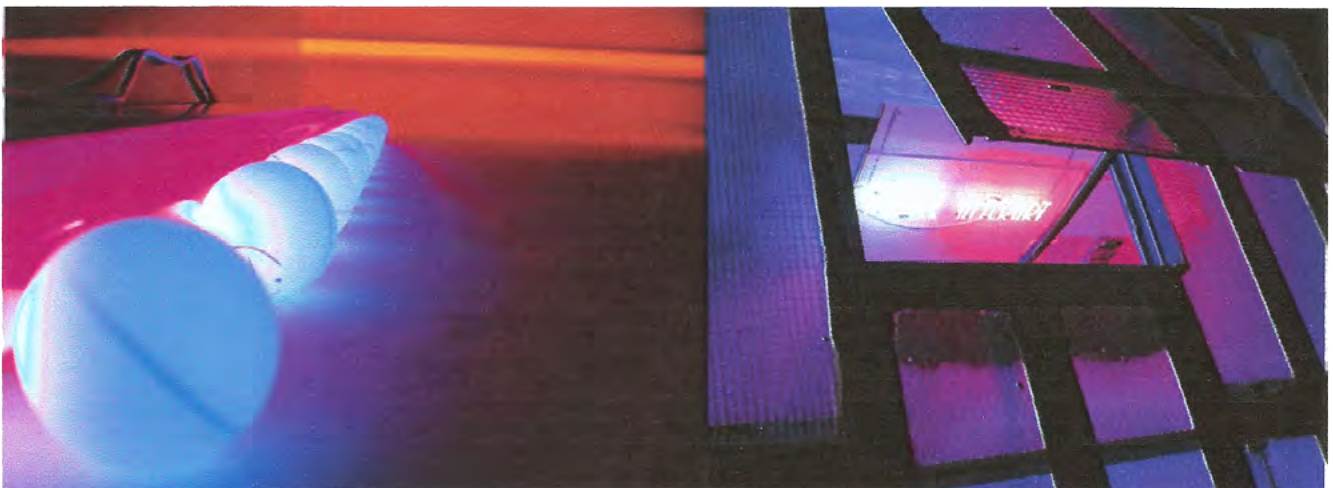
A big feather piece tacked to the wall at Gambey.  
1,5 meters x 70 cm + detail

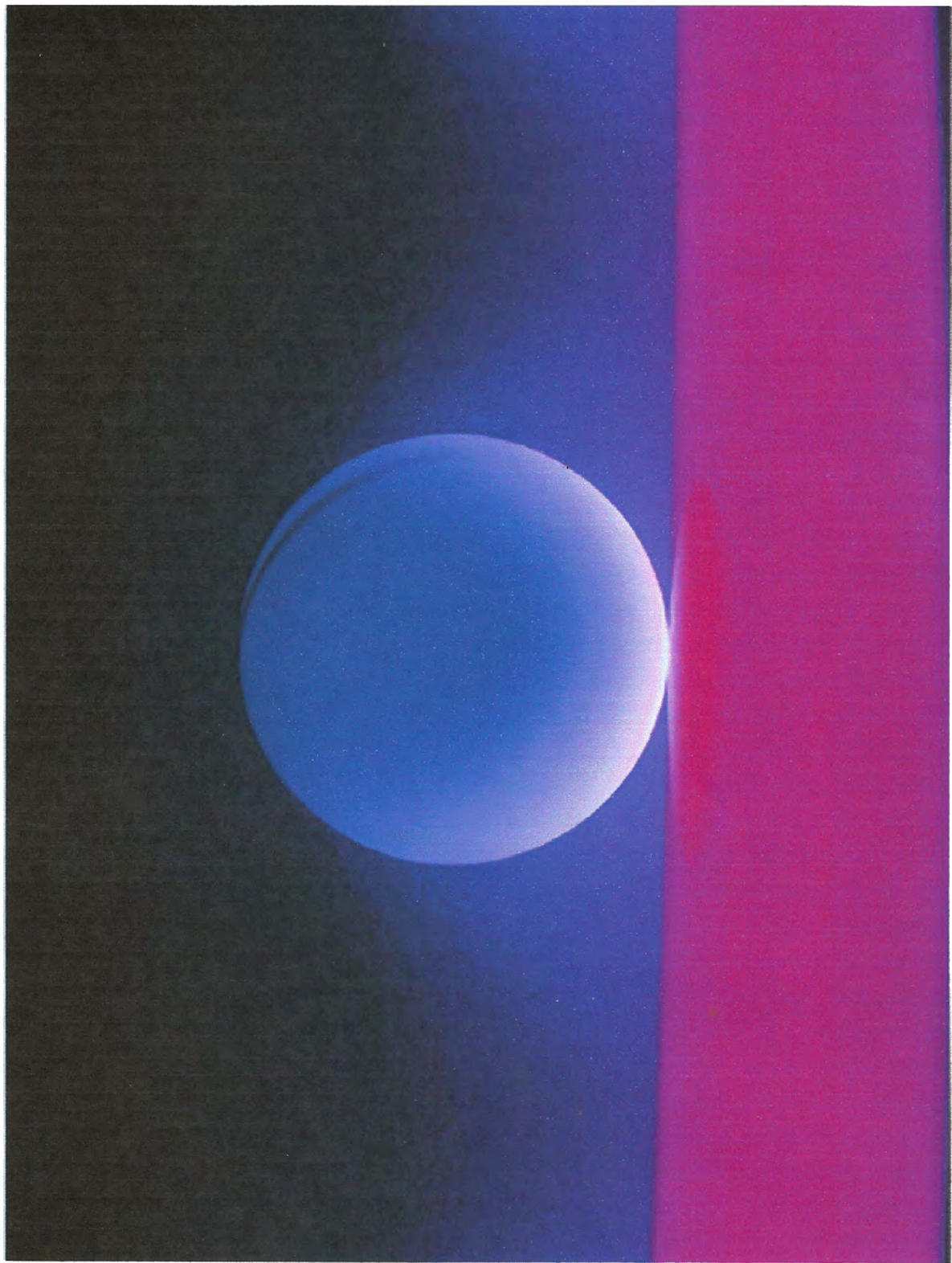


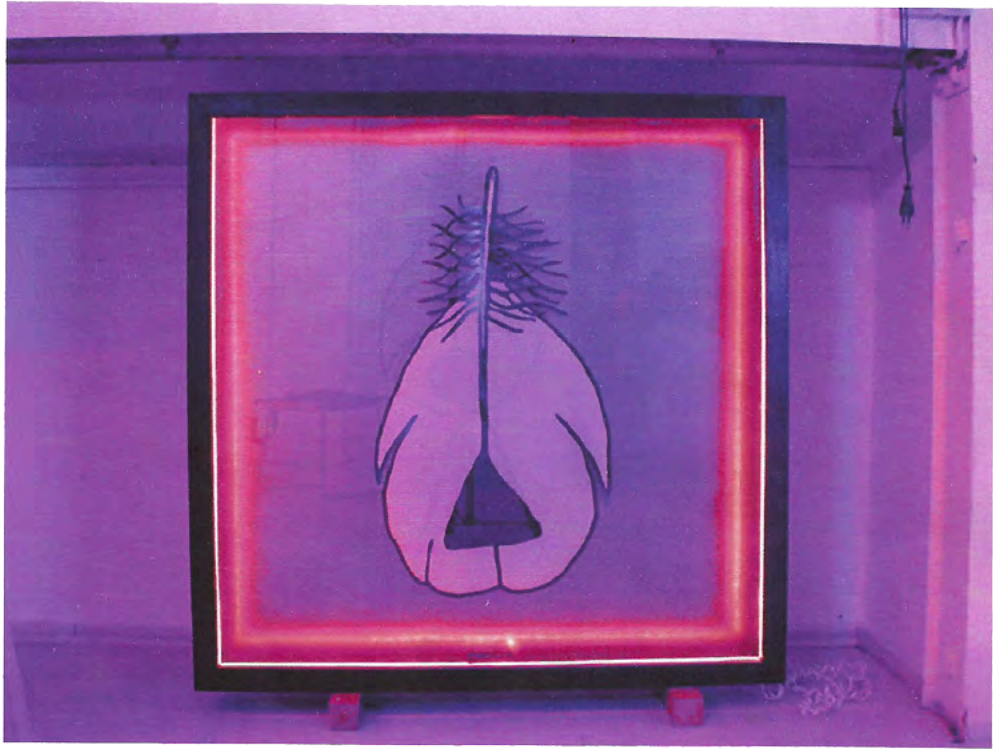
ATELIER LIGHT PLAY



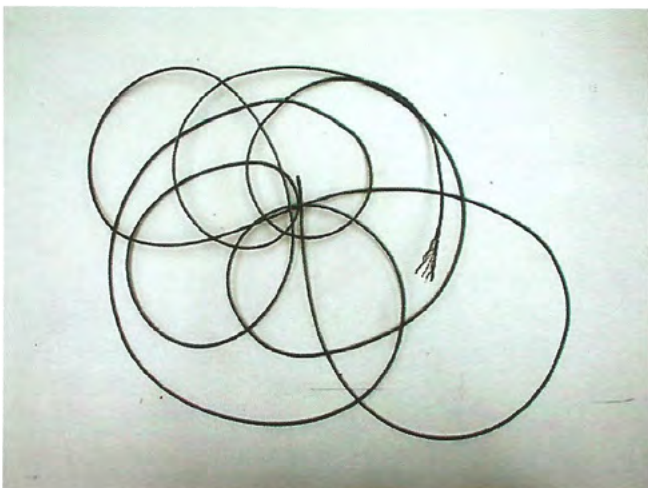
mixes of various neon & black light and fluorescence











THE MYTHY QUICK (afterart productions 2008) is the video version of a handmade artist book (one star press 1992) with text by Richard Dailey, photos by Christophe Boutin and figuration by Carole Martin. For the photographs, parts of the text were copied onto transparencies and projected onto Carole Martin as she posed. The text consists of six prose poems examining human relations and desire in Ovidian terms - metamorphoses in and out of love that shift between the real and the mythic.



THE MYTHY QUICK II mins

ONE STAR PRESS

RICHARD DAILEY  
**THE MYTHY QUICK**

PHOTOS: CHRISTOPHE BOUTIN

PARIS 1992

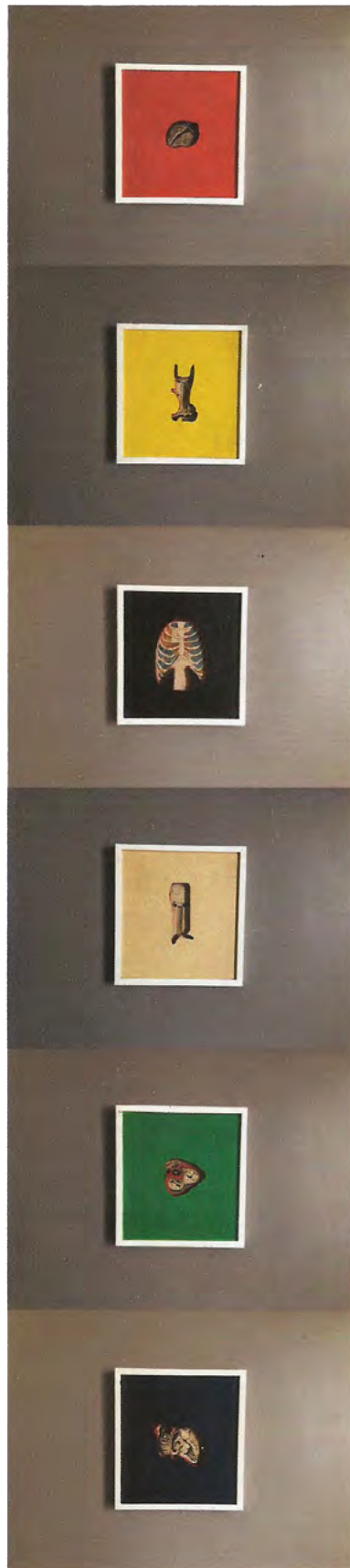


the book 20cm X 34.5cm  
12 pages  
edition of 6  
numbered and signed by the poet & photographer  
book design by Christophe Boutin  
see appendix ★ B



Heart Totem

Someone once told me that every artist should  
make a totem. This is mine.



22.5cm X 24.5cm X 2.5cm foamcore, heart crosssections  
from old medical textbook, acrylic paint, wood frame

more fo a m core from the late 90s;

vintage tourist photos, foamcore, a crylic paint  
10cm X 10cm X 1cm

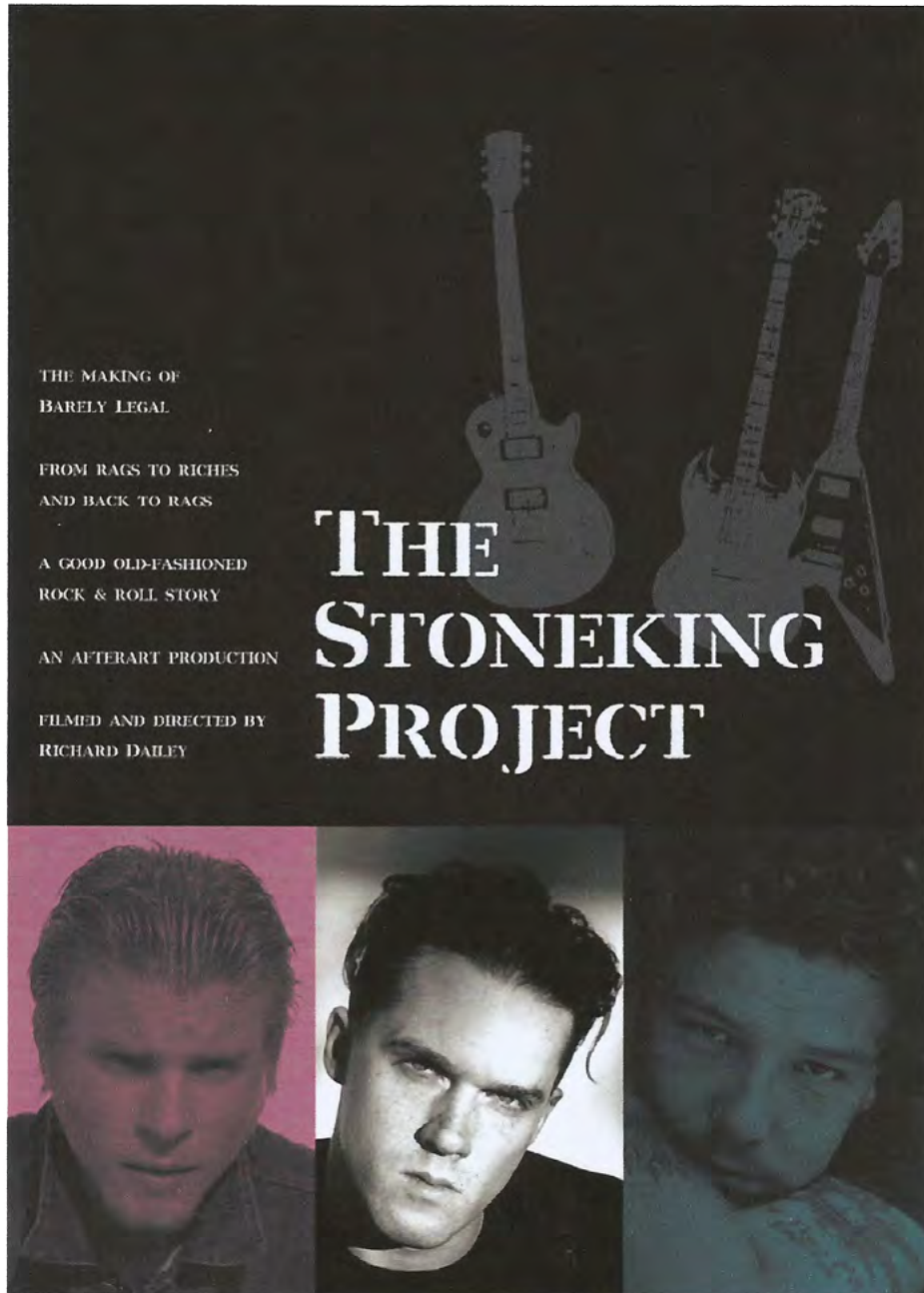




"Sentimental 1 Nihilis m"  
33.5 X 24 X 5  
black radish, wood, pa int, nails  
1999

THE STONEKING PROJECT

I can no longer number my films because they were often made simultaneously and over fairly long periods. They are presented here in close to chronological order.



po ster by Christophe Boutin



I filmed the Stoneking Project as archival footage for a recording project in association with Robinson Productions in 2001. It wasn't until much later that I came upon the tapes and realized how much material there was, enough to tell the whole rags-to-riches-and-back-to-rags story. I located the people involved, who had all moved on to other lives, and interviewed many years later about their memories of the project.

It's like Spinal Tap, only real.



**JASON**

**TROY**

**GOOSE**

**FROM RAGS TO RICHES AND BACK TO RAGS**

# **THE STONEKING PROJECT**

**A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED ROCK & ROLL STORY**



Afterart Productions  
15 rue Gambey  
75011 Paris  
(33)0661995706  
rich@afterart.com

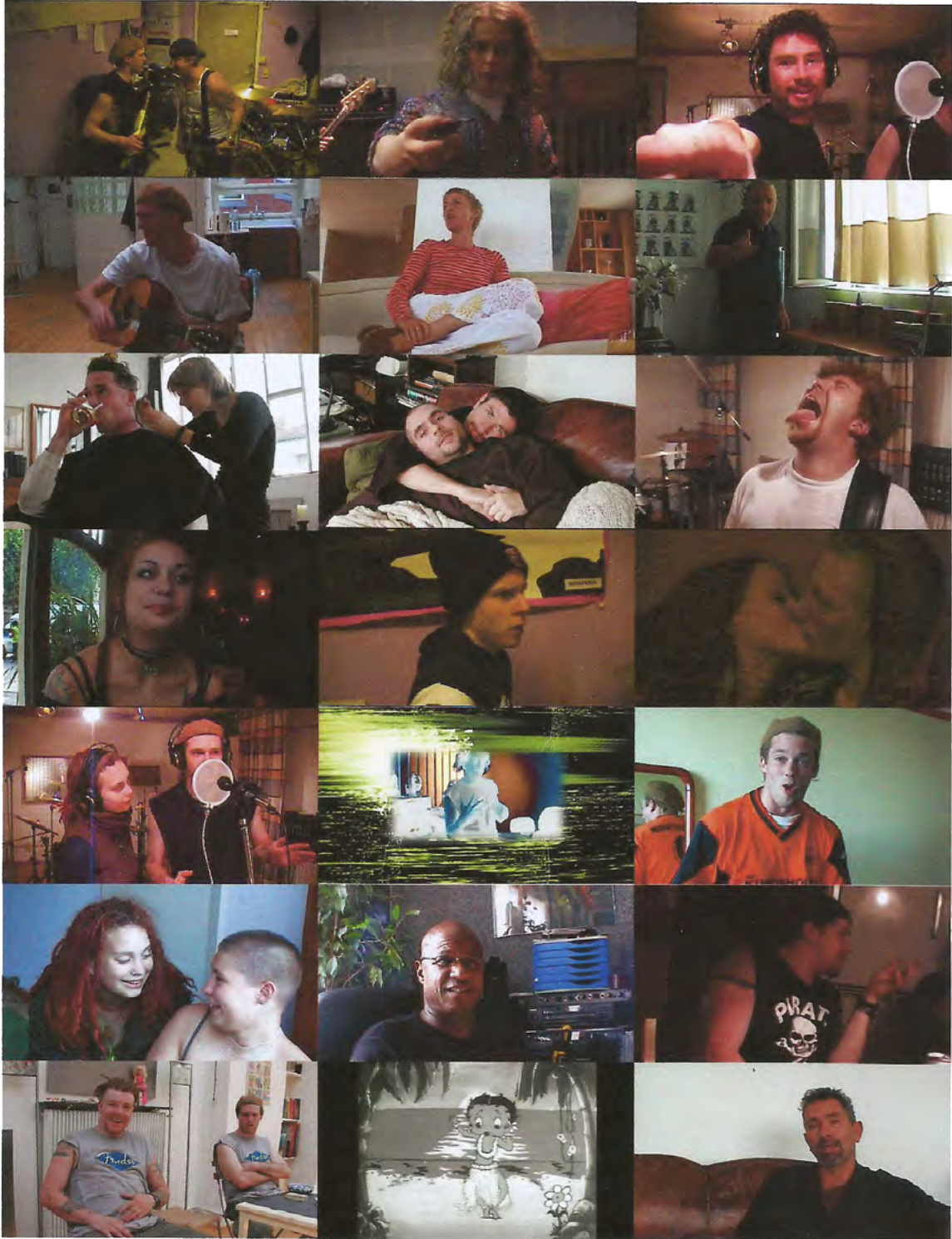
www.afterart.com  
www.myspace.com/stonekingband  
www.myspace.com/afterart  
www.youtube.com/afterart  
www.afterart.com/stoneking

**THE STONEKING PROJECT** is 90 mins of kickass rock that rolls from Colorado to Jonkoping Sweden by way of Paris France. It's hard to believe your ears & eyes as Stoneking goes from singing on the streets of Paris to singing with Mick Jagger in a Chateau, from homelessness to high-class hotels. But believe you must as the outrageous antics unfold frame by crazy frame. Filmed, edited and produced by the American artist, writer & filmmaker Richard Dailey for Afterart Prod, Paris, 2007.



**THE STONEKING PROJECT** documents the making of the album BARELY LEGAL in 2001 by STONEKING, a Franco-Amero-Swedish Punk/Funk/Rap/Garage Band. Jason Stoneking was living on the streets of Paris when he met Theodore D. Robinson, a music producer, who offered to help Jason record an album. Jason hooked up with bass player Troy Plank, an old friend from Boulder, and they went up to Sweden to make a demo with a drummer they knew there named Jan-Esse Yhien. Shortly after the first few songs were complete, Jan-Esse left the band and was replaced by Gustav Hultegard, affectionately known as "Goose," and the album BARELY LEGAL was recorded in the summer of 2001. Upon completion of the album, the band went their separate ways and more or less lost touch. The album never picked up a distributor and the project was all but left for dead. Then in the fall of 2006 new life was breathed into the band when filmmaker Richard Dailey (who had helped to organize the original project with Robinson Arts) dug up all his old footage of the making of the album for a documentary about the band. Dailey's film is in the post-production stages. The film features moments from the creation of all 11 songs on the album BARELY LEGAL, as well as interviews with Jason, Troy, Goose, Theodore D. Robinson and many other people who were involved with the band and the album. It's a good old-fashioned rags to riches and back to rags rock & roll story.

the stoneking project  
sti lls





Do you have to just go mad on I fuck and fuck and fuck in all the fucking songs?

The way you fucking speak.

Fuck!

You're breaking my fucking heart over here.

Well just make a little mental note maybe.

Ok, I'll tell you. Because do you know how bad they are going to castrate our songs? All of them! Fucking castrated! Like chopped and bleeped and fucked up!

Yeah I give a fuck!

I don't mind the bleeping but the way we're going right now we might as well not play!



Well, that's an interesting question. Like lately in my poetry I've been trying really hard to reflect accurately the way I speak.

Sometimes. But in this environment, me and you hanging out together and drinking beer and making music, that's the way we fucking talk, dude.

You know? And if that's what's going on with us, then maybe one idea is that it might be what we want to share with the audience. I'm just trying to tell the truth, man, because I think if I try to say something other than what's unique to me, then I'm just going to say something that somebody else said. The only way you can get anything original is to be yourself as much as you can. You can not create originality. The most original thing you have is the weird little parts of yourself and that's all you're ever going to have that's really original in this world. You know?

I'm just saying, I'm trying to write honest lyrics.

I mean, why put people in a censored reality? Is it like a Jehova thing? Bad words, man? What are you saying?

Do you give a fuck, man?

Then we'll release radio versions with alternate lyrics when we sell the thing. It's cool. You got a poet workig for you.

August 26, 2019

To whom it may concern,

Richard Dailey is the man who has seen it all, but hasn't decided how he feels about it. The voices that come through in his work are sometimes wickedly cynical, sometimes gently amused, sometimes flippant, sometimes tender and generous. He has been a critic, a dealer, a teacher, a manager, and every kind of artist under the sun. He knows damn well that it's all been done, and suspects that none of us know why we're still doing it, so there's only so much of it that he can do with a straight face. But he is still willing to take on the challenge of entertaining himself with a smile and an open mind.

He is constantly on the lookout for any angle on anything that tickles him. He doesn't care if it's old or new, consistent or out of character, what form it takes, or what result it gets, so long as it momentarily holds his

elusive fancy. And this approach has turned him into a man of many faces. He is a walking cabinet of curiosities, a cultural peeping Tom, a scavenger of the artifacts we store in our forgotten corners. He is the sly fox who knows what's in the house and knows when we're not home. He is the maniac midnight janitor who cackles while he sweeps cobwebs out of the collective awareness.

In his poetry, he's the achingly vulnerable protagonist, suffering valiantly from sex and death and memory. In his prose, he's the unreliable narrator, dodging in and out of fact and fiction, alternately hiding behind the truth and torching it for laughs. In his films, he is the ever-wonderous bystander, whose camera invites us over his shoulder to help him make sense of what he's seeing. In his visual art, he is the juggler of a thousand interchangeable genres and styles, trying them on like masks at a party, more inspired by the mix than he is by the match.

Dailey has worked through the

decades of absurd overabundance. He is an artist of the time just before we gave up on keeping track of everything, but just after it was no longer possible. An era in which sifting curiously through the wreckage has proven to be a lifetime's work. And as he straps on his trademark grin, and takes up his shovel to head back out into the fields of that work, it's perfectly reasonable to ask yourself, "Who is the real Richard Dailey?" My guess is that he's wondering the same thing about you.

With love,

Jason Stoneking



RADAR CHILI DYE



Rene Ricard came to a party on Elizabeth Street once sporting an enormous cabuchon emerald ring that he bought that afternoon at Harry Winston with the money he got from selling a drawing that Francesco Clementi had given him. He lost the ring that very night.

Alan Jones got thrown out of the Britti Palace in Venice for pissing in a potted palm the last time I saw him.

# afterart news

What's left after the end of art?  
More art, of course, and we're going to have to live with it.

Art that doesn't make me think bores me.  
Including my own.

calling ANYBODY an outsider is ridiculous

You don't have to be Wittgenstein to ask, "Outside what?" Inside what? No & it's World it exists in a void. Art creates whatever exists in.

O = obsession  
A = art/poetry  
R = rupture  
O = R1 + R2 + R3  
A = R1 + R2 + R3  
R = R1 + R2 + R3

**CLOSKY:**

**afterart news**

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**PAGE 3**



**LEON  
& NANCY**

# editorial

## Hyperlinking in the black hole

The guy who commissions an oil painting of his dog will tell you he is buying art, as will the collector who buys, say, a Koons. But they obviously aren't at all buying the same thing. There is a gap in Wittgensteinian black hole in the art universe or as usual. Our readers think. This is or



Miltos Manetas portrait by Yi Zhou from the back cover of Selected emails.

networks are creating alternatives at every stage of an artist's process, including distribution. So art lover, get Koons to sign that dog painting and we can have it our way.

**RICHARD DAILEY**

**PAGE 2**



**LE BUREAU DES  
MÉSARCHITECTURES  
DIDIER  
FUZIA FAUSTINE**

**99% INSPIRATION**

I am giving a cocktail for a few people, Alessandro, Sozzani, Kontova, Prada (which also gave me a 30% discount!) etc. Much fun! I wish you were here. I will send you pictures.

Love  
Miltos

**HARD DRIVING  
MILTOS MANETAS**

**1% PERSPIRATION**

n° 4  
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# afterart news

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PAGE 9



ZBIGNIEW  
LIBERA:  
TROTSKY'S  
ICE PICK

PAGE 3



JOHN  
TREMBLAY'S  
NETWORK...

PAGE 10



MARK DION AND  
BOB BRAINE:  
ARAC ATTACK!

## WHERE IS JOSEPH BEUYS WHEN WE NEED HIM?

**W**hat has happened to the land of the free and the home of the brave in four short years? Alexis de Toqueville's famous tyranny of the masses has morphed into a television-fueled nightmare on Main Street. EVERYTHING is super-sized, not just the state's repressive apparatus and the Bush regime's oligopoly, FOX News, the Republican propaganda arm, reaches into the far corners of the country 24/7/365 and is slowly poisoning the American mind. This is racism for the masses, a primitive fear of the other made public policy. It's a machine for the installation of low-grade perpetual war. The Cold War has become the Culture War.

Where is Joseph Beuys when we need him? "To make people free is the aim of art, therefore art for me is the science of freedom." Beuys liked America (and America liked him), but he wasn't going to take any bullshit from it. Today, watching videos of his actions reminds us that art used to matter. Just look at him at his blackboard at the Tate in London, covered in chalk dust, earnestly discouraging about politics and art with anyone who wandered in. He actually believed that an artist could transform the world, change the course of history, bring down a government. In the U.S.A., the only people who believe that today are born-again evangelists. Someone has locked the ghost of Joseph Beuys in a very dark place.

Fred thought that people love tyranny for the same reason that they love intoxicants and sex: temporary relief from cognitive dissonance. The dissonance provoked by the crises of globalization has given the US government enormous powers to establish control which daily diminish individual freedom. Afterart News believes that artists matter more than ever today if only because, for most of us, cognitive dissonance is our modus operandi. But we also know that if art is to be more than a pleasurable pastime for the rich or a barnacle on the underbelly of mass culture, then artists, collectors, curators and culture vultures of all stripes must be political (whatever their art may be). The freedom of our science is at stake. Beuys's blackboards have become our flat screens. Let the presses roll.



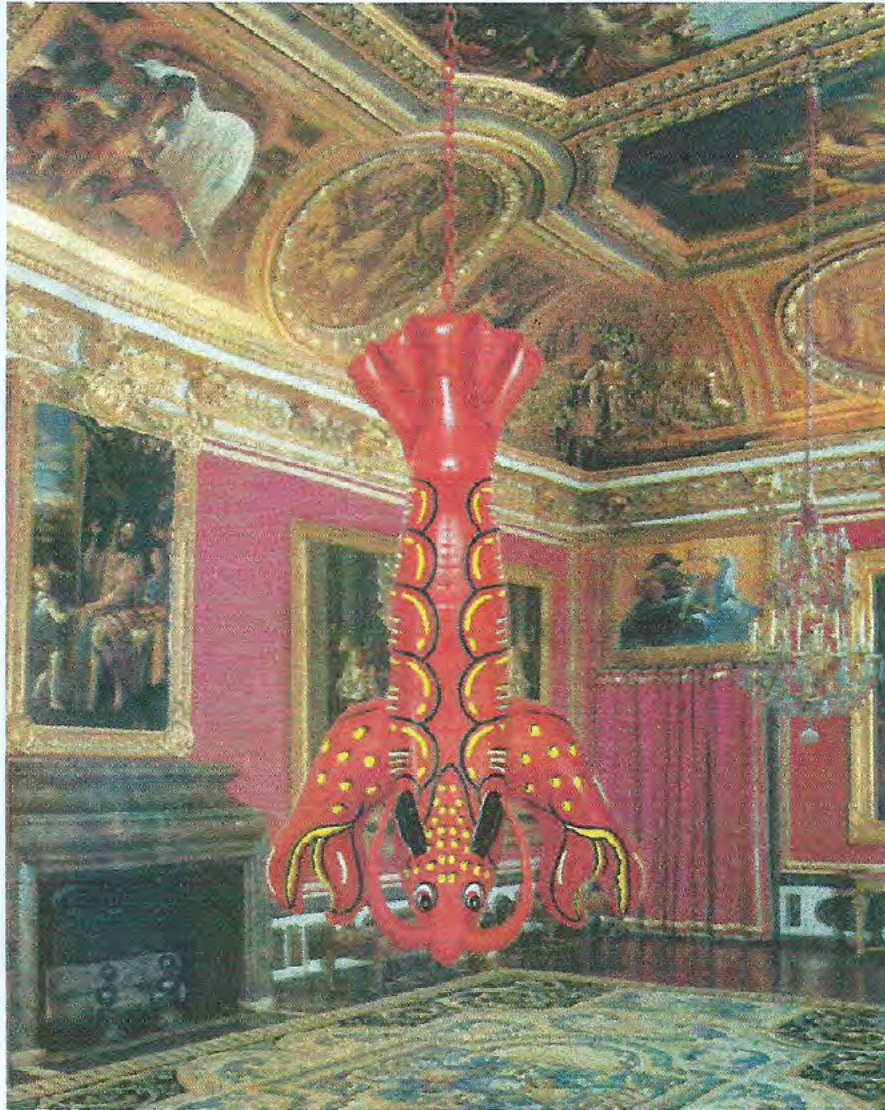
Joseph Beuys now by Lucien Krings, La Cric, Paris. Photo from Afterart.com

Richard Dailey, Paris

The byline from an article I wrote about the Jeff Koons exhibition at Versailles. I have written a fair amount of art criticism over the years, including catalogue essays for Sébastien de Ganay, Alan Séchas, Corinne Marchetti, Barthélémy Togue, Cecilia Jurado,

### **LET THEM EAT LOBSTER (Jeff Koons in Versailles)**

By aaneews | September 19, 2008 - 12:54 pm



Lobster - Collection Michael and BZ Schwartz (Studio Jeff Koons)

Nicole Blau, etc. I have included many of these essays/articles, including articles I wrote for Afterart News, in appendix C.

**PIERRE BISMUTH**



**editorial**

**POET**

Peter Nagy is an artist and co-founder, with Alan Belcher, of Nature Morte.

Here's what he has to tell us.

Richard Dailey



Gears has its bottom!



**BARTHÉLÉMY TOGUO'S INSTITUTES**

**Alain Néchas**

**AFRICAN ROOTS & INSTITUTES**

**SMEN**

**WHAT WOULD OL' DIRTY THINK?**



**SCHABUS'S DREAM...**

Richard Dailey

**SEPTEMBER**

**Elein Fleiss's BLACK**

In 1973 Louis Malle made a feature-length documentary at Place de la République in Paris. Mostly he just hung around and filmed. From Sept. 2007 - Junr 2008 I did the same thing. Except instead of shooting with a shoulder-held film camera, I used an early Canon digital powershot. The only rules I gave myself were 1) I would stay within the bounds of Place de la République and 2) I wouldn't set anything up. I just shot what I saw. The result is an hour-long homage to one of the masters of cinema.



un film de  
RICHARD DAILEY

projection 1/06/16  
20h30 entrée libre

GROBAT  
1 cité griset 75011

#### **un mot du réalisateur**

En 1974 Louis Malle réalise un documentaire long-métrage Place de la République à Paris. Il s'y est juste installé avec sa caméra en compagnie de Jean-Claude Larioux le preneur de son. De septembre 2007 à juin 2008, j'ai fait la même chose, mais au lieu d'une caméra à l'épaule, j'ai utilisé une caméra digitale Canon Powershot. les seules contraintes que je me suis données étaient 1) de rester dans les limites de la place de la République et 2) de ne pas prévoir de scénario à l'avance. J'ai juste filmé ce que je voyais. Le résultat est un hommage d'une heure à l'un des maîtres du cinéma et une description de la Place de la République (avant sa rénovation) comme centre de l'expression politique française à tendance gauchiste.



Place de la République stills



What we want is very clear: to share with the greatest number of people what we thought was reserved for the elite. But what a difficult, delicate balance to maintain. A balance between the poets, their work, the general public, the actors, the technicians. However this instability can create a living style, a style which is threatened every day, which does away with habit and social sclerosis. This dangerous instability also keeps alive this proposition: the art of popular theatre is a permanent revolt.







ARCHED AIR IDLY

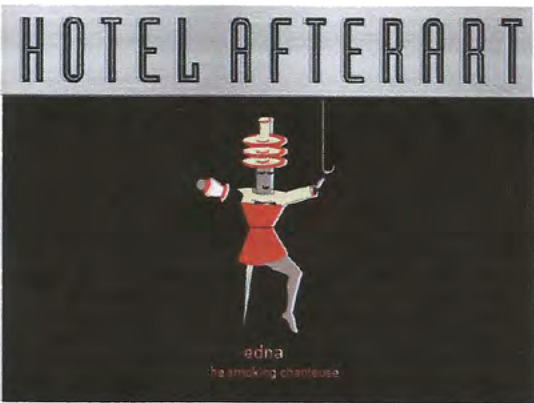
Inspired by Allen Ruppersberg's *Palms Café*  
I created an ephemeral hotel in my studio, along  
with all the staff required to run the establishment.



Joe - barman, neo-situatiocist



Ivan - masseur, security



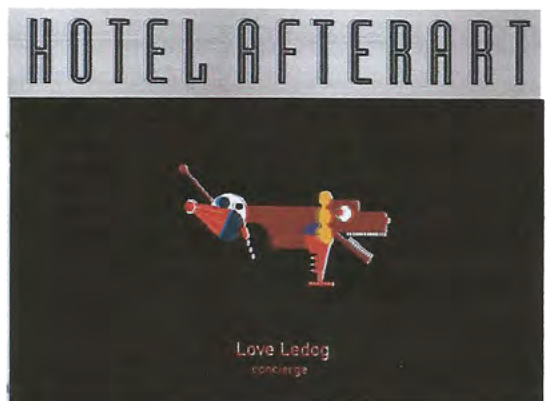
Edna - the smoking chanteuse



Veronica - maid, vagina painter



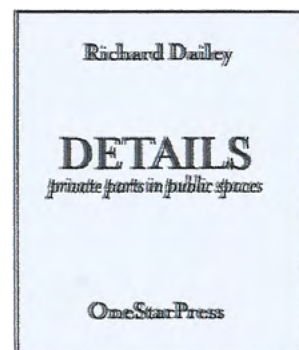
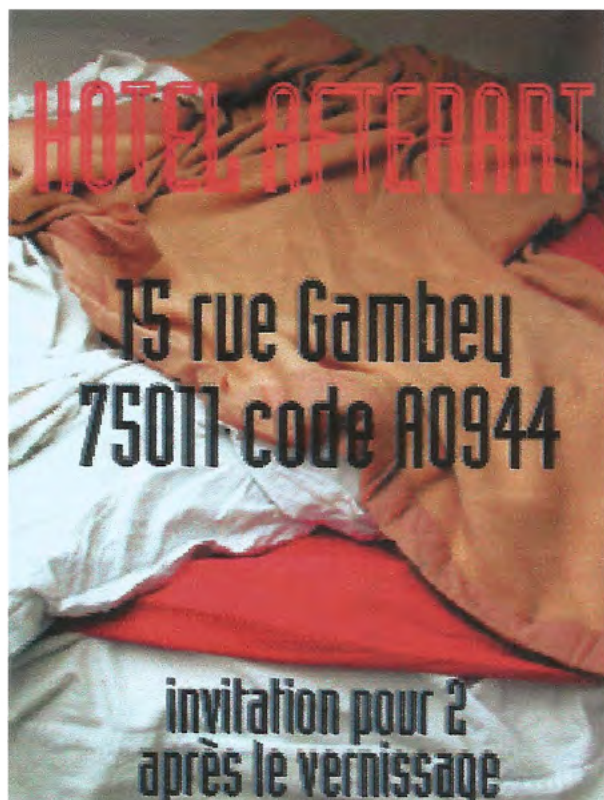
Arthur - manager, concrete poet



Love Ledog - concierge



Hotel Afterart ephemera



signature & presentation  
of original photographs

at

**The Hotel Afterart**

Friday, September 27, 2002  
from 8 PM to midnight  
15 rue Gambey  
75011 Paris

staircase in courtyard, 4th floor, room 6  
code: A7511 tel: 06 69 99 57 06

Hotel Afterart polaroids



## PHOTOGRAPHS



I bought my first photo camera - a Nikon in the late 80s. I knew from watching my photography Friends that the expense of being a serious photographer was beyond me. I saw how they worked. they took rolls and rolls of pictures and printed contact sheets and selected the best shots and cropped them. I called it the machinegun technique.

I also thought Sally Mann was right when she said she worried that photography actually weakens memory.

I ~~now~~ no longer think that. and of course digital put the machinegun technique into everyman's hands.

EARLY PHOTOS

Indian Cow - 1992 - 60cm X 40cm - white wood 3/4 in frame

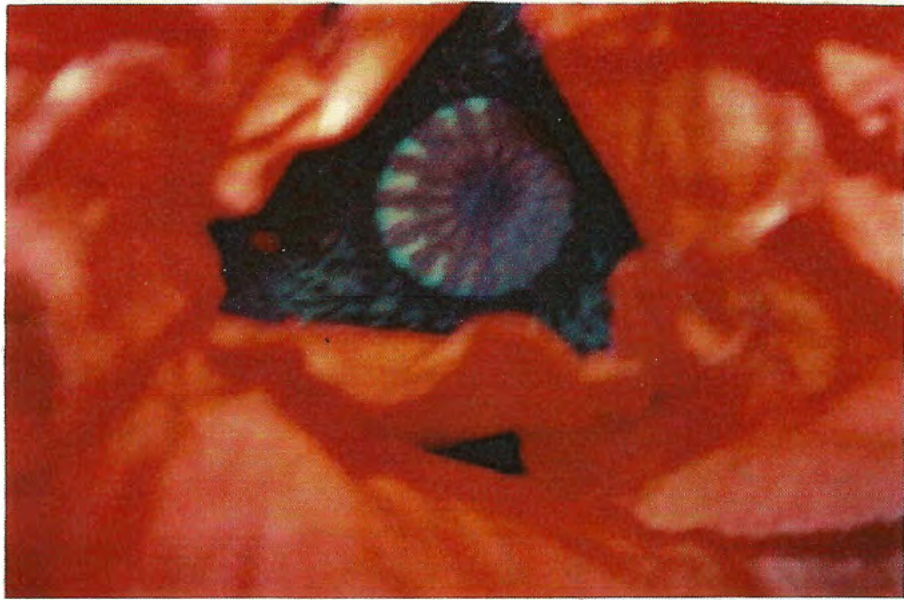


Brutus -1993 -60cm X 40cm -white wood 3/4 in frame

I sometimes photographed scenes I set up.  
I did this again later when I started working  
with the Harinezumi.

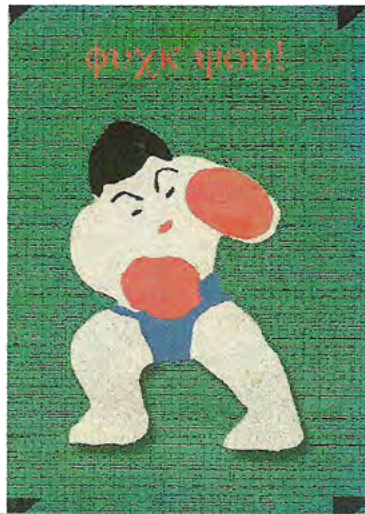


Flower Dyptic - 1992 - 60cm X 80 cm  
3/4 in white wood frame





I made Afterart postcards out of photos.



## SWIM

### Scenettes

Six-panel soft-core 40's French porn in a paperback book format on cheap paper in black and white. the six photos were spaced out through the little magazine. The scenarios were just excuses to have the women undress. The stories are often completely surreal. I colorized and framed them



in a horizontal sequence. Each image is 19cm X 13cm

Balloon Girl



TAHITI STRIP



## HARINEZUMI

Sometime early in the Facebook era my (real) friend (Chris) Hoover put online a short video of a NYC subway ride over the Manhattan Bridge. I wrote immediately to ask him what he took it with.

It looked really cool.

He told me: Harinezumi, "little mouse with antennae," a miniature plastic camera made by an artists' collective in Tokyo called Superheadz. It took a couple of weeks but I found one of the original models from a Hong Kong distributor on Ebay. I got the batteries and the charger. I got a 32 gigs micro memory card.

To this day the Harinezumi remains one of my favorite interfaces with the world.

I am not the only artist (Dash Snow) who uses it as a still/video camera, but I was one of the first to take its possibilities seriously.

The video looks like old super 8. The photos like they were taken with an early Kodak.

These incredible pixels give the photos a painterly aspect.

The lens is hypersensitive to light, and it has a macro feature which lets you take really dramatic photos of very small objects. It also takes incredible landscapes in low light or in seemingly uniform atmospheres, like mists or snow.

I never retouch my Harinezumi photos. They are "right out of the can." I develop them at full size -- 2048 X 1536 or 54cm X 40cm -- I buy beat-up flea-market frames and cut them to fit the photos.

The frames are integral to the images. 10 of the following Harinezumi images are shown in frame. The others are printed here from files.

good example of the Harinezumi  
macro feature -



one of my favorite landscapes

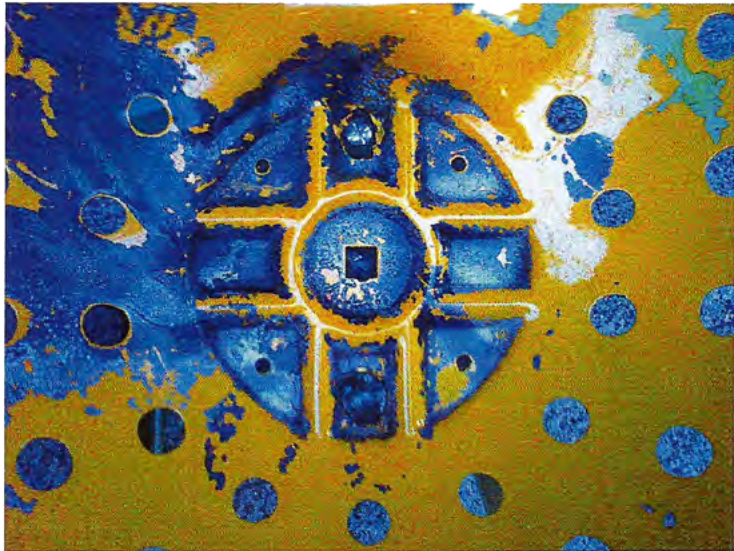






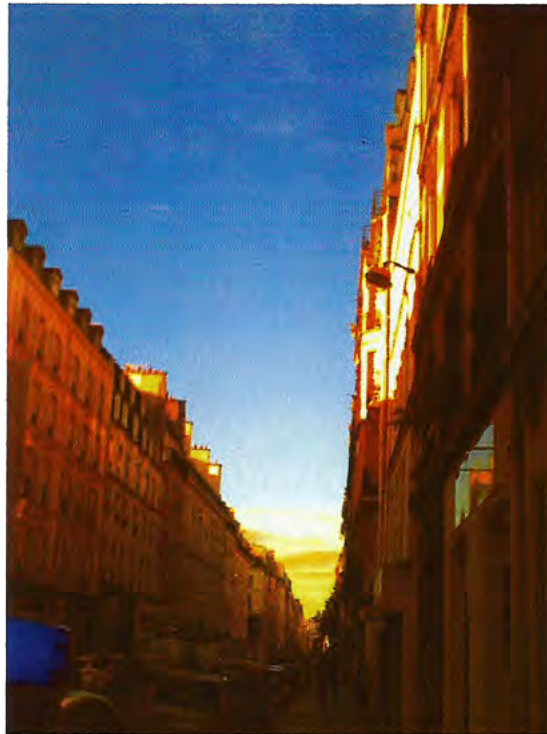




















The Visit 90 mins

**Cannes' FUNNIEST film!!!!**  
Full frontal! **TEENAGE NUDITY** with socks!



**PORTOBELLO FILM FESTIVAL 2010**  
**THE VISIT**  
Afterari Productions 2010 directed by Richard Daller & Come Bevin  
Free & open to the public!  
Mestbourne Studios London  
242, Acklam Road N105JJ  
Sept 18 2010 18:30  
[www.portobellofilmfestival.com](http://www.portobellofilmfestival.com)

Zoe Daller  
Raphael Giannasini  
Pierre Boulanger  
Nancy Vale

Official Selection  
Cannes Independent Film Festival  
2010

Official Selection  
New Filmmakers NYC  
2010

Official Selection  
Portobello Film Festival  
2010

"If Paris can't cure her, then nothins can!"

"Much like Scorsese and Woody Allen each have their own New Yorks, Richard has his own Paris - and what a wacky raunchy, yet somehow sweet and charming place it is... this man has a world that will positively delight many of us, turn others off completely and violently outrage even more..."

Devi Snively



Côme Levin and I wrote, cast and shot *The Visit* in 3 months.

Then we spent 6 in post trying to fix it.

We did.

It's a comedy that deals with a lot of serious issues, like teenage sexuality in the internet age.

It's based on an old paradigm: a sexy American Puritan comes to France and finds herself entangled in a web of old-world intrigue (*Portrait of a lady*).

Like all my films, *The Visit* cost "nothing" to make, and in financial terms it returned more than any of my other films because it got Côme and me invited to the Cannes Independent Film Festival where for two weeks we stayed in a gorgeous hillside villa with a swimming pool. It didn't take long (this is France) for the official Cannes Fest to close down the Indie Fest, but it sure was fun while it lasted.

I love this shot of Côme - it's not the last frame in the film, but it's close. I love that he becomes an angel, a blue angel.

Remember when things actually mattered?

"If Paris can't cure her, then nothing can."



## Nos States

I decided to make this documentary about what the US looks like from the French Parisian ghettos when I read an article in the now gone Herald Tribune about how much money the CIA was spending there in an exercise of soft power. I knew I would need help - I contacted a friend who curated a French rap web site. It was all male. I asked him who the female rappers were and he told me "Black Barbie." I went to a small concert she gave in the neighborhood. I went back stage afterward and introduced myself. We met a couple of times to discuss the idea of promoting a freestyle contest and taking the winner to NYC. We held auditions and the contest took

Hip hop is everywhere in France and has been since soon after it first appeared in NYC in the 1980s. Slamming or free-style rapping has since put down deep roots here and evolved into a vibrant verbal ecosystem for political, social and self-expression. In 2011, in the best gonzo documentary film tradition and on a minuscule budget, Afterart put together a slam/free-style contest to explore this cultural phenomenon. The goal was to see what America looks like from within the French ghetto and to show Americans what happens when their popular culture is adopted in another country. The first prize was a 7-day all expenses paid trip to NYC.

Principes, a 20-year-old French slammer and beatboxer, won hands down, and this film documents the contest and our trip to NYC. Principes was a total mystery - he had won the contest, but who was he? How would this French kid of Congolese origins react to the greatest city in the world and the home of hip hop? How would you feel if one day you were rapping and beatboxing with your friends on streetcorners in the Paris ghetto, and the next day you were on a plane for the first time in your life, heading for NYC, and having your experiences documented? We hope you enjoy the ride.



place at Les Voutes in the thirteenth arrondissement. Bruno Herlin, the director of Les Voutes (who had supported my film work for years) participated in filming and eventually came to NYC with us. A great example of gonzo film making. The best screening was at La Mama in NYC. The film also led to the making of a get-out-the-vote video for Francois Hollande with 100 or so French personalities.

A graffiti wall created by  
Milo Levin for the film



Princes relaxing in an abandoned lot



**THE POETRY CLUB ARTSPACE PRESENTS**



straight from Paris France one night only  
sunday oct 16 @ 7:30 pm

**PRINCEPS/BLACK BARBIE**

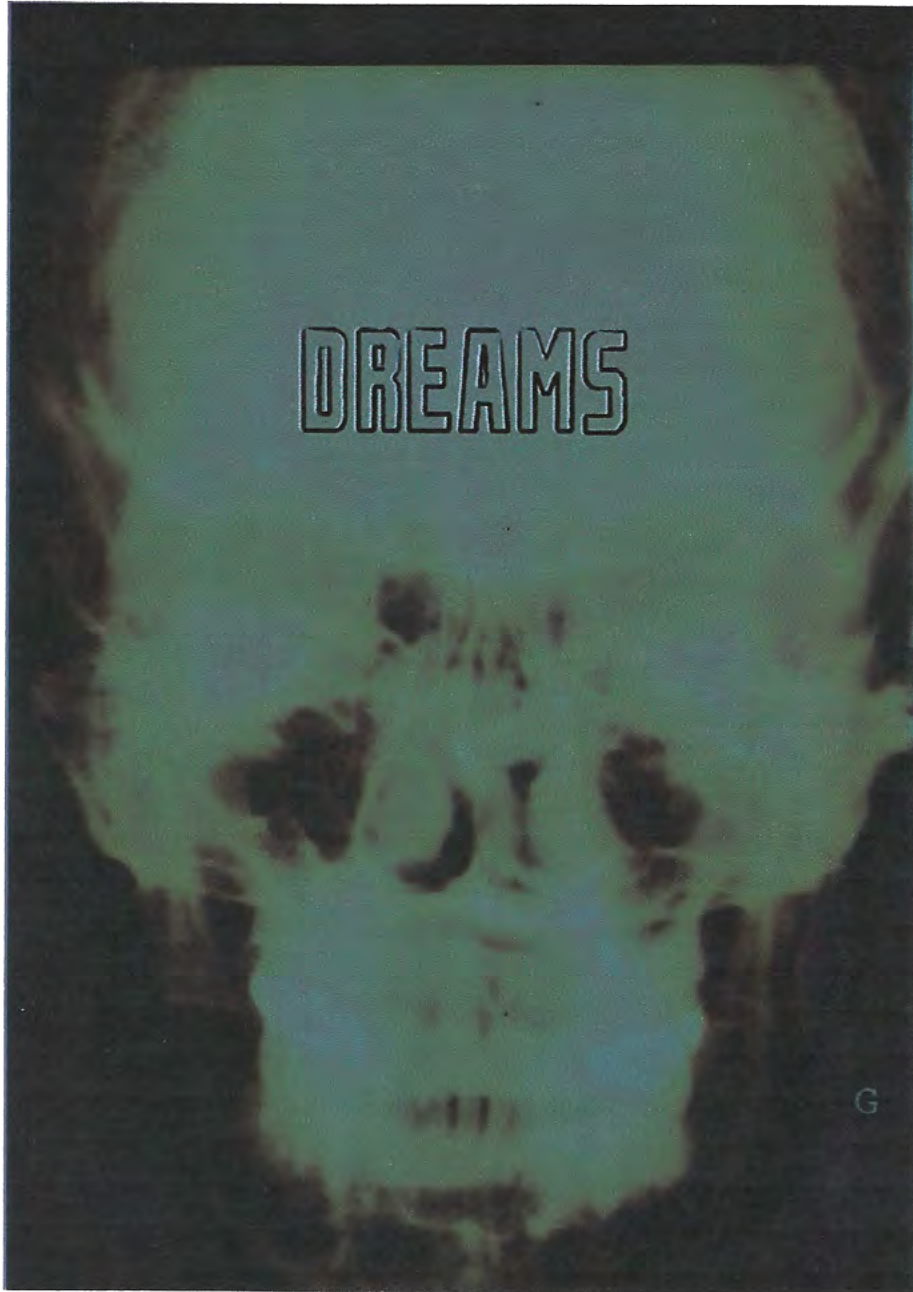
French acapella rap from Princeps featuring La Reine de 93, Black Barbie  
you can't get any closer to French hip hop without going there

**THE POETRY CLUB ARTSPACE**

FREE ENTRY 517 Putnam Ave (under the stairs)  
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11216 subway A,C & G  
[www.poetryclubartspace.com](http://www.poetryclubartspace.com)



I returned to writing poetry again regularly in 2013 by recording my dreams almost every morning. It was a time when I dreamed often, but not always, about famous people. I printed this edition on nesprint and the image is an X-ray of my own skull.



DREAMS is an edition of 300 - numbered  
and signed - 12 pages - 37cm X 29cm  
printed on nesprint in Glasgow 2014



## ROLAND BARTHES DREAM

I walk along the rue de France, bourgeois  
And turn into a Peugeot showroom  
That isn't really there, Roland Barthes  
Says, "Heureux de te revoir, Richard."  
But he's not Barthes, he's Jean-Claude,  
The old fruits and vegetables guy  
On rue Oberkampf. People combine all  
The time in dreams, like Francis Galton's  
Composites that fascinate Freud.  
Sig says you only dream about yourself  
Although you dream of someone else  
Who represents what you see of you  
In them, Jean-Claude took five years  
To say hello to me - Roland Barthes is  
Fast. The Peugeots sleep and gleam  
In their finishes, ice-cold, killers.  
"Ecoute, mon ami," chuchote Roland,  
"Je te vends l'amitié d'une pair de lunettes  
De soleil, et tu peux acheter l'autre moitié  
Ailleurs, ça te coutera moins cher tu vois."  
His wheezing and dealing disturbs me but

I'm happy to be dreaming in French.  
I am in awe of him - he died after lunching  
With President Mitterand at the Elysée  
When a drunk driving a Peugeot van  
Ran over him. Of which it's obscene to dream.  
But now I say to Roland, "Tu t'en fou, eh?"  
And I'm ready to take his deal but I  
Only see cars for sale and not sunglasses.  
"Ils sont dans le funeraireum," he insists,  
Leading me to an antique display case  
Where I see a pair of blue sunglasses.  
I really don't want blue but Roland again  
Insists that I take half of his blue glasses -  
He snaps them in two and hands me half  
Whapped in the page of a glossy magazine.  
"Les monts sont dans le salon," he says  
To seal the deal and I am obliged to pay.  
We embrace and I am on my way wearing  
My half a pair of new blue sunglasses  
Walking up rue Oberkampf and I hear  
Jean-Claude has left us without a word.

05/03/2014

## LEWIS BALTZ DREAM

Lewis Baltz is in the cellar of my childhood  
Home, editing video on a couple of big screens.  
I go down and find him 30 years younger than he  
is, looking cooler than ever, so Cali, like Chet  
Baker at his coolest, and the cellar is no longer  
dark. You know the photographs of Chet Baker  
And how they tell the tale of what became of him  
Even if you've never seen Baltz's industrial  
Parks in California, unpeopled, formal, still -  
Baltz turns into Robko and back into Baltz.  
Now in the basement he is happy with the way  
Things are going and wants me to look at his edit.  
So I watch the images go by on the screens -  
There's not really a story but it all makes sense:  
The way dreams do except I feel no need.

To wonder what it means: "I had grabs me  
Like lights on and I feel trapped with Lewis.  
I realize I should have been helping him edit.  
But where was I? Upstairs in my childhood?  
I notice a window that looks out on rue Amelot  
In Paris where I live and I turn to Baltz and say,  
"Come on, Lewis, let's go to the Clown Bar."  
It's a real bar next to the Cirque d'Hiver where  
I have never been with Lewis. I turn away  
Wondering if I had moved to Cali, gone west  
Instead of east, would I have grown up cool  
As winters spent on the beach, not hanging  
Around in this dank basement in the dark  
With a Lewis younger than I ever knew.

05/03/2014



## RENE RICARD DREAM

I am lost on the Paris metro  
With a heavy bag and sit to gather  
My wits only Rene Ricard appears  
Sporting the Confederate cap he  
Wears on the beautiful cover of **God  
With Revolver**. "Rene," I shout,  
"Can I use your phone?" He tosses  
Me a dumbphone and says  
"Never be without one even if  
No one has time for it." Rene  
Vanishes into the crowd he came  
From as Virgil disappears in Dante.

I rise and my bag becomes metal  
And the floor is magnetized  
Like a well-loved punishment.  
Rene's phone rings but I throw it  
On the tracks because I know  
How dangerous it is to answer.  
A super modern train pulls up  
and I abandon my bag and get  
On alone - the train is unpeopled.  
Freud says trains in dreams  
Mean death but I am not so  
Sure because there is a girl

At every station we rocket past  
In expensive underwear who  
Sits high on a wooden lifeguard  
Chair as at the beach or pool.  
These new subway lines are all  
Closed loops that don't connect  
To anything - maybe Freud  
WAS right and this is the dream  
I never wake up from after all  
Just yesterday I was sure Rene  
Was dead and here I find him  
Underground in my head.

01/03/2014

# KATHARINE HEPBURN DREAM

I am filming a remake  
Of the **Wizard of Oz**  
Which in this dream  
Ends with everyone  
On the roof of Katherine  
Hepburn's house.  
Her place is huge as I  
Arrive before it only  
Something is bizarre,  
A heater or something  
In the roof's middle  
And I wonder how they  
Shot the original end  
With it there but I  
Guess the secret is  
All in the angles.  
I enter and Katherine  
Greets me and says, "I'm  
Thrilled that you are redsng

**The Wizard of Oz!**  
I follow her into a room  
Where all the costumes  
She ever wore hang  
Abstractly in the air -  
Everyone she has ever  
Been is here for her  
To become again.  
She points out  
Some of her favorites  
And I am so moved I cry  
As I look at the tags  
She proudly shows me.  
She tries a few dresses  
On which excites me.  
We go into another room  
And it's the same - clothes  
Hanging everywhere in the air  
As we lie down on a silk

Mattress passionately  
Together and I wonder if  
I am only making love  
To her because I need  
Her house for my film -  
But I have seen **Harold  
And Maude** and besides  
I am no spring chicken  
Either - and suddenly I  
Realize there are five  
People on a low  
Bench against the wall  
Who slowly troop out  
As the last, a woman,  
Crooks her finger at Katherine  
and says, "I want to talk to you  
For a minute." And I think  
That's what friends are for.  
Or are they?

03/07/2014

# BEN BELLIT DREAM

I am lounging on a couch in a bohemian  
Restaurant where my daughter works  
And I order two hamburgers. She asks me  
If she can have half of one. "Of course,"  
I say and she goes off to put my order in.  
Ben Bellit, who died in 2003, falls down  
On the other end of the couch and glad  
I am to see him because I suckled at  
His big poetic tit for four years  
And even moved to Cuernavaca where  
He loved to live while translating  
The poems of his friend Pablo Neruda.  
Ben was part of a chorus led by  
Malcolm Lowry seducing me  
Toward Popocatepetl's volcanic  
Landscape to find this in me  
Where life and dreams ooze  
Like lava. "How are you, Ben?" I ask him  
And he says, "de Kooning is my friend  
And the only one who is worth  
A good Goddamn if you ask me."  
He tells me he just wrote an essay  
About Willem, whose daughter really  
Was thrown out of my high school.  
Ben says maybe her problem was  
That she was nowhere near as pretty  
As her father was; no one was;  
And I tell Ben about the stormy day  
She appeared in the school cafeteria  
Wearing a bright green transparent

Dress - she was a little too fat for it  
But still a naked 16-year-old blond  
Is hard not to stare at. They kicked  
Her out of school; she went to live  
With the Hell's Angels on 3rd Street  
In NYC, near where her beautiful father  
Used to paint and drink himself sick  
and she too now is dead too young.  
My daughter arrives with the burgers  
And reminds me I promised her half  
Of mine and I know I'm as good as my  
Word. We pass the burgers around.  
We each take a bite and I remember  
The night Ben tried to talk me into  
Going home with him, in a grungy local  
Bar in North Bennington, Vermont,  
The Villager, a short walk from Ben's  
Converted mill on Prophet  
Street by Perin Falls, the place  
That got hit by lightning; he wrote  
About it in a poem I have forgotten,  
But I remember electricity coursed  
Visibly around the room's perimeter  
Like this dream around the edges  
Of my sleep when I hear him say,  
"I just uploaded my essay on Willem."  
I succeed in pulling out my smart  
Phone but then Ben is no longer.  
I mumble Ben again and again.

23/03/2014





In 2015 I started making limited signed editions of Afterart Posters, which became known as my "scans". I made high resolution scans of a few of my fetish images - the front page of the N Y Post, the cover of Junkie by William Burroughs, etc. I had them printed in 4-color offset at 75cm X 60cm in editions of 10.

## AFTERART POSTERS



CERTIFIED

RLH Daily 2014

VERNISSAGE 12/03/2015  
@ 25-50  
18 rue Oberkampf 75011  
18h - 24h

They were shown for a month at 25-10 on rue Oberkampf

## AFTERART POSTERS

Richard Dalley, écrivain, artiste et cinéaste américain basé à Paris, a créé AFTERART en 2000 comme trademark pour sa production artistique pluridisciplinaire. AFTERART POSTERS est une série de 10 affiches, toutes signées et certifiées, dans des éditions illimitées. Les images ont été empruntées. JUNKIE, par exemple, est la couverture originale de NAKED LUNCH de William Burroughs, qu'il a signé avec un pseudonyme. Elles ont aussi une résonance personnelle - Richard Dalley a obtenu une copie de JUNKIE il y a plusieurs années à New York - et, en se les appropriant, dans la série AFTERART POSTERS, il les fait entrer dans son musée imaginaire.



Richard Dalley, an American writer, artist and film maker based in Paris, started AFTERART in 2000 to trademark his multi-disciplinary artistic production. AFTERART POSTERS is a series of 10 posters, all signed and certified, in unlimited editions. The images are appropriated. Junkie, for example, is the original cover of NAKED LUNCH by William Burroughs. They are also personally significant - Richard Dalley obtained his copy of JUNKIE in the 1980s in NYC - and reach their full significance here upon induction into the AFTERART POSTERS series.

AFTERART POSTERS



CERTIFIED *Phil Daily 2014*

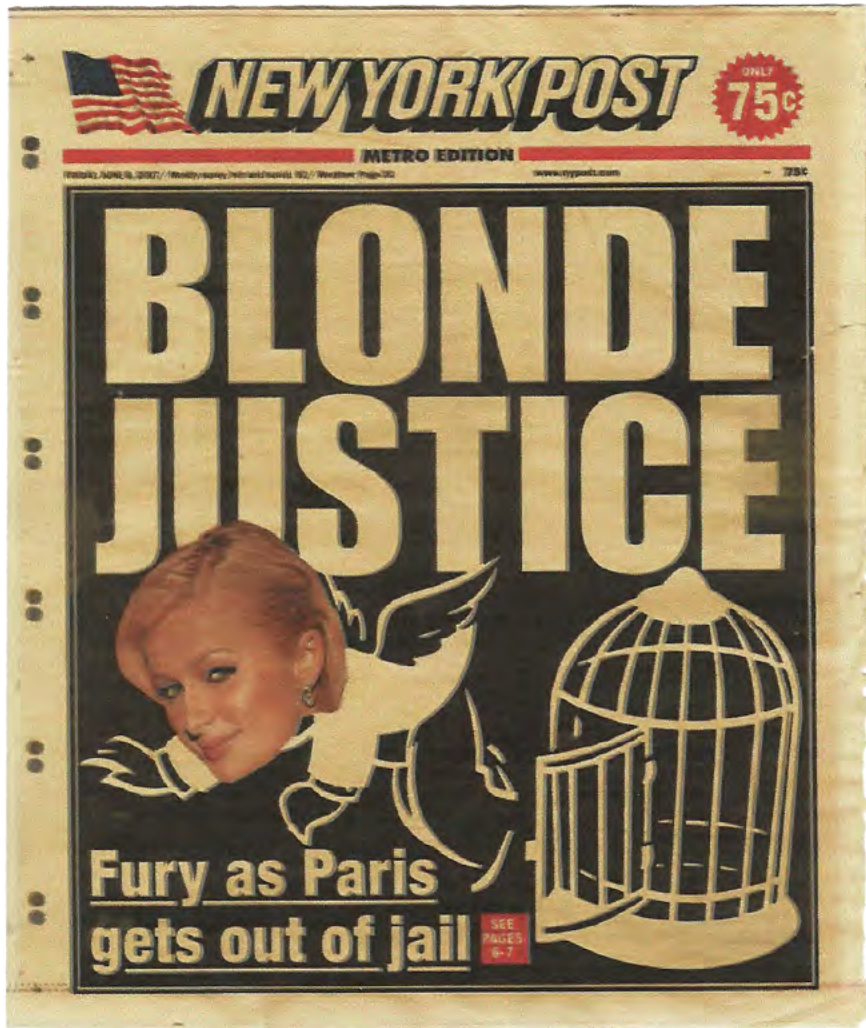


AFTERART POSTERS



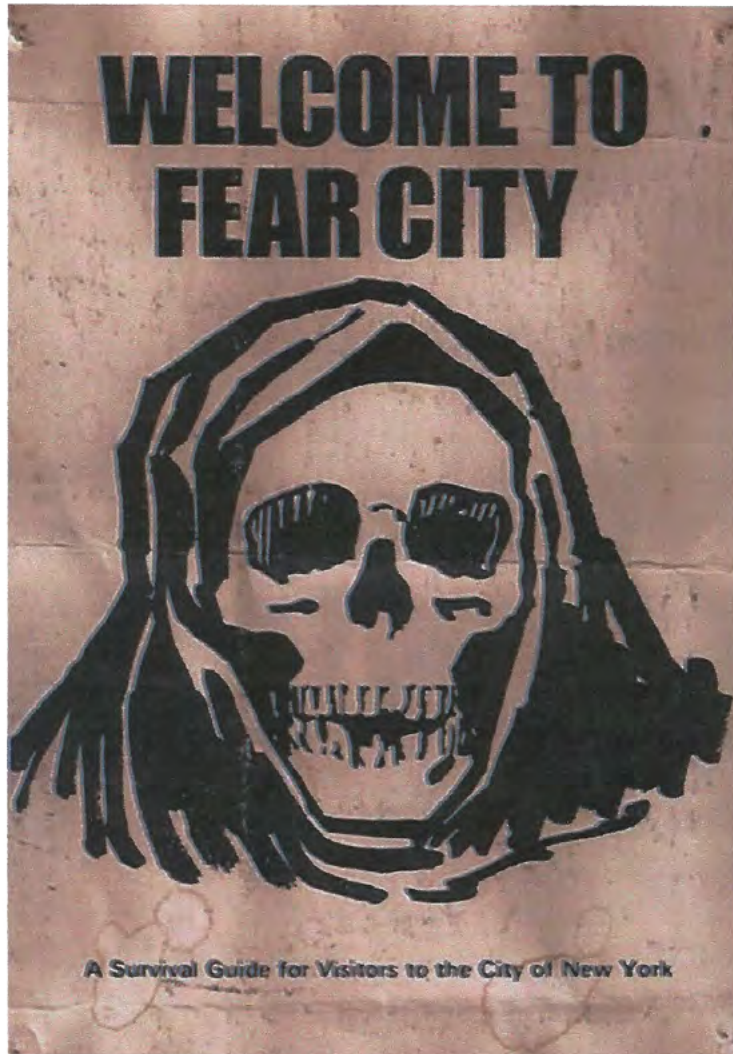
CERTIFIED *Phil Daily 2014*

AFTERART POSTERS



CERTIFIED *Richard Dawkins* 2014

AFTERART POSTERS



CERTIFIED

Richard Dawg 2014

Scanned this image from a book  
of matches advertising a bar in the midwestern  
US. At first I thought I wanted to make a poster  
from it. Then I decided to make matches.



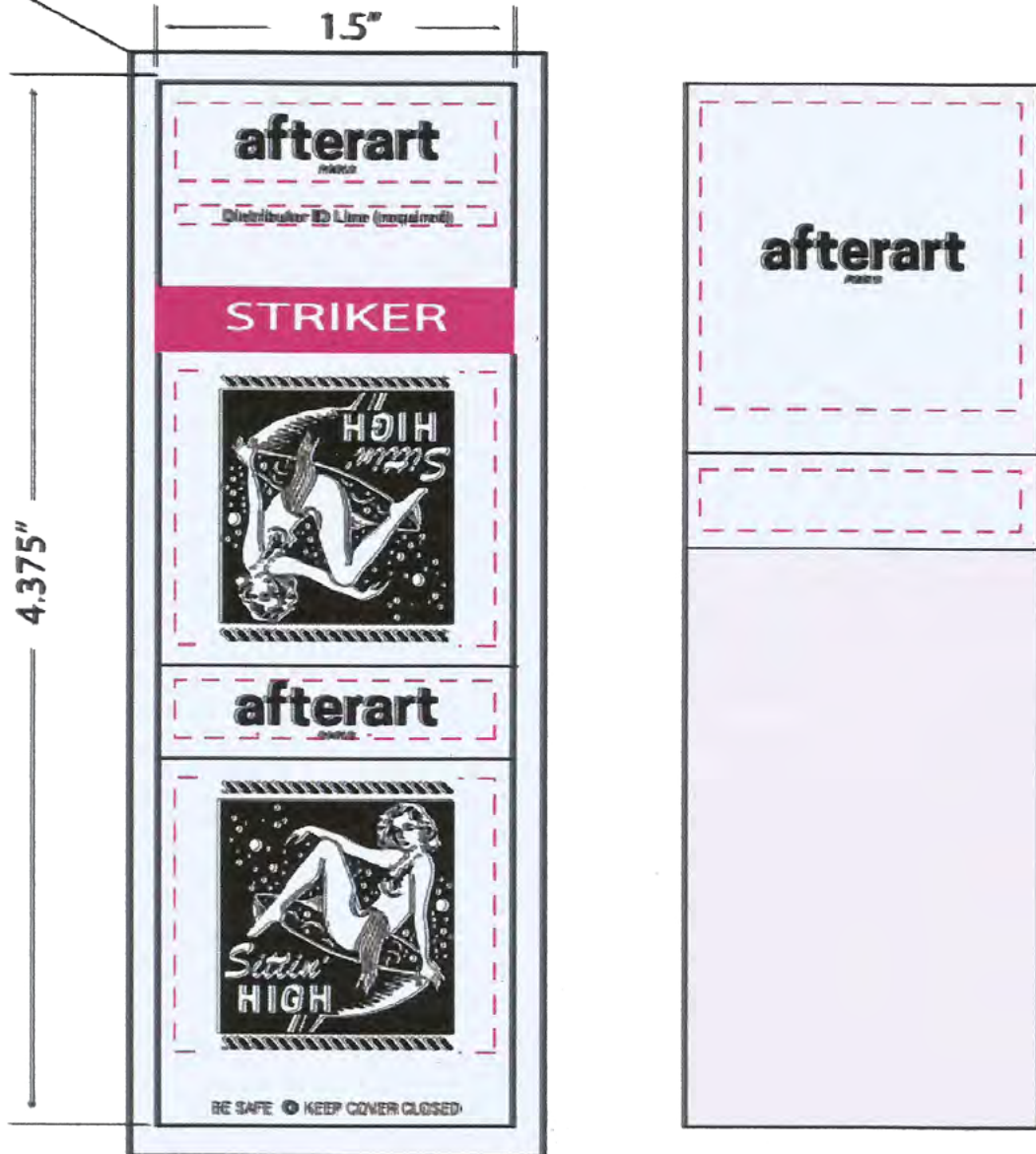
1937

I found a company in the US that would make the matches for much less than any place in Europe. Only it turned out that they were considered hazardous material for shipping and had to be treated as such - so it ended up costing much more and they were delivered with hazmat warnings all over the special container, as if they were radioactive.

Bleed for Reverse

Outside/Cover

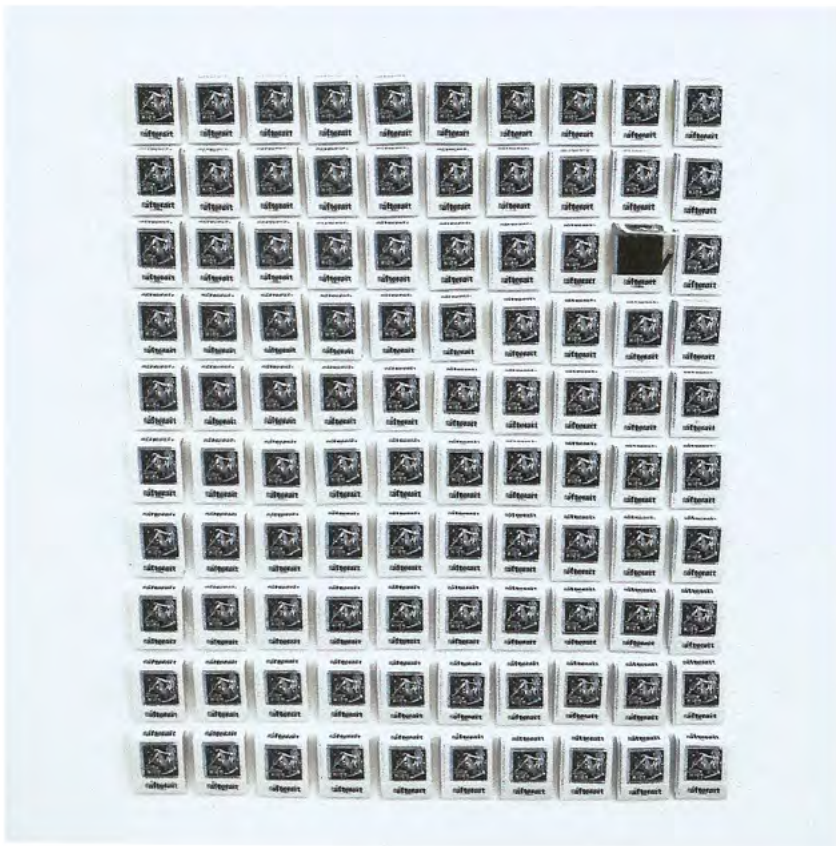
Underprint/Inside





The matches are 100euros for a box of 100 or  
3 euros for a single pack.

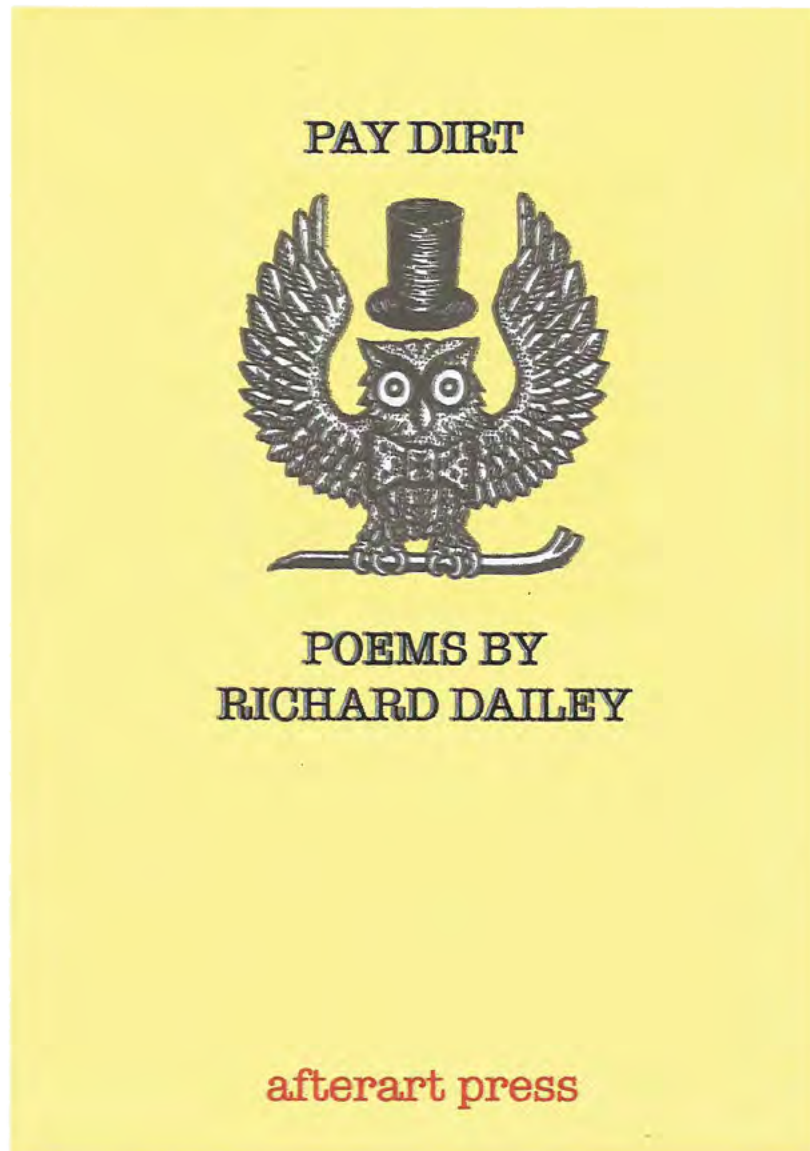




Pay Dirt 2015 edition of IC, signed & numbered

67 pages 21cm X 29cm

also available as an audio book



The poems in PAY DIRT were all written in the morning during July, August and September, 2015. I would take my coffee, a piece of glass the size of an A4 sheet to support my paper, my favorite pen, and wait for the words to come. I wrote out to the edge of the paper in landscape - the long way, so essentially the paper made the line lengths what they are, and they are long lines for me. I didn't punctuate, and I used the dates for titles. Later in the day I would type up whatever I wrote that morning, modifying bits as I went along. I have included here both the typed and original handwritten versions. A recorded version of the entire series with musical ambiance is online at [soundcloud](https://www.soundcloud.com/richard-dailey).

This activity was excessively pleasurable - in fact some of the most agreeable writing I have ever done. Mostly I felt I just had to get out of the way and let the writing happen. The routine felt completely integrated into my days, like watering the plants. I hope some of that pleasure is apparent here.



surfing the night is divine the world breathes in the dark  
forever seeming ~~hours~~ of sweet terror by in physical and mental  
inventory knees bad self-loathing check fear of the future  
fuck it hang ten tubular rushing until the dawn creeps up  
at the end of the tunnel and I emerge from the surf naked tan  
the girls in their bikinis swoon the boys applaud <sup>handsomely</sup>  
the sand is unstable shifting but my balance is impeccably  
sky blazes blue now ~~waves~~ waves crash behind me I gulp the air  
I want nothing I am everything nature's god is a ~~god~~ <sup>god</sup>  
the wind lifts me gently in its arms like a lover and I wake.

16/09/2015

Surfing the night is divine the world breathing in the dark  
Forever seeming hours of sweet scary physical and mental  
Inventory knees bad self-loathing check fear of the future  
Fuck it hang ten tubular rushing until the dawn creeps up  
At the end of the tunnel I emerge from the surf naked tan  
The girls in bikinis swoon the boys all applaud handsomely  
The sand is unstable but my balance absolutely impeccable  
Sky blazes blue now waves crash behind me I gulp the air  
I want nothing nothing is without me even you

crossing the days on a suspension bridge of words <sup>Dominican</sup>  
pure sorcery like making a film <sup>in a ~~mountain~~ jungle</sup>  
requiring blinding vision iron will financial resources  
and even then the river can go dry for the first time  
in a century making you change countries do you know  
that scene ~~of the~~ <sup>is</sup> of the most incredible things I've seen  
on a screen not for one frame do you not believe but  
is truth the second river ~~started~~ <sup>in Mexico</sup> this time also ran  
dry the locals ~~blamed~~ <sup>blamed</sup> the bridge was at fault and had  
to destroy it in the end they faked the river with hoses  
~~and~~ knowing this only makes the truck crossing that rope +  
plank  
passage over incredible the river arriving at their end.

02/09/2015

Crossing the days on a suspension bridge of words  
Pure sorcery like making a film in jungles Dominican  
Requiring blinding vision iron will financial resources  
And even then the river can go dry for the first time  
In its history making you change countries remember  
The scene despite appearances the rope bridge contained  
Numerous safety devices as well as hydraulic lifts Bill  
Friedkin took three months to film a couple of minutes  
And that doesn't include post one of the most incredible  
Scenes I've ever seen on a screen not for one frame do  
You not believe not only did they have to move to Mexico  
To finish and rebuild everything from scratch the new  
River started to dry up too and the locals blamed it on  
The bridge they wanted to destroy it so a 24-hour guard  
Had to be kept finally artificial current and rainstorm  
Using helicopters wind machines men on towers giant  
Hoses knowing only makes the truck crossing the rope  
And plank passage as believable as this bridge of words

Enamelled steel plates  
each plate is 60cm X 40cm



**A blue dog  
with white thoughts**

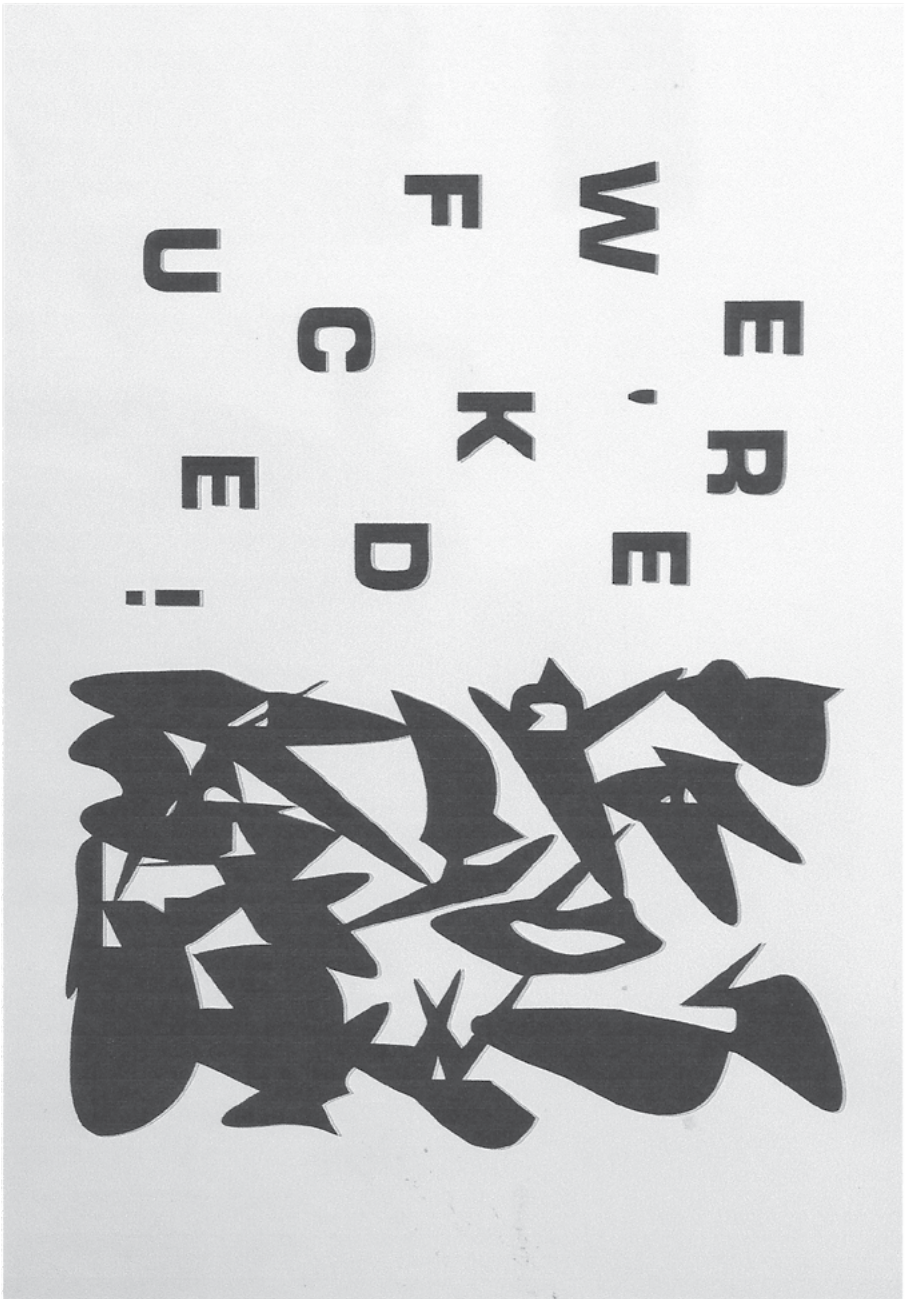
**A white dog  
with blue thoughts**

**vast resources  
are required**

**to sustain  
a will-less state**

**ABSENCE  
OF EVIDENCE**

**EVIDENCE  
OF ABSENCE**



London Paris Marrakesh



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# UNPLUGGED YELLOW

by Richard Dailey

**RICHARD DAILEY**



*paperback \$12 – Kindle \$3.50*



*limited signed edition \$40*

## **Logline**

Artists, collectors and punks in a 1979-80 novel about a love triangle on the Lower East Side, Haiti, Paris and Timbuktu.

## **Description**

An art-world novel in memoir form: Zachary, a contemporary art collector with roots in the flea markets, and FleX, an eccentric and self-destructive artist, are both in love with Rachel, a model from Haiti. Zachary is instrumental in creating FleX's meteoric career, even as he impregnates Rachel. The resulting chaos is corrupt, funny, and eventually catastrophic.

### Advance Reviews

"The best book about the New York art world since Boogie Woogie and I'm sure the movie will be equally good." Adrian Dannatt

"A personal account of the players and hangers-on who live with art at the center of their lives. Some achieve fame, others wealth, some nothing at all, but all are aware of the magnitude of the elusiveness of it all." Peter Nagy, Nature Morte, New Delhi

"UNPLUGGED YELLOW is a fascinating account of New York City in the late 1970's and early 1980's. It takes me right back to the terror and beauty of that time. It is a mesmerizing read." Jennifer Clement, author of Widow Basquiat

"A famous Minimal artist eulogized an even more famous Pop artist calling him "...a perfect glass and mirror of our age, and certainly the artist we all deserved." I assume the list of artists 'we deserve' has lengthened and that it includes, at some point, the name of FLeX." Tim Maul, artist and critic

"A poetic memoir. I don't mind if you leave me in. But the part about me is fiction." Suzanne Malouf, Basquiat's muse

"A memoir of a place I was lucky to get out of alive." Garret Linn, Laboratories.com

"I'd often regretted missing the NYC art scene of the early 80s. No longer! I time-traveled there with UNPLUGGED YELLOW. Come along! Richard Dailey's gripping account is written with the intimacy and authority of the perceptive insider. It will transport you right into the glories and darkness of it all. And when you're done, you'll feel some Timbuktu sand in your nostrils." Adam Niklewicz, artist

"I started to read this but didn't get very far as it is about 1,000 times too hip for me." John Seed, Huffington Post Arts blogger

"I read right through UNPLUGGED YELLOW. Dailey has given us an accomplished romp around a dark corner of the art world." Steel Stillman, critic and artist

"Up until this new level of gentrification on the Lower East Side wiped out most of the inherent goodness, the LES was a magic crucible that helped ferment much of the creative genius that came out of America. Richard Dailey is one such creator who drank from this well." Clayton Patterson, videographer emeritus LES

"Walking the Lower East Side today, impossible to imagine the chaotic creativity that owned the streets. Mr. Dailey's writing reminds us that there was a dynamic, popular East Village art and social scene. Vibrant All Colors." Bruce Frankel. Journalist TFI and photographer



## Chapter 1

I met FleX on September 1, 1979, in NYC. His late NO Wave noise band, The FleXtones, was playing at a loft on Walker Street, around the corner from the Mudd Club. FleX played guitar and sang in true DIY fashion. I'd heard of the FleXtones before, but had never seen them. They were more than just another blast of Jack Daniels and speed with a weird rockabilly undercurrent and unintelligible lyrics, but they never had much impact beyond the vortex of that musical moment. If you search for them on the Internet today you get a rock trio in Willamette Valley, Oregon. The first FleXtones were probably at their best that night when someone slid open the loft's pulsing steel door to let me in. Maybe fifty people milled around, a few of them dancing like the scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*, a lot of them stoned on heroin (anyone remember redrum (murder backwards), Tombstone, Hiroshima, Dead Man Walking?). Holes gashed in the plank floor inspired visions of what might creep out of them. Then the electricity crashed, stranding everyone for a few minutes in a murmuring penumbra. It would stay off only for the time it took someone to give the local Mafia lowlifes their cut of the door.

At first glance FleX looked like another Vicious clone, as in poor dead Sid. But then he came closer, and I saw that he was taller and wore clothes that seemed like they might have been his grandfather's. His spiky black hair was prematurely going snowy at the temples over dark, wide-set, almond-shaped eyes and sunken cheeks – with a beauty mark mole on his left – flanking a cleft chin. A toothpick who was above owning a toothbrush, a skinny Bacchino Malato. Sid beat FleX to death by about a year and a half. Not that FleX wasn't trying. He consumed most drugs within reach, and there was always something going around. As the eternal bacchanal moved on to the Mudd Club or the Pyramid or God knew where, FleX and his horn player (everyone called him Horny), a guy who proffered Quaaludes from a modified Daffy Duck Pez dispenser, shot up redrum. I didn't mind watching. FleX nodded for a while, squatting by a voodoo love candle (Rachel's present).

*Hey man, you know, what I really fucking love is to paint. Painting's like jerking off. You're just really concentrated, and it feels great, man. Patti and I were discussing that. We're both Capricorns.*

He nodded off again. I collected paintings, but you probably can't imagine how systematically for a kid of my age at the time. I had a warehouse in Hoboken filled with paintings, alphabetized and cross-referenced, two entire floors. Plus my loft on Orchard and Rivington: four thousand square feet. By 1979, I was already a certified downtown collector of painting, exactly when the NYC art market was at its absolute bottom financially. At the time, there was so little vehicular traffic in SoHo that artists played volleyball on Sunday afternoon on West Broadway, back when painting was a joke even among artists. As Village Voice art critic Gary Indiana said, "Many artists made no objects but did things that were art, like keeping dull people out of the Mudd Club."

He was talking about Richie Boch, the Mudd Club's doorman, who ironically is now a painter living upstate. Late that night, I wanted to see FleX's paintings, and I was not in a hurry. Eventually he got around to unplugging his guitar.

*It's not a Gibson 335, man, it just looks like it. Same double f holes. It's a Hofner Verithin, a Gibson copy except it's hollow. You can't find one anymore because when people started smashing guitars after Rockin' Rocky Rockwell smashed his, everybody used the Verithin. It smashes great. It shatters most satisfyingly. Solid-body Gibsons will break your elbows. Plus, with a Verithin, man, you automatically get that sound like you've been out of food for a week. And when the time comes, it explodes.*

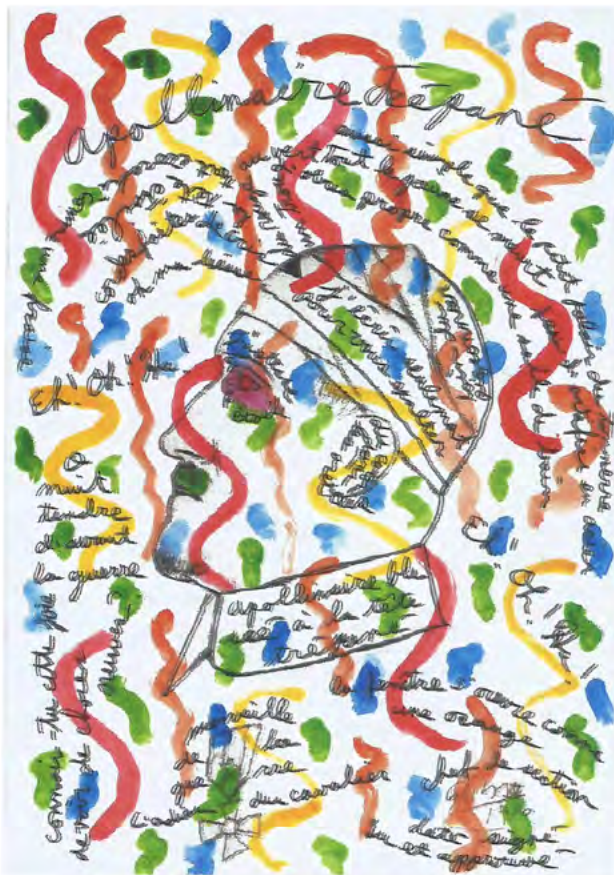
We descended the wide, worn wooden stairs to the street, me talking excitedly behind FleX about Fluxus artists destroying pianos. On Canal Street, FleX waved his guitar case. A cab did a U-turn, screeched to the curb, and we got in. Chinatown rolled by in saturated washes of red and blue neon, then the Bowery in grainy black and white and gray fluorescents as we headed uptown. That view of the Chrysler Building still knocks my socks off. I feel like it belongs to me. FleX pointed out the cab's open window at 222 Bowery, William Burroughs' Bunker, and Rothko's old studio where he painted the Seagram Murals. I had no idea then that FleX was obsessed with Debbie Harry, who hung out there sometimes, and that he would be back banging on the door of 222 the next night. He knew by heart the astrological signs of everyone who passed through there: Brion Gysin (Capricorn), Jean-Michel Basquiat (ditto), Keith Haring (Taurus), Allen Ginsberg (Gemini), et al.

*Patti is cool, I'm a Capricorn like she is. Saturn reigns over us. We could never be together though. Goats together are tragic.*

Tragedy means goat song, so it's not surprising he was a Capricorn. He conveniently didn't mention the main thing that distinguished them from each other, namely that Patti Smith was on her way up, and he was on his way down...





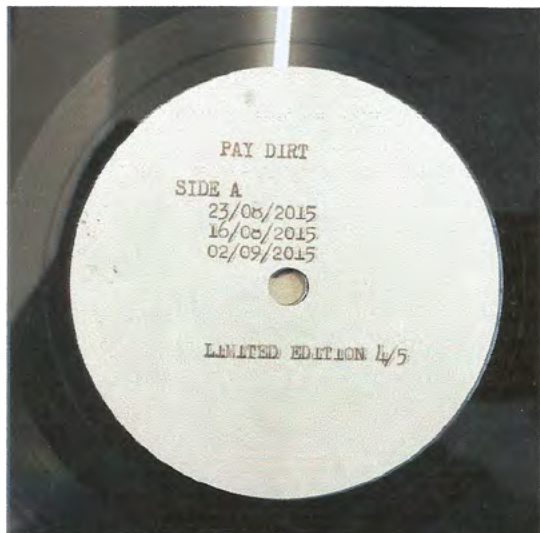
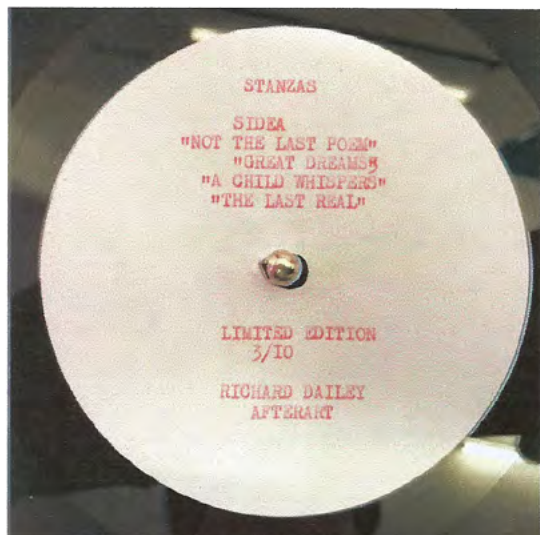




45 rpm recordings of my poetry, made  
at Crane Studio in Paris.

These 45s were made with a Japanese recorder from  
the early 70s that was originally designed to record  
karaoke. The recordings sound like they were made in  
outer space, or maybe in Thomas Edison's lab in N.J.



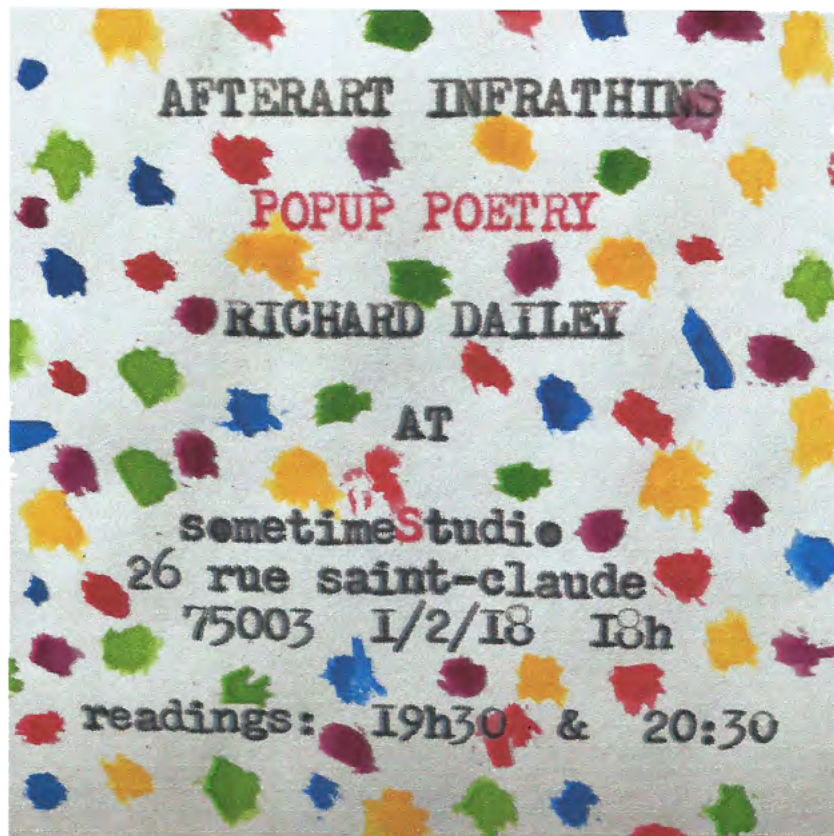




drawing/collage  
spring 2018

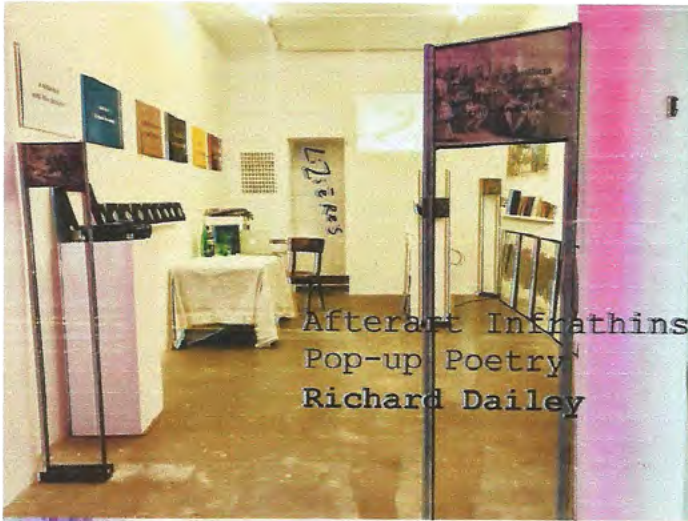
each 65cm X 50cm oil crayons, pastels,  
glue, newspaper, sticky stars  
watercolor



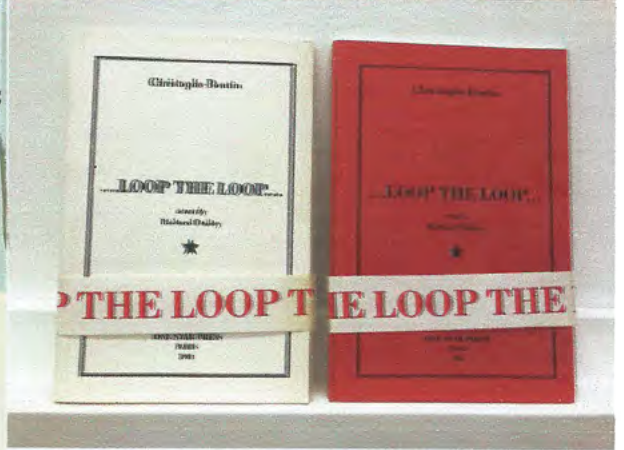


one-man show of some of my current and past work. Work with a strong use of words, including many of my artist books, was prioritized. I read my recent poetry. The Mythical Quick was screened in a loop.

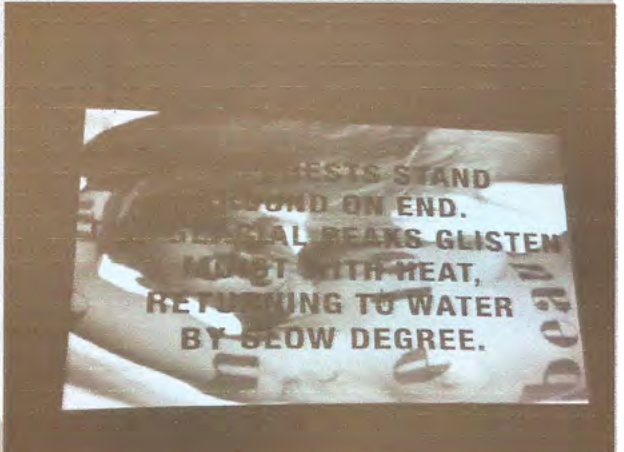
My feature-length lesbian, art-world  
B series gore flick Luna & Ms Y  
was screened every night for  
the exhibition's duration

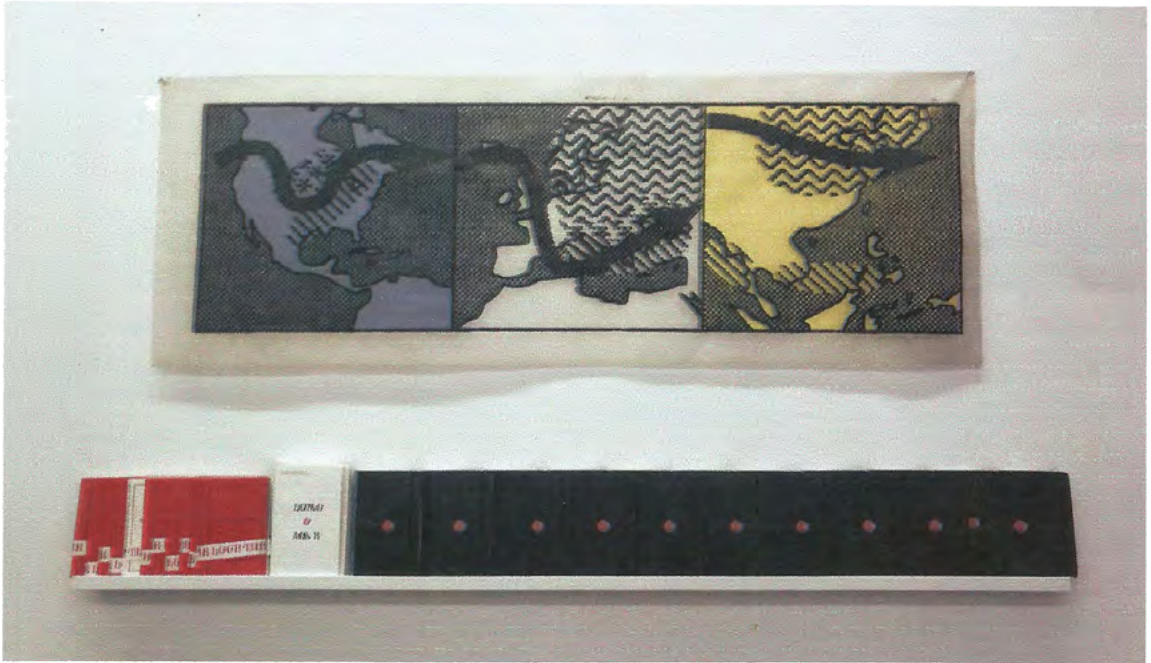


Afterart Infrathins  
Pop-up Poetry  
Richard Dailey



THE LOOP THE LOOP THE





sometimeStudio/Afterart Infrathins

Afterart postcards.	€1
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Apollinaire Trépané	copies, €30 originals, €100
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number I spring 2018 oil crayon and watercolor  
on paper 65cm X 50cm



number 2 s pring 2018 oil crayon and watercolor  
on paper 65cm X 50cm

number 3



number 4



## Funeral March for a Dead Parrot

This series of drawings is inspired by Charles-Valentin Alkan's musical composition by the same name. His short symphony has the lyrics: " As-tu déjeuné, Ja cquo? Eh de quoi? ~~AKI~~ Ah! " which are repeated many times. I included these words in all the parrot drawings.

watercolor, oil crayons & pastels on paper 65cm X 50cm  
all done in 2018 autumn

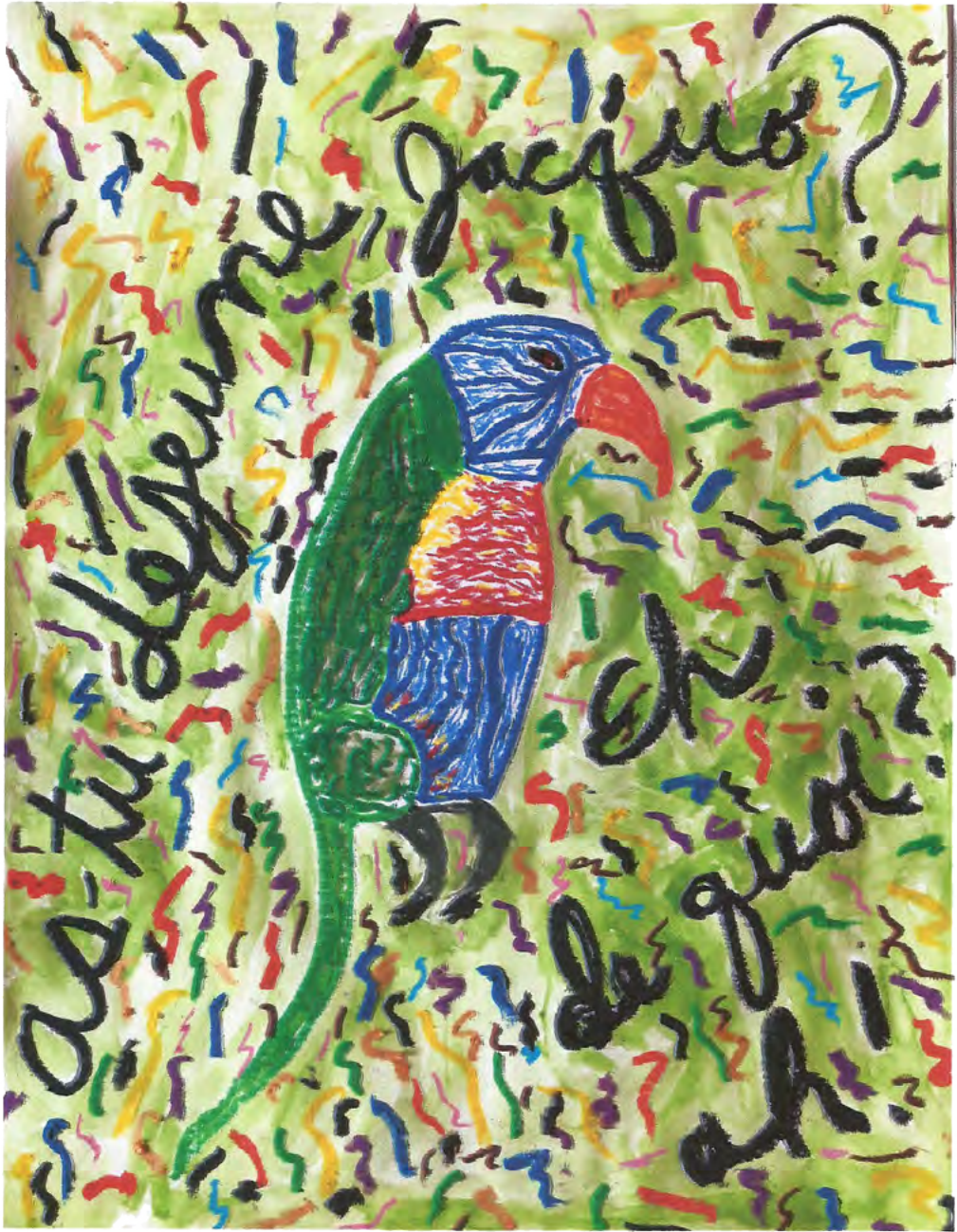


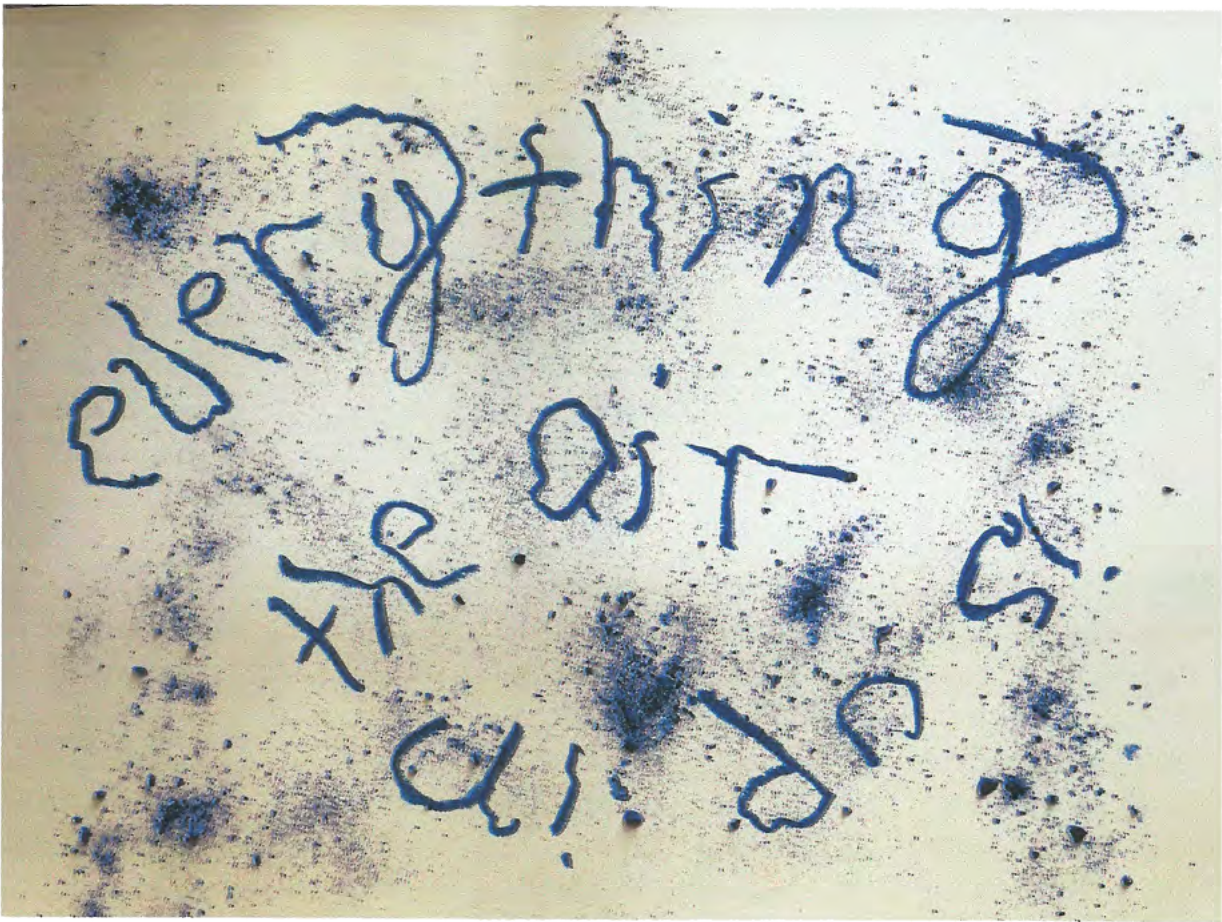




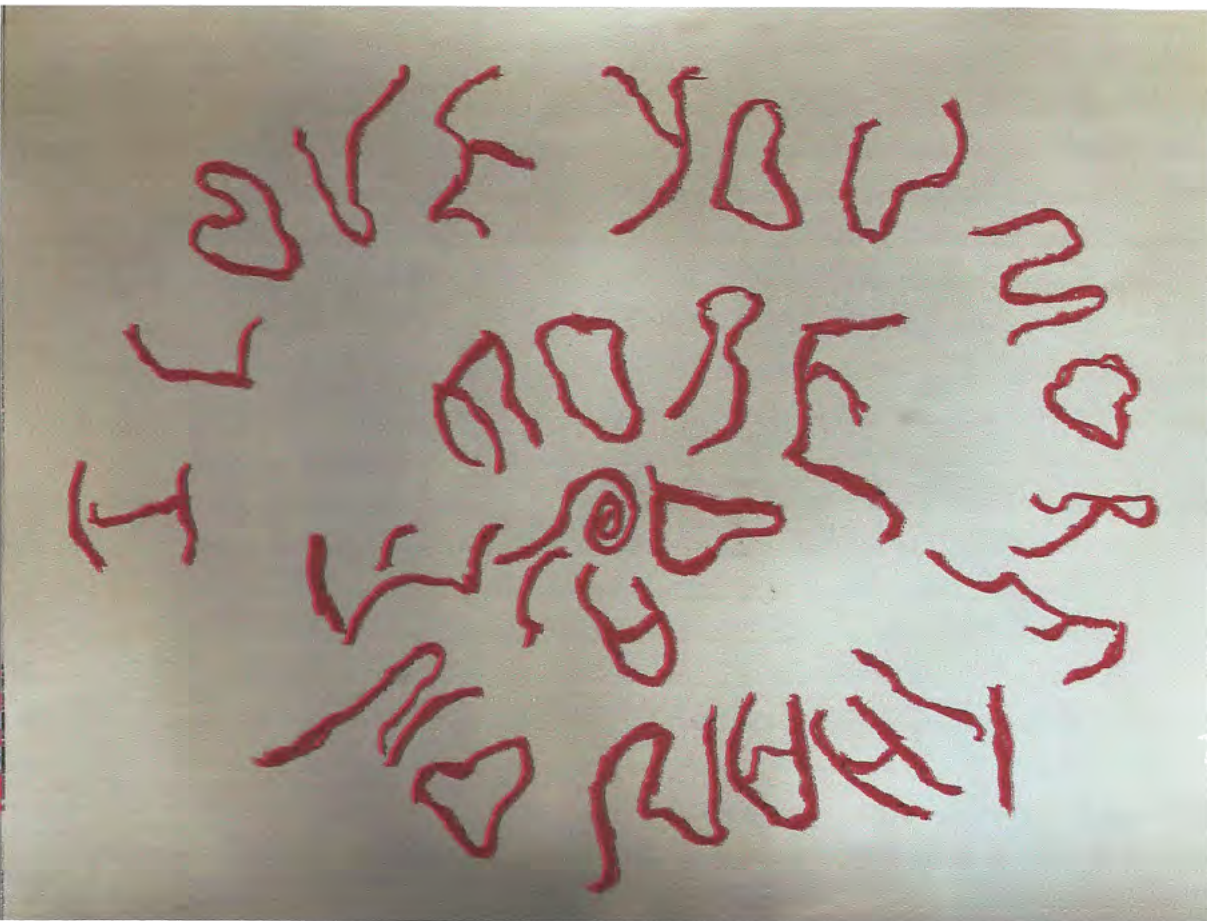








four spiral drawings fall 2018 oil crayons and pastel on paper  
65cm X 50cm



Handwritten text in red ink on a white background, arranged in a circular pattern. The text is a mix of English and Hindi characters, including "The roof of", "is", "with", "blue", "tiles", "is", "white", "and", "the", "roof", "is", "good", "and", "the", "tiles", "are", "white".

Handwritten text in blue ink on a white background, framed in a wooden border. The text is a mix of English and Hindi characters, including "The roof of", "is", "with", "blue", "tiles", "is", "white", "and", "the", "roof", "is", "good", "and", "the", "tiles", "are", "white".



# THE HALF MOON

by Richard Dailey

## THE HALF MOON

by Richard Dailey

afterart

"Laure, have you seen?"

"Of course, Maurice! Why do you think I'm calling?"

"You must have it!"

"Absolutely, I must have it. This time, hopefully, is the last time, but I'll need your help again, I'm afraid. I know I can count on you."

"I'll have to reschedule. Segolène. In any case, the last thing I did for her was so outrageous! Hilarious that no one dared laugh. Did you see? The butterfly bangs? Hahahahaha! No one had *les couilles* to say it was a joke! She's such a loser."

"She's getting raked over the proverbial coals. Can we go to Geneva at the end of the month?"

"For you, I would go to the moon, or rather the half moon, at the end of the month or any other time. You know how rare it is for a piece owned by our Princess to come up. Adrian will be delighted. He's going to be in town next week. I'll have lunch with him. He hates seeing European masterpieces go to the Middle East."

"Let's meet for a drink at the Hem."

UNCORRECTED PROOF 2.0

afterart (2019)



I conceived *The Half Moon*, my second novel, in the late 80s when a friend gave me an article from the French press about Maurice Joffo. Joffo was a world-class coiffeur with a string of salons. He was also a jewelry thief who had a gang of Bulgarians working for him. He was robbing his clients and friends. He was eventually arrested and the police found a vast hoard of jewelry stashed in secret compartments in his various homes in Paris, Nice and Geneva. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to 4 years in prison. His stashes of jewelry were put on exhibition at the Hôtel de Ville so people could identify and reclaim their stolen property. It was the most talked about exhibition of the year in Paris.

I thought the story had everything I needed to hang my Parisian experiences on. Almost 30 years later *The Half Moon* is the result (but I wrote it relatively fast in the last 2 years). I have known some version of all of the many characters in the book. Maurice Joffo is still alive. I met him once at one of his 2 remaining salons, near the Gare Saint-Lazare. Now in his 90s, he was charming, but seemed both close to and distant from the character I created (as does everyone else), just as a much younger self may seem both like you and different.

The images here are of a pre-publication edition by Afterart, for review purposes, and are not for retail sale.

"Plotwise, finishing *The Half Moon* feels like completing a Rubik cube; stylistically, it feels like Michel Petrucciani playing the piano."

Nov, 2018



Quatre Hommages



Hommage à Cy Twombly



Hommage à Marcel Duchamps



Hommage à Lawrence Weiner



Hommage à Hail Steinbach

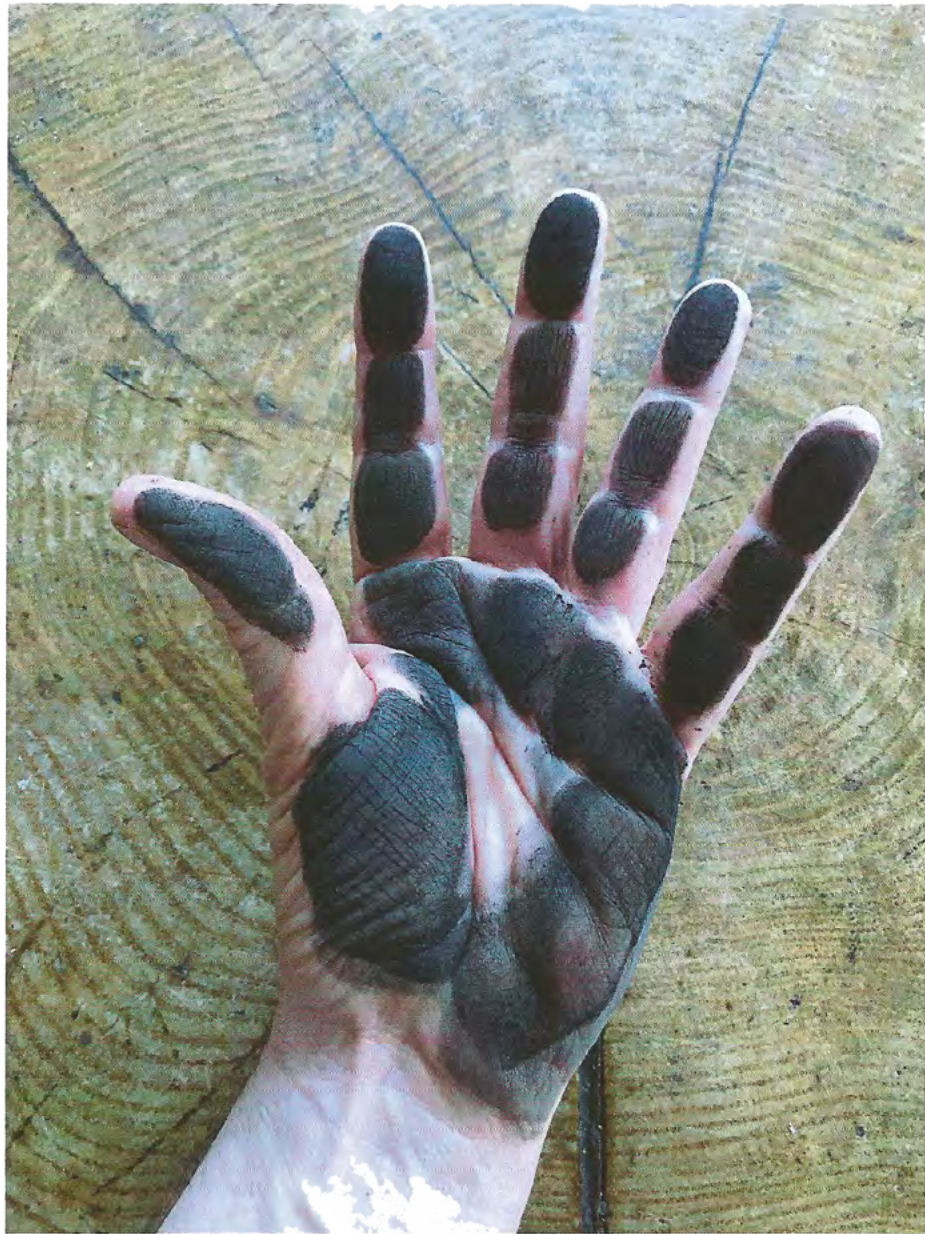
foamcore e ncore

foamcore, oil crayons, pastels 2018

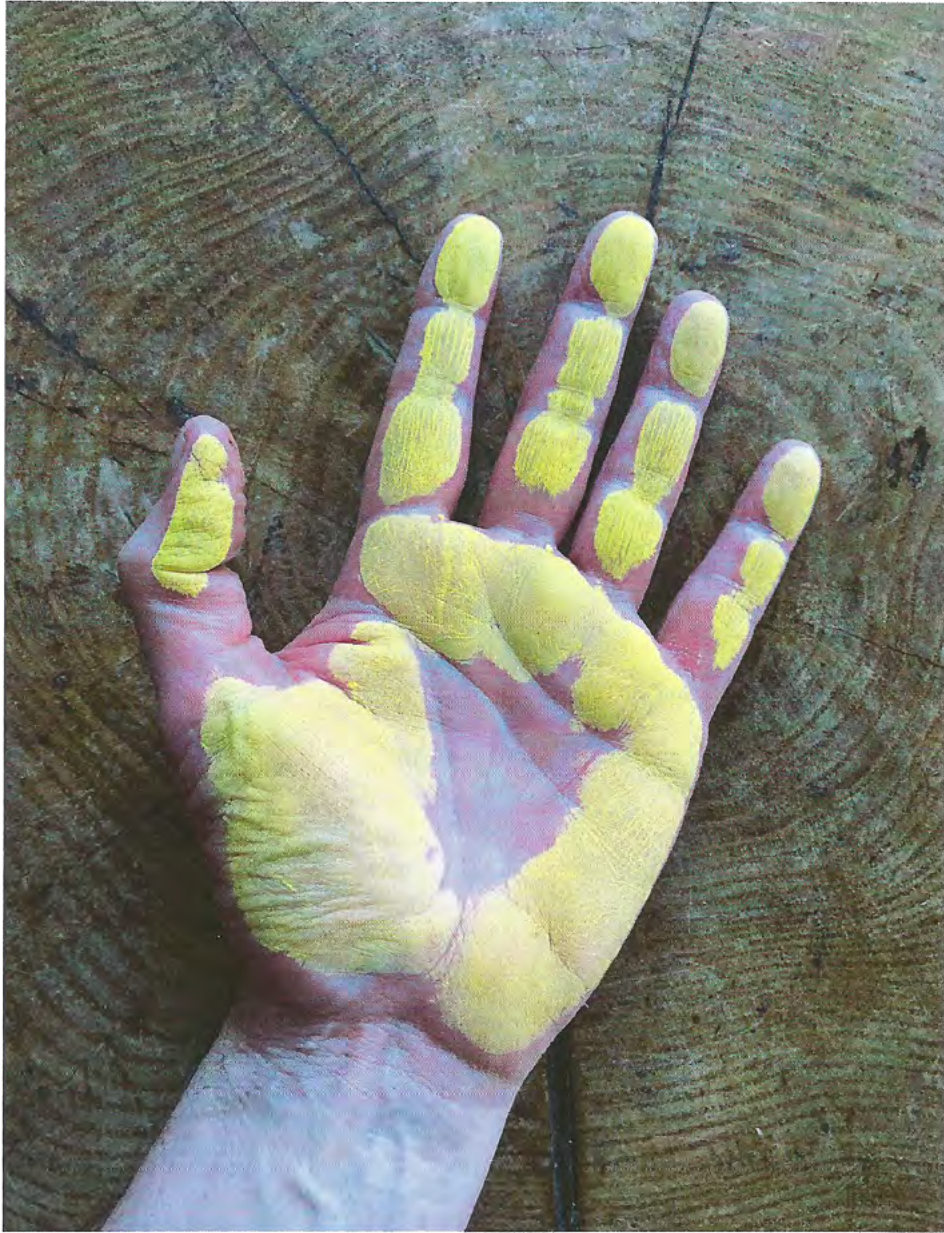




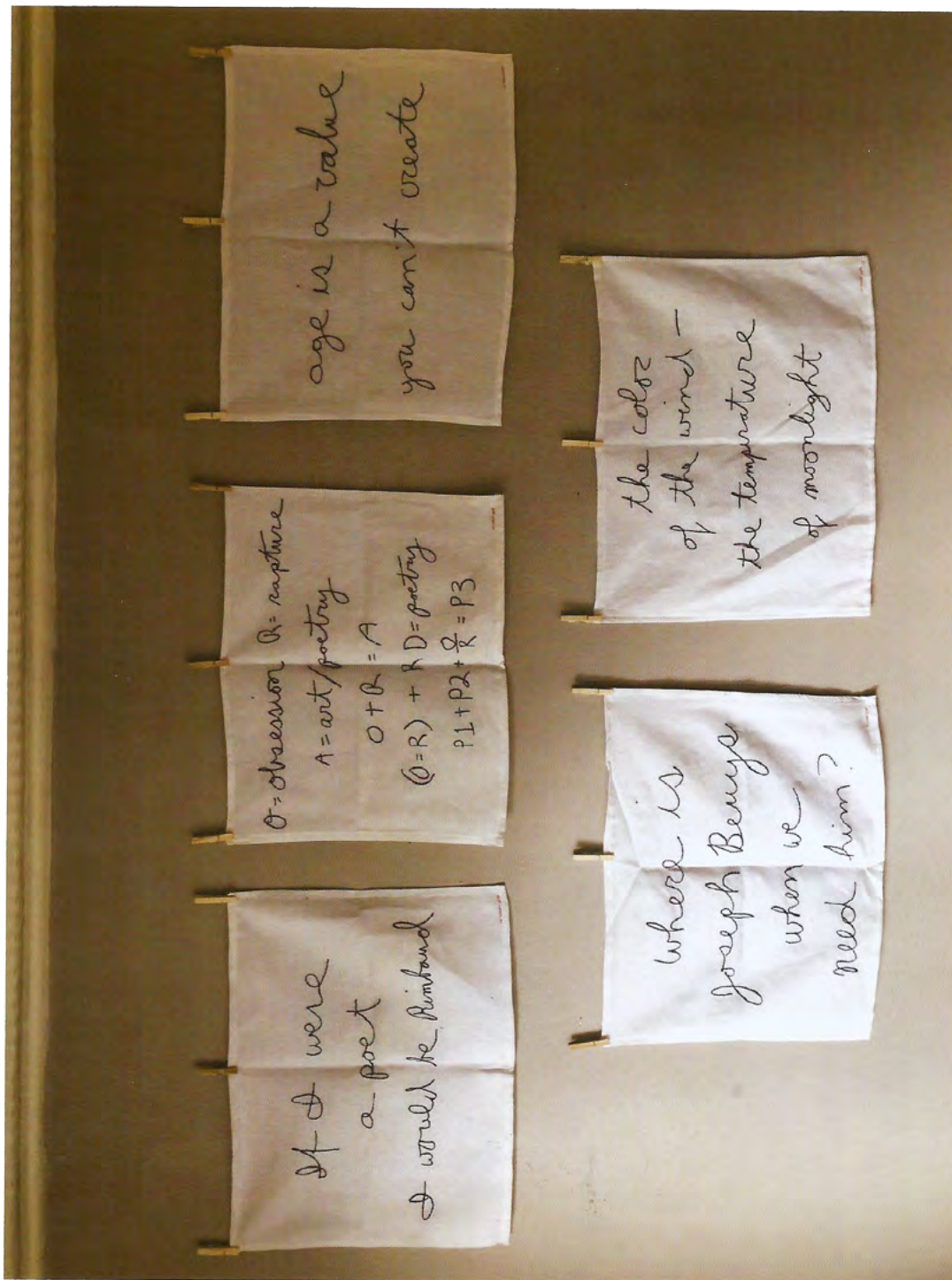
selfies 2018



RADIAL ICY HERD



HERALDIC DIARY



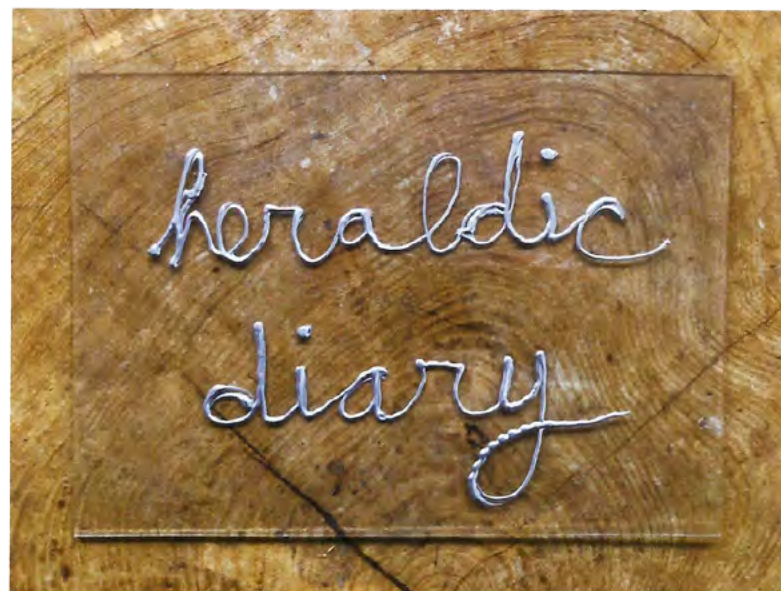
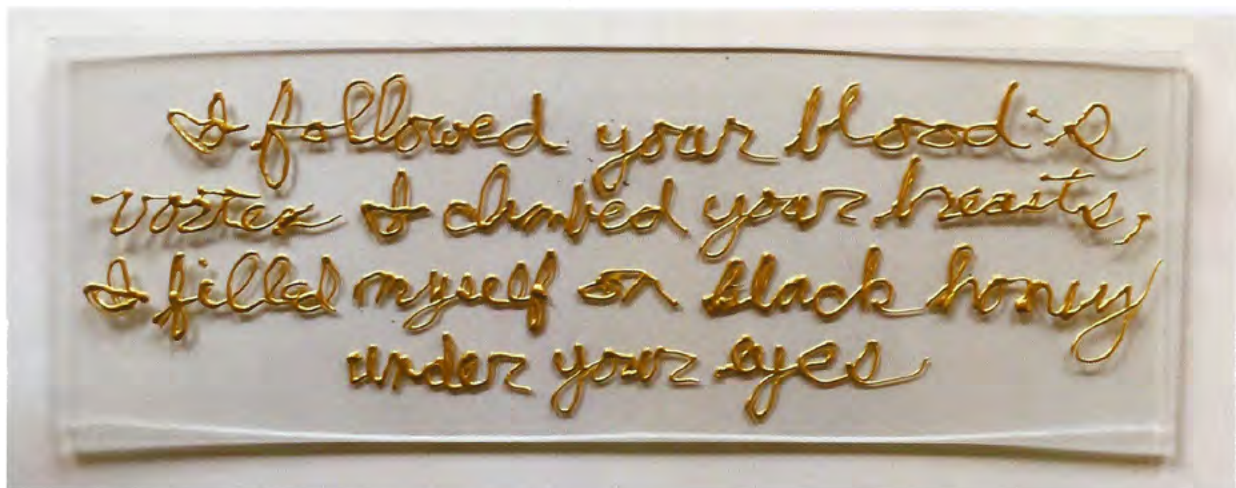
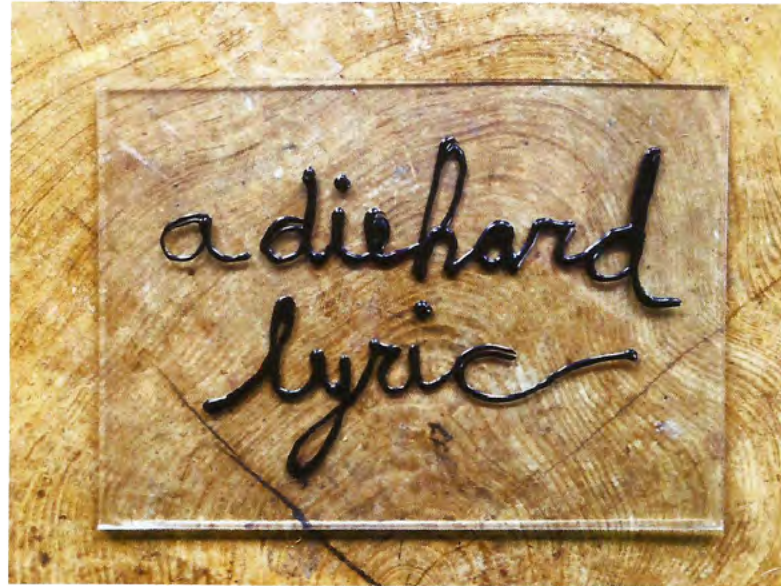
EMBROIDERED TWEETS

50 cm X 60 cm  
wool thread, 19th century linen  
2019



GLASS WRITING

relief outliner on glass  
variable sizes  
2019





## Conversation : Stefano Chiodi and Richard Dailey

*Stefano Chiodi is an art critic, curator, editor, and professor of art history based in Rome, Italy.*

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SC: So it's March 31, 2019...

RD: A beautiful spring day in Paris.

SC: This is the first extensive interview you have done about your work?

RD: Yes.

SC: A few months ago I asked you what is the original and continuing impulse behind what do and you told me poetry. Let's begin with poetry because it is what gives shape to your entire career and production. Let's go back to the very early years. You are in the US, not yet in France: Did you want to become exclusively a poet? Was it a part of other activities, critical writing or visual arts?

RD: No, I wanted to be a poet.

SC: What were your influences, who were your models? We know that modern American poetry is more or less split into two main tendencies. One is classic, with philosophically and culturally intense language, and then there is a tradition where language is reduced to an everyday dimension, more intimate, closer to daily life, much closer than for example Wallace Stevens was. Where do you feel you fit in this landscape of modern Anglo-saxon poetry?

RD: Most people think of it as a division between academic poetry and the Beats: the Beats were more spontaneous, closer to spoken poetry, the academics more rigorous and structured. For a while I had a kind of intellectual desire to be a kind of academic poet, to be a Wallace Stevens or a T.S. Eliot, cerebral and lyrical. But in reality I was much closer to the Beats and to something that was spoken - and a kind of compromise between those two worlds was the New York school of poetry. So the work of Frank O'Hara, John Ashberry, or Kenneth Koch really interested me. They were different from

the confessional poets too, Robert Lowell or Anne Sexton or Sylvia Plath or John Berryman, in that they were specifically connected to the art world in New York. And when I was at university, at Bennington, I studied with a number of poets (in fact I chose Bennington because of the working poets who were teaching seminars and workshops there, Ben Bellit, Alvin Feinman, etc.) and I remember Steven Sandy, a very good poet I worked with quite a bit and became friends with, and he regularly told us that if you want to be a poet today you have to be close to the artists, you have to know what they are up to and talking about. But in a way I suppose that has always been true.

SC: So very early you were curious about the art world, you visited galleries and museums?

RD: Yes. The art world had a kind of cultural traction that poetry didn't have. Still does.

SC: A sensuality?

RD: Yes of course, all of that, sure, physicality, but I mean even at that time art had a kind of economic structure, it had a system. Poetry had no economy at all, except maybe as an adjunct to music. You had no expectations for poetry, or if you did, they were crazy expectations. Maybe crazy in a good sense, and that certainly meant that there was total freedom. But you could make money being an artist and there was already at that time an important gallery system and it was functioning. I had friends who were making money making art. Not huge sums at that time, but life was cheap.

SC: It was a moment of profound transformation in the art world, because you had a transition from a post-minimalist or conceptual generation to the post-modern Pictures generation, and of course painting was becoming a new phenomenon,

Schnable and so on. The artists of the Pictures generation - did you feel like you were a part of this transformation of old habits, when new words were being found? Did you want to be a part of the flow or were you more attached to the 60s and the post-Beat generation sensibility, like the poets you mentioned before?

RD: I think I was lost, actually.

SC: Did you like punk music?

RD: Punk is little bit particular for me. I lived two blocks from CBGBs at the time that punk music was really ascendent, so I was completely aware of all of that, but I was never really a part of the scene. Retrospectively, I was wrong. There was some great music.

SC: Were you publishing poetry?

RD: I was. Usually in obscure journals. Occasionally someplace more significant. Never got paid for anything that I remember. I might have gotten paid a small amount for the poems...here (pointing to "Tenement Two-Time" in *Exquisite Corpse*), this is my first published poem...

SC: 86?

RD: Yeah. That was the first time I sent a poem cold. I was really happy about who they put me with, it was an honor to be on the same page as Philippe Soupault...

SC: The phrase "Protagonist fuck yourself..."

RD: Yeah, which came back in a string drawing. I suppose today I would say "Protagonist fuck your selfie."

SC: Do you recognize yourself in this poem? Or do you feel it was written by a younger man?

RD: Both.

SC: I'm curious about this 19th century letterpress on Mott Street in NYC, 1984. So why were you using the letterpress?

RD: I had a friend who was working at the Museum of the American Indian that was up on 155 Street, and was about to move. They did move, they are downtown now, but they had in the basement of 155th Street a 19th century letterpress the size of a locomotive, and as heavy, and my friend said I could have it if I could get it out of there. I fantasized that I could make a whole poetry press around it and found a fraternity at Columbia that agreed to let us set it up in their basement, anarchist style. So we did, but it ended in fiasco. But in addition to the main press, which really was huge, there was also that desktop press that was used in the wild west to print wanted posters. I took it home, back to Mott Street. Dead or alive. It became my anarchist means of production of myself.

SC: Which doesn't sound like it's just an anecdote, it sounds like you were in exactly the right place to exploit an exploded level of post-modern activity, like using an obsolete medium to create contemporary work. That's one of the things post-modernism allowed in a massive way in the early 80s. But it's not just about the obsolete technology, which has become an integral part of the operation...part of what this is about is its means of production.

RD: Completely. It was my own private theater. It was very physical, of course, the slamming and the lever, but yeah, you're right, it's a kind of meta aspect.

SC: Let's stay in New York just a bit more before getting to Paris. What did you think of the art? What were you attracted by? Graffiti? Painting? The whole art world becoming full of money, and probably full of shit as well, and artists becoming stars...

RD: And stars becoming artists...I was interested in the cleverness of it, the energy. I was interested in the social scene around it. I liked going to openings. They were like high school dances. You never knew who you would see holding hands.

SC: Any names? Any galleries?

RD: Nature Morte, the whole East Village thing was happening. Early days was more like Phyllis Kind. It was an effervescent social scene that was exciting to be a part of. You have to remember this was pre-AIDS. Once the AIDS crisis hit, in '83-'84, that changed everything.

SC: Did you write art criticism at that time?

RD: No.

SC: It didn't interest you?

RD: I worked with artists. Hung out. Provided texts when asked. It was creative. But nothing that you could call art criticism. That came later.

SC: Can you be more specific about what special qualities made you want to explore the art world in a literary and cinemagraphic way? You created characters inspired by real people, real artists, real gallerists...

RD: If you're talking about "Unplugged Yellow," the novel I wrote in Paris much later...

SC: I'm jumping because I feel the origin for this work is in the 70s and 80s in New York. Tell me more about this. The art world is the model for a decadent small world which is interesting to probe like a scientist doing some kind of experiment...

RD: "Unplugged Yellow" is an investigation of the psychology of the collector, as well as an attempt to understand why a young artist would commit suicide, or would behave in suicidal ways.

SC: And are both themes connected to real life experiences?

RD: Of course.

SC: So let's go back to the 80s, because you typed on the very first page of this catalogue, in red, "I moved to Paris." It is sudden and unexplained.

RD: I moved to Paris slowly. I started coming here in '84, but for fixed periods of time, not vacations exactly, exploratory visits I guess. I felt I couldn't live here. But I liked it. I didn't speak the language. And the economy was depressed. New York, in spite of the problems, was still exciting. And I could teach. I taught at Pratt, at NYU, at Wagner College on Staten Island. I taught night classes to immigrants for the city. My rent was cheap. In Paris there was no way for me to exist. Then my wife and I bought a raw loft space in the 11th, and eventually that provided enough of a base for me to make the leap. My New York friends thought I was crazy to move here. Paris was a dead zone. Rome was New York's sister city. Paris was all an extension of Pere Lachaise.

SC: (quoting from catalogue) "I am a homomorphic artist. My art is automorphic."

RD: You want to know what that means?

SC: Maybe homomorphic means that everything you do is connected to the shape of your life? It's not autobiographical, it's more about the morphea, the external shape.

RD: Like Picabia's mechanomorphs.

SC: Why do you think you are a homomorphic artist?

RD: Because as diverse as everything I do is and the way it is constantly morphing, in spite of that there is a unifying sensibility.

SC: On the other hand your art is automorphic. That means it finds in itself its own motives?

RD: Once you concretise sensibility or voice or vision, that poetic norm that I talk about, whatever medium you're working in makes its own demands and structures itself in its own way.

SC: Some artists distance themselves from the work, which is pure concept, pure form, autonomous, disconnected from the

self - and you are saying that you can not help but be invested in the work.

RD: I think I'm saying both, actually. I know what you mean by distancing and in it's purest form that's not me. If I'm doing photocopies, or if I'm working in video, those modalities make their own demands that are separate from mine *per se*. Once I decide that I'm going to jump into doing video to make a Youtube sitcom series, then that format makes its demands. The world makes its demands. When you start in a certain medium you're both constrained and you're freed in new ways. That's automorphic. Then of course, and I'm talking about "Familie Lecoq", it becomes video autofiction; I put all my art work in it, my life, etc. That's homomorphic.

SC: So you arrived in Paris as Paris was profoundly changing. The cold war was ending, the Berlin Wall fell, the Neoliberal order was about to start.

RD: And you could feel all that happening here. Paris is central to Europe. And, lest we forget, life was relatively cheap. I bought my studio at the time in what was a marginal neighborhood. In fact it was a shooting gallery. I'd lived through it in New York, and had seen friends evicted from their city because they couldn't afford it - I knew gentrification would hit here too. I wasn't wrong. By the time I moved here also I had some good friends, Randolph Nae, the Knapp twins, and I soon met many others. I learned enough French to get around. Although I kept my apartment on Mott Street for three years. And soon after moving here, I met our mutual friend Christophe Boutin, who introduced you and me, actually, and Christophe opened a lot of doors for me.

SC: Christophe introduced us in Rome in '92.

RD: That's right. I was very optimistic at that time about Paris, I thought the whole European thing was amazing, there's a great infrastructure, and both the city and the state were investing in art. The Palais de Tokyo was opening, Mit-

terand was president and Jacques Lang was the Minister of Culture. Whatever you may think of his overall politics, he was great for the art world. You could put a cynical spin on it and say they were co-opting soft power, bringing marginal art movements into the center and defusing their political efficacy by...

SC: *Le effet Beaubourg*, as Baudrillard called it.

RD: Exactly.

SC: So this is a real life change.

RD: I left four different university jobs and a rent controlled apartment, not to mention a grassroots network of art world connections, at 38 years old, for a city where I had no job and I couldn't speak the language.

SC: Sounds like a leap forward.

RD: It's not the stupidest thing I've ever done.

SC: Still since the 40s it has been clear that American artists are leading the way, and in New York particularly. And Paris was part of the old world.

RD: And that was definitely true when I lived in New York. It was a New York centric world.

SC: And then you begin producing visual works in Paris, but you go back to an artist like Cornell, who was one of the links between New York and the European art scenes...

RD: Absolutely, all the surrealists loved him, and a lot of them were in New York because of the war.

SC: Why did you feel that Cornell's was an appropriate way of producing work?

RD: The appeal of Cornell to poets generally is pretty apparent. If there's a word that's regularly applied to Cornell, it's poetic. He is a poet's artist. And he was appealing to me for his obscurity, his oddness, his living on Utopia Bou-

levard in Queens - I'm not saying that Paris is equivalent to Utopia Boulevard in Queens, but to my New York friends when I moved here Paris was considered a cul de sac. And mostly a Cornellian oeuvre was doable - I could do it with an absolute poverty of means. If you look at those boxes they are made of old wood and thread...

SC: Wine boxes, books...

RD: Yeah, stuff.

SC: Flea market finds.

RD: There were lots of other ephemeral artists, of course, like Richard Tuttle - he was working with scotch tape and crumpled pieces of paper. So that was part of it. The poverty of means.

SC: The vintage look sets you apart. There is nothing American, Pop, modern...

RD: No. It's not shiny. It's not a stack of vacuum cleaners. It's even far from the feeling of someone like Haim Steinbach.

SC: Exactly. There is a completely different feeling. A different aesthetic from what was happening around you. You went back to surrealism.

RD: Surrealism was an art form that incorporated poetry. Poets and visual artists at the time collaborated intensively. It was a way forward. But I know it's not for everybody.

SC: (quoting from catalogue) "I had access to a poetic "norm" - a headspace and gestures (not assemblage) that produced work that didn't have its origin in arrangements of the alphabet." What do you mean here? "Protagonist fuck yourself."

RD: That piece is particularly interesting because you can clearly see it is floating somewhere between language and pure visual expression.

SC: Exactly. This is not surrealist.

RD: When I made that piece I was attracted by the idea of doing something with

paint, and I found the idea of standing before an empty canvas with a paintbrush ridiculous, of course, so I took a crumpled up piece of paper and swirled the paint around with it and then started working on the rest of it.

SC: Who is the protagonist? Why a protagonist?

RD: The protagonist is always yourself.

SC: Yes, but it's also technically a narrative term from literature and film and theater, so is there some kind of plot?

RD: That's an interesting thought. Did I have a plot in mind? That protagonist specifically is me trying to cast myself as a painter.

SC: So it's yourself, not a character in a story.

RD: As we saw, that's a line from one of my early poems. Often I would come across or write lines of poetry that sound good, and I can't really say what they mean. Most of John Ashbery is like that. The best literary critics in America have broken their brains on John Ashbery's poems. They don't mean anything in a literal sense. At the same time his poems are endlessly intriguing and beautifully fascinating. It's not just John Ashbery who is celebrated for this. "Not all pianos in the woods had power to mangle me." That's Emily Dickinson. I love it, but I can't tell you what it means.

SC: I was thinking that this blue ring around the word "fuck" looks like an asshole and it has a sexual innuendo.

RD: Yeah, like Picabia's "La Jeune Fille" - which I had never seen at the time I did this. It could be a cock ring, or a female sex. Picabia did "La Jeune Fille" as a pair with "La Sainte Vierge", the ink splatter. Somehow, don't ask me how, "La Jeune Fille" is there.

SC: I want to ask you something about your status as an artist. Artist is a word which covers so many different realities...

RD: It's a Wittgensteinian black hole.

SC: Were these works meant to be shown publically, or were they more intimate, secretive?

RD: At that time I was experimenting with modalities of expression to see if they could make my poetry resonate with a bigger public, and specifically a public that didn't speak English. And you can see that by the fact that I framed things. I mean it when I say that the art I was making was *povere*, but the frames were sometimes relatively expensive. I realised when I was working in the Cornellian boxes and collage and the string drawings that if they were going to survive and if they were to be taken seriously then they had to be framed. Somehow I knew that my work had to be protected and contextualised in a frame. Set apart and treated like a serious piece of art. Otherwise, you're right, they would have been private expressions. As impulsive as they were, they are meant to be taken seriously as artistic experimentation.

SC: I want to ask you about your guillotines. This presentation - text superimposed on vintage prints...

RD: They are Hogarth prints from a series he did called "The Rake's Progress."

SC: Yes of course, the famous series, but this strategy of superimposing text on images is a sort of signature of yours. You made many pieces, and even the early films with Christophe Boutin, in which you have poetry on top of an image.

RD: I was obviously coming out of New York and the work of people like Barbara Kruger and that very graphic approach to combining image and text. Of course Barbara Kruger clearly had a political agenda...

SC: And a Pop aesthetic...

RD: Yes, and the guillotines come out of that.

SC: Text and image came together? Or you found the image first?

RD: They came together. I found the Hogarth etchings in a farm basement in New York State and carried them around for years. It wasn't until computers that I could associate text and image in this way, by printing on clear plastic. But what was really radical for me about the guillotines was the presentation, the stands, the sculpturality of it, moving it away from the wall, making them free-standing and double-sided. There is a technical dimension too because it's primitive soldering, and for me that was very different.

SC: "Black honey." There's always a sexual undertone.

RD: There's a continuous sexual vibration behind it, yeah, definitely.

SC: One of the reasons I like it is this physical approach to language, and also the rhythm. So, "Infinite Parrots." Why have parrots been so widespread in your career? Over the years you've painted, sculpted and written about parrots.

RD: The parrot is a standin for the poet.

SC: (quoting) "Parrots parroting parrots, what does parrot conception resemble." A standin also for everything: language itself is parroting experience. Literature is parroting thought. Which implies a sort of post-structural understanding of language. It's a post-Wittgenstein and post-Barthes understanding of language as something that fuels itself. There's no direct connection with the world. Language is the world. It creates its own nature. And changes meaning - meaning moves from one word to another and there is no final state, there is always a flux.

RD: The morphic part of homomorphic. But of course you're right.

SC: So you continue producing words and images for years.

RD: Years.

SC: Let's talk about collaboration, with Christophe Boutin and other artists. Your collaborations with Christophe

lasted for years, but I would say he took more from you than you took from him.

RD: That's hard to determine, who got what from whom. I got a lot from Christophe. He introduced me to many people.

SC: He framed your work. I always thought you were a very good match. You needed the frame and he needed your verbal agility. It was always interesting to see you both at work.

RD: He also gave my work a graphic element that I hadn't considered. He has, as we know, a vast knowledge of artists' books. I knew something, I mean Marie was writing her thesis on artists's books, but Christophe was living with Florence, one of the biggest dealers in artists' book in Paris, and that world was a revelation to me when I moved here. The guillotines, for example, came out of being here. They are graphic, they are aphoristic. In fact, starting with "Protagonist fuck yourself," which, incidentally, I did in Christophe's studio on the 13th because I was working there while he was away, my work became much more aphoristic. The phrases became shorter. As Tim Maul points out in the piece he wrote for this catalogue, it's like the later signage pieces: somewhere between reading and seeing.

SC: So with your first show in Paris you had a kind of "baptism" in the art world...

RD: How did that happen?

SC: We can talk about the mechanics in a minute, but first I would like to know how you felt. You achieved something that you had wanted for a long time, and then suddenly it was real, your name was on an invitation card, a date, a time. Joseph Kosuth wrote somewhere that a show begins when the invitation card is sent out, which means that the show is also the invitation card, the whole thing is composed of different parts...

RD: I get that. That's why I included the ephemera here. All of that was exciting to me.

SC: So what did you feel, and what changed after showing (W)holes?

RD: It's strange, but nothing changed. Morally, it was important, but objectively nothing changed. I made a little money, but not enough to support myself. Like much of what I've done, it feels like a life style but never really amounts to anything in pragmatic terms.

SC: I really love the (W)holes. It's been more than 20 years, and I remember thinking then, and today I have the same feeling, this is all about you. It's some kind of condensed autobiography.

RD: I thought of the (W)holes when we were in Bayonne for Christophe's exhibition at the Musée Bonnat, in what, '97? With the great catalogue you contributed so substantially to...

SC: Of course, I remember.

RD: I first conceived of the (W)holes that summer. And realised them in this form in '98. So it took a year.

SC: That's normal. For me it's the first time, as one turns the pages of your catalogue, that I feel like the visual and verbal are happening together. Not that before the work wasn't interesting and even exciting, but this is taking it to another level. I think it's an important step.

RD: I agree with you. And personally I find it as interesting today as when I did it.

SC: And then digital freedom. An important moment for all of us. Computers enabled us and it was wonderful.

RD: It was an exciting time. Still is.

SC: Of course. "Private Parts in Public Spaces" is more ironic, funnier, in a way. Is there something I'm missing?

RD: It's meant to be ironic and funny. It's the first thing in the digital section of the catalogue and not only could I take

lots of pictures relatively discreetly in a museum, but I taught myself something about framing. It's like syndoche, a rhetorical technique where a part stands for the whole. All of the male sexes come from more or less full sculptures. It returns to the (W)hole thing in a way.

SC: You take out your trademark, "AFTER-ART," in the late '90s. You say you were reading Arturo Danto at the time. Did you agree with Danto? That art ended in '64...

RD: With the Brillo boxes?

SC: With the Brillo boxes. I always thought it was bullshit.

RD: I thought it was a clever idea.

SC: Yeah, on one level.

RD: And it provided me with a way of, again, of explaining the lack of homogeneity in my work. And you'll remember my phrase from the masthead of Afterart News: "What's left after the end of art? More art, of course, and we're going to have to live with it."

SC: Yes, and I agree with that line. And he changed his mind, Danto. In '64 art was a thing of the past and in the '80s and '90s he wrote three or four books all dealing with the same question and he came up with a different answer. Art was not dead, of course it continued...what was the word he used? The "aboutness," the "aboutness" of art, every work of art is about something so the "aboutness" cannot be erased, and art will continue.

RD: I read art criticism, but I'm not a serious critic. I cherrypick. Like everybody does with Wittgenstein. Nobody reads the whole work. They cherrypick phrases that they like.

SC: As they say, "More quoted that actually read!" (laughter) Which is a nice paradox. What strikes me here is that you announce the birth of Afterart and right away there is Afterart's first film. There's a jump between these two pages which is unexplained. So please tell me how you moved from poetry and visual objects and images to moving images.

RD: "Child's Play" is already heading in that direction. But the Margaret Holloway film, "God Didn't Give Me A Week's Notice," happened because I had just bought my first video camera and the cosmic forces just came together. There she was and there I was and there the camera was. It may look like a leap, but it just happened. Like life.

SC: It must have been a liberating experience, not having to create the content.

RD: It was liberating in two senses. In the first place you're exactly right, the subject matter was just there, all I had to do was capture it and frame it and edit it. The editing is fundamentally related to writing. Editing immediately fascinated me and I felt very close to it, almost possessed by it. And the other thing that happened with video, and in a more general way with digital photography, is that it allowed me to interact with the world through that medium. When you hold a camera up between you and a subject, particularly a person like Margaret Holloway, it enables you to access their world in a way that would otherwise be impossible. I could never have gotten so close to her without that camera between us.

SC: More than photography? If you were taking photos instead of video it would have been different?

RD: As Godard said, "If photography is truth, then cinema is truth 24 times a second." Or something like that.

SC: You get sucked into the scene. And you participate in her performance.

RD: There's an interactive element to it, yes, like that subatomic particle thing, the observer changes everything.

SC: Yes.

RD: That's very true. But also just having an instrument makes it possible to be there.

SC: What about a black woman being filmed by a white man? In the current atmosphere of suspicion and paranoia



about appropriation it's possible you might be accused of exploitation. Can you address this?

RD: It's an interesting question. I would turn it around. Why would I be attracted to a black, schizophrenic street performer as one of my avatars? Margaret Holloway, *c'est moi?* I have worked a lot with people of color. The art world in general is a very segregated place. Go to an opening at the Palais de Tokyo: the public is white and the security are all black. Agnès b's gallery and events are one of the few in Paris with an unsegregated public, because Agnès also works with people of color and lots of graffiti artists. If the culture police are focussing on me, I would really say they should have better things to do. But to answer your question more directly, I also had the good sense to just point the camera at Margaret, who of course I knew from more than 20 years before, without any agenda or direction. She comes through very powerfully, very directly.

SC: Can you tell us about her briefly?

RD: We met at Bennington College, where she was a drama major. She went on to Yale's drama school, where she was the first person accepted as a triple major: writing, directing and acting. Very shortly after her graduation she succumbed to schizophrenia and didn't leave her apartment in New Haven for three months. Her landlord evicted her onto the street, in February, where she lived for 20 years. The film we made together was a tremendous help in getting her story out. If the culture cops want to focus their anger on something related to her story, try Yale University. They really didn't care about her finally. With the notable exceptions of James Ponet, at the time head rabbi at the Joseph Slivka Center for Jewish Life at Yale, and Greg Zuckerman, a mathematician there, no one helped her.

SC: I see.

RD: The really authentic and powerful street theater that she had created and I just arrived to witness was some of the

most astonishing theater I have ever seen anywhere. Once after we worked together for twenty minutes, which was the most she could do at a stretch, I got down on my knees and bowed to her.

SC: I'm raising the question now because it will come up. People will say, "Oh I see you completely ignored the race, power, inequality issues." Do you still see her?

RD: Today she's a shadow of her former self. Our paths crossed when she was doing relatively well. And by the way, we had an actual legal contract. She found a lawyer who drew it up! And I signed it. She had total veto power over the end product. One of the best things that happened was a benefit screening in New Haven. The mayor even came. It raised a lot of money for Margaret and really helped her in the community. So in terms of me appropriating Margaret for my own devious white man's ends, it's quite simply ridiculous.

SC: The moral police will not find any evidence against you!

RD: And to date, it really has never been a problem.

SC: So after this you began producing films regularly with the Afterart label.

RD: I was in production for many years with projects either in the writing process, the shooting stage, or in post-production, and sometimes all three at once.

SC: So, "Famille Lecoq," "Luna & Ms Y," these are complete productions, with many people involved, actors and crew - how did you manage to transform yourself from a poet and a visual artist into a film maker and producer? That doesn't just happen. Did it feel like a giant leap or the natural consequence of your previous work?

RD: It was something of a leap. The interest was ignited by the Margaret Holloway video. That was just dumb luck, stumbling into that. And I learned how to edit. It wasn't easy, mastering all those skills. But once I had them, I wanted to do some

thing. "Famille Lecoq" came first. I just looked at what was available to me, and I thought, "I can do it." I wrote a script for a 26-minute television length pilot and used the script to seduce everyone else into working on it for free. So there was writing as a basis for it to start with. Then everything else, the make-up, the catering, the lights, the sound recording, all the technical aspects of film making were all done to nourish the second part of the writing process, which is the editing.

SC: I'm reading: "Cost, \$3000."

RD: Yeah. Food for everybody. Makeup for the actors. Renting a few lights. Some stuff for the set.

SC: And this was also the first film with a complex scenario.

RD: Yup.

SC: There was a lot to cope with.

RD: There were seven actors, multiple locations including an exterior roof terrace, set design, costumes - technically it was complicated, yeah. Not to mention directing the complicated family interactions.

SC: It's about a family.

RD: We did a casting for it. Some of them are fairly well known actors in France. But I say it's video autofiction because I put a lot of my life into it. My art is on the walls.

SC: You found a medium where you have the freedom to combine writing, images, texts and faces...

RD: Absolutely. The visual style was the director of photography, Alex Kaufman. He was a film pro, and his interest in the project was to see what he could do with video. I learned a lot from him. But the highly saturated sitcom type image was his work. He also insisted on doing the color correction in post, which I was happy to learn about as well. He was very competent and creative and I gave him

the freedom he wanted. We worked together on it. I designed the set around what he needed. I learned that directors work with their DP whispering complicitously in their ear. If they are lucky. The image in the Margaret Holloway film is compelling, but it was an accident. I obviously did all the camera work on that video, and it was just instinct that made me frame her as I did and find the right natural light and backgrounds. Maybe from watching so much TV when I was a kid. But in "Famille Lecoq" the sense of humor, the acidity, the sexuality, the social criticism, all of that is very much me.

SC: Did you want it to be a fringe work, shown in festivals, or something more mainstream?

RD: It was made for TV. I created what's called the bible for it, and put together all of the packaging to sell it to French TV as a professional production. In fact, though, most French people didn't get the humor at all. The only people at screenings who laughed were the Anglosaxons. Brits and Americans. It ended up on YouTube.

SC: And after this you came up with a genre B movie, a gore movie. This is another jump forward. You never dealt with genre stuff before? Popular culture, gore or splatter?

RD: No.

SC: So what happened to you? Because this is clearly a homage to a certain tradition, a tongue-in-cheek remake of classic splatter flicks from the '70s and 80s. But also there's a lot of sex, explicit scenes... so, it's a real change of mood.

RD: Certainly. But there was also a tradition of out-there art films - Cinema of Transgression when I was in New York, Amos Poe for example. He was much more extreme than I ever was. And once again, the technical, financial and social means were present. I could just do it. That doesn't explain necessarily why it happened, I know. Part of it was just excitement - the mountain is there, let's climb it.

SC: It was another fiasco, but you're still proud of it.

RD: Yes. And it's having a little come back. People are discovering it. I screened it every night for a week during my last exhibition in the Marais just over a year ago. People really dug it. It was nice. And it's being screened at midnight shows in Brooklyn at a micro-cinema called Spectacle.

SC: It's an artistic production set within the framework of, let's say, underground or alternative filmmaking. It's an iconoclastic, anarchistic approach? More like an ironic, tongue-in-cheek production?

RD: There is definitely an ironic, tongue-in-cheek element to it and at the same time I wanted to make a film that might be interesting to people not deeply involved in the art world, to break down the walls of something that is basically a very esoteric phenomenon, the art scene.

SC: I quote, "Essentially the film is an art world parody, a comico-tragic take on the absurdities and truths of the making and business of art." There's always a double-edged approach. There's a reversal, but also a homage, some kind of connection - so is the graphic violence in the film a metaphor for another kind of violence: the competition and the greed and the materialistic transformation of the art world in the past decades?

RD: Sure. And at the same time the violence is full of quotations. For example, the image of Ms. Y lying on the floor in a pool of blood and bits of styrofoam was directly inspired by a Cindy Sherman photo.

SC: Which in turn is inspired by a long line of B movies and horror films and so forth.

RD: Exactly.

SC: So the post-modern appropriation mythology feeds itself in the way that a critical work like Cindy Sherman's turns into a source of second-hand material?

RD: My quoting of Cindy Sherman in a rarified B movie is pretty obscure compared to her enormous international success.

SC: These kinds of films are unexpected from someone like you.

RD: OK; but there is a long tradition of this kind of film making, and in describing the film in Hollywood-speak I say it's "Pecker meets My Dinner with André." Waters' fasceitousness and over-the-top social parody is combined with Louis Malle's more cerebral qualities. Pixels and digital production versus physical real world production. It's tied into linguistic interests, words which are immaterial - in their form as arbitrary signifiers - and art, which has a physicality.

SC: So it's an allegory, the clash of two different ways of making art, one belonging to the past and the other hyper contemporary. Do you think it's a sociological split between the two ways of making art or is it deeper, is it also two ways of thinking about art? Where do you place yourself?

RD: Up above it as director, I hope!

SC: The all seeing eye in the sky!

(laughter)

RD: What is interesting is the debate itself.

SC: Let's continue. Clouds, feathers, neons, what about these images we see of your studio? Lightness? *Legèrte*? What's this about?

RD: The clouds thing came out of the (W) holes, reversing or inversing the negative with a positive, dark with light. A friend once said they looked like the ghosts of art.

SC: Afterart. The big difference is that they don't have words on them.

RD: You're right, they are simply shapes. Tim Maul suggests that they look like comic book balloons for words or thoughts, but empty.

SC: Interesting. They are meant to be floating in the air.

RD: It was also a time when I was exploring my studio space fully. Making work that grew out of the space, even if it isn't site specific.

SC: So you are moving away from the digital freedom we talked about and toward something more traditional and analogic. I mean you are in a studio and you are creating material works. Were you doing both?

RD: That "Luna & Ms. Y" divergence, I never really came down on one side or the other of it. They end up being one artist, entwined physically and artistically, laughing and kissing.

SC: Was film making a way of enlarging the public for your work?

RD: Yes.

SC: Was it a good strategic move?

RD: No regrets, if that's what you mean!

SC: No! But did it work?

RD: Absolutely not. But maybe it depends on the sense of what you're asking.

SC: Was a new public able to access your work? Beyond the art public?

RD: No.

SC: The gallery crowd was the same public that was coming to your screenings?

RD: Look, after a couple of screenings the film went on a hard drive in a dark cold closet for at least ten years.

SC: Consider yourself lucky - experimental film makers of the '50s and '60s waited a lot longer.

RD: It's an honorable tradition.

(laughter)

SC: And in your case there are fewer worries about material decay. They are as fresh as the first day.

RD: Indeed. But listen, in "Luna & Ms. Y" the original music is by Métal Urbain, the famous French punk band. They have a significant public. I was hoping that their creative participation would pull in a larger audience than I'd find by exhibiting feathers or (W)holes or clouds. Today people love the music, but back then, after a screening/concert for the première, it didn't move the needle, as they say.

SC: So in 2008, eleven years ago, you were involved in a lot of projects, but I want to stay with the films. I read here "I can no longer number my films because they were often made simultaneously and over fairly long periods. The are presented here in close to chronological order." So there's an explosion of film making.

RD: The practical dynamics of film making and the long lead times and the long post-production times and the inevitable lag between the end of a film and it's eventual distribution in whatever form mean that you have to constantly be in pre-production, production and post-production. It's really difficult to sustain, but when you're making no-budget films it's close to impossible. It's one of the reasons I eventually abandoned that kind of film making, although I might go back to it. I was burned out. As great as the rewards are, as huge as the satisfactions can be, as deep as the pleasure goes, still almost everytime the phone rings it's a problem, and the phone rings all the time. There are an infinite number of things that can go wrong when you make a movie.

SC: I have an extensive knowlege of how artists deal with budget problems and how this can be an influence over choices and the form of the work. For example the explosion of documentary and archival works can be explained by the fact that they are easily stored and manipulated. But you didn't do this kind of work. You wanted to have a plot, narratives, not to

mention all the complications of actors, lights, makeup, batteries, feeding people, transporting them, etc. You thought in terms of film making, not video art.

RD: That's both right and wrong. In "Luna & Ms. Y" there's a film within the film that is a satire of the kind of video art you are talking about. But also I made a lot of art films, mostly a couple of minutes, mostly shot with my Harinezumi camera. But they're not in the catalogue.

SC: They should be. What's wrong with this production?

RD: Nothing at all. It's just hard to represent on paper.

SC: Find a way!

RD: There are a couple of pieces I couldn't get in the catalogue. That Jane Austen piece behind you for example. It's impossible to photograph because of the mirror.

SC: You should write about that! Just put the bad photograph and write a text explaining why it's wrong.

RD: Great suggestion.

SC: These art films were made without actors?

RD: Completely without actors.

SC: Hand held camera.

RD: Mostly. Occasionally I'd use a tripod.

SC: Easy to edit, easy to make, no scripts...

RD: Yes. Just ideas and images and sound.

SC: Do you consider them minor productions or are they on a par with the rest of your film production?

RD: I consider them more like poetry than feature-length full scale film productions. I've got a lot of poems that aren't in here either. I'm not really sure where my "art" films might go, could go, should go. One thing that I've seen recently that I've really liked is "Thanx for nothing,"

the video piece Ugo Rondione made with John Giorno for John's 70th birthday. I saw it twice at the Palais de Tokyo. It was pretty damn close to perfection. Mathew Barney, he really brings huge budgets to art video installations. Christian Marclay's "The Clock" is fabulous.

SC: Is the physical size of the screen relevant to your work?

RD: It depends on the film.

SC: "Luna & Ms. Y" is meant to be seen on a big screen in a theater.

RD: Yes. "The Mythical Quick" has been shown in a gallery. It was projected in a loop on the wall for my last show, with the audio playing too. It made a nice sonic backdrop.

SC: "The Mythical Quick" is a video adaptation of a book project, a collaboration with Christophe Boutin, made much after the book project which was done in '92 and the film is from 2008. Why did you come up with a film 16 years later? Was the book originally meant to be accompanied by a movie?

RD: No, the video was not part of the original conception. I had no idea I would be doing video at the time we made the book. I taught myself 3-D animation much later and used those skills to make the video. It's meant to bring the book alive.

SC: It's not about sexual arousal. More like, I don't know if we can put it like this, but eroticising the mind? Eroticising the language?

RD: Yes, that's absolutely the case. Duchamp is a good example, look at the bicycle wheel.

SC: Or the bottle rack. These are sexual metaphors. Objects with deep rooted sexual meaning.

RD: You can say the same thing about Picabia. A lot of his work is really highly erotically charged and at the same time you don't look at it and think...it's been mysticised, maybe? The eroticism is gener

alized and mystical. More cerebral than pornographic or fetishistic.

SC: It could be pornographic or fetishistic and still be connected to the deeper layers of the psyche.

RD: There are a lot of artists who deal with that today. Artists who put their own sex organs in the foreground.

SC: You produced a lot of work with an explicit sexual content. Even "Luna & Ms. Y," although not pornographic in a banal sense, certainly reveals something unexpected.

RD: The word "unexpected" is hopefully *le mot juste*. I have always tried to, in some sense, surprise myself.

SC: Afterart News. Was it born out of your previous collaborations with Christophe Boutin? Who had the idea of putting out a free art newspaper?

SC: Christophe came up with the idea over brunch in Deauville at Melanie's house. He'd always liked the name Afterart, and Afterart News had a nice ring to it. Another impulsive, inspired moment. Connected to his work with onestar press, and ultimately what he had in mind was a kind of propaganda arm for onestar press. In any case it moved in that direction with time and that's what finally caused its demise.

SC: How many years did it last?

RD: A couple of years in print, and then a couple more on the internet. Which as ephemeral art world publications go is actually a pretty long time.

SC: So he asked you to edit the paper?

RD: He needed a writer and an editor.

SC: I believe I wrote a couple of pieces.

RD: You did. It was tremendously fun and exciting when it started. And it gave me a soapbox to expound from. Not that anybody listened. But people liked my style. It was amusing.

SC: Yeah, I remember that! So the ambiguity of being an art magazine and the house organ was never resolved and in the end the magazine died because of this?

RD: I'd say that's a fair assessment.

SC: The house organ was never explicit between you? It was an open secret?

RD: Somewhat. But how many artist's books did they publish? Hundreds! These were PODs, not high-end artist's books, but as the house organ there was a LOT of room to maneuver. There were so many artists connected to onestar press. I don't now how many onestar artists there are today...

SC: Hundreds. It's a very high figure. Three or four hundred.

RD: I don't think they are publishing quite so many today.

SC: No. They haven't given up on the idea of the collection but not so many books per year. They are meant to be inserted into objects mainly, mostly bookshelves by artists and designers...

RD: Lawrence Weiner made one. And the collection has become an object in and of itself.

SC: Yes, they sell the collection.

RD: And don't forget that with each book a multiple was produced. It was a very smart move to create such an extensive network of artists. He and Melanie have built a miraculous publishing house, and have gone on with Three Star Books (high-end artists books) and have become curators at Untitled Art Fair, a satellite of Miami Basel Book Machine, just one of their projects, was a world-wide success.

SC: I always thought that your role as editor in chief of Afterart News was more than just editing texts and coming up with clever titles, it was something that Christophe needed to internationalise his work in France. You brought smart, refined English writing to his activities.

You say intelligent things in an interesting way. It's more than just providing texts for publicity, it's like branding a campaign.

RD: Sure.

SC: Without your ideas..."What's left after the end of art? More art of course, and we're going to have to live with it." I mean, this is brilliant, it's tongue in cheek of course, but it's more than that.

RD: As well as being a soapbox it let me refine a certain kind of journalistic, critical style that had appeal. It led to a lot of work, catalogue texts, book introductions, magazine and online stuff. I worked with Laurent Godin and a couple of museums in France. I worked for Le Monde and Telerama. People who actually paid me money. I put some of those publications in Appendix A. It connected me to the contemporary art world in a way my own artistic production never had at that point. It's another reason I really don't consider myself an outsider artist. Even if the art world didn't know what was going on with me, for whatever reason, I certainly had a good idea of what people were up to. And the quality of your attention changes when you have to write about something. You discover what you actually think.

SC: But you didn't want to have a career in art criticism. You were doing many other things. You made "Place de la Republique."

RD: My homage to Louis Malle.

SC: Do you still shoot pictures with a digital camera? Or do you use your iPhone? Is there any need for a specialized camera? Except for maybe still lifes. Street photography is almost all done with iPhones these days.

RD: I use my iPhone all the time. It's like a visual diary or journal.

SC: In the analog days there was a delay between shooting and seeing the result. Now it's instantaneous and you can take hundreds or thousands of photos a day.

Has the value of the individual photo been undermined?

RD: I'd say, to make an analogy, that cameras have become like pencils were for centuries - everyone had access to them, but there weren't a whole lot of Rembrants or Watteaus.

SC: But the distribution made possible by digital technology is really new. To be an original image maker is much harder. We are flooded by so many good images.

RD: I like what Kenneth Goldsmith has to say about originality and archival work. He's right about our whole conception of what it means to be original. He is as important a thinker now as Walter Benjamin was in his day.

SC: Your film "The Visit," and I'm reading from the text, "is a comedy that deals with a lot of serious issues, like teenage sexuality in the internet age." Is this your homage to Larry Clark?

RD: There's more John Waters in it than Larry Clark. That film happened because of my relationship with a well known child actor named Côme Levin, he's my friend the artist Frédérique Morrel's kid. Once Côme and I decided to do a film together we worked incredibly fast. We wrote, cast, and shot the film in under three months. That may not be a record, but that's really fast film making.

SC: You say it's an old paradigm. "A sexy American puritan comes to France and finds herself entangled in a web of old world intrigue." James' "Portrait of a Lady" is the reference.

RD: In Henry James' novel Isabel Archer is a sexy Puritan who has just inherited money and arrives in Paris, the city of sex and sin. She gets involved in a vast web of devious intrigue that is beyond her ability as an American to imagine or deal with. So this is a retelling and an update of that story from an adolescent point of view. The girl who comes to Paris, in this case to spend her Christmas holiday with her aunt and cousin, is very religious. Her cousin is a porn addict. She

thinks he is possessed by the devil and is determined to cure him.

SC: What do you think of French films, like "The Color Blue," or any films, that deal with teenage sexuality in a way that goes beyond the old conventions?

RD: That film about the two lesbians? That's really different from "The Visit."

SC: More John Waters than Larry Clark. It's more grotesque than romantic and erotic?

RD: It's also just funny. It's not ironically amusing, it's laugh-out-loud funny. Even the French laugh at this one. Côme grew up doing comedy and he's got an impeccable sense of comic timing. He knows how to write it and knows how to act it. He's a comic and he was willing to exploit that to get at a profound examination of teenage sexuality and identity. Not just the internet and pornography, although that's pervasive. It's almost banal now, but at the time it was new. This was the first generation to grow up, boys and girls, watching extreme forms of pornography. Because it's a comedy people can see "The Visit" not be offended or scared or freaked out or disturbed. We had screenings where mothers came with their kids and told me afterwards they were really glad they had seen it together.

SC: You don't belong to the Beaux Arts tradition.

RD: Which gives me a lot of freedom.

SC: You don't depend on the market. It's also a danger. You have all the freedom you want but nothing is decisive. It's not a criticism.

RD: It's a fact.

SC: It's a fact. You don't fear a fiasco. You are sheltered from the effects of your art on your life in a way.

RD: I can afford to fail because I have nothing to lose. My life has been incredibly risky in terms of a career. From the decision at 14 to be a poet. Over the years

I've rarely felt discouraged or stuck. It's like a river flowing. If it can't go in one direction, it goes in another. But I've recognized the risk, financially and even socially. And I've often thought that if I don't live long enough then what I have been doing will never get recognized as a body of work. It's been a long game. I have to stay around long enough for the arc to be apparent.

SC: So you had a show last year, "Afterart Infrathins, Pop-up Poetry." A one-man show of some of your current and past work. Most with a strong use of words, including many of your artists books. You read your recent poetry. "The Mythical Quick" was screened in a loop. So this is a mini retrospective, which means you were thinking of it even before we started on this catalogue. You were thinking about the idea of shaping your work. A way of presenting it to the public. Poetry, visual work, and film. Before we conclude, I have one more question. You haven't made any films in the last couple of years. Why?

RD: I felt I had come to the end of something. I started writing novels. I became as passionate about persuading that as I had been about making films.

SC: We haven't talked much about the novels, in fact. What have you written?

RD: "Unplugged Yellow" and "The Half Moon."

SC: Opium Books published "Unplugged Yellow." How did that happen? I remember seeing an early draft of this book in the late 90s.

RD: Yeah, I wrote it in the 90s and nothing concrete ever happened. It got some interest from agents and editors in New York. Basically everyone wanted me to turn it into a real memoir, which for me just really missed the point. But I concede it needed a rewrite. I took another swing at it in 2015 and I was ready to publish it at Afterart. I had a POD made up. And then I had a show of my posters at 25-50 on rue Oberkampf, and my friend Adrian Dannatt came. As well as the post-



ers, I left a bunch of my dream poems around in their newspaper format. Adrian picked one up and read it there and told me he thought it was my masterpiece. He came for dinner a couple of nights later with Josh Shoemake. He noticed "Unplugged Yellow" and I gave him a copy. He called me the next day to say it was going to be a best seller. I ordered Josh's books on Amazon, he's written two, a literary guide to Morocco and a novel called "Planet Willie." I read them and sent him appreciations - I liked them both. I noticed that "Planet Willie" was published by Opium Books, and asked about them. I went to the web site, and saw it was an author-run press started by Josh himself and Danny Moynihan, the famous art collector, writer and curator who wrote "Broadway Boogie Woogie," which was the gold standard at the time for novels of art world shenanigans. They read it and decided to publish it. I wanted to do the special, signed limited edition and they were into that. I also wanted to promote the book by touring art venues, and they totally agreed. I had some great readings.

SC: So let's finish with "The Half Moon."

RD: I completed it recently. I'm looking for a publisher now.

SC: You didn't want to publish it with Opium Books?

RD: This book requires different treatment. I'm going to wait until I meet the right person at a cocktail party or something.

SC: There's a real plot and characters taken from real life. One of the protagonists is Maurice Joffo. I'm reading from the synopsis, he was "a world-class coiffeur with a string of salons. He was also a jewelry thief who had a gang of Bulgarians working for him." It sounds like Jacques Demy, classic film noir from the 60s. So, and I'm reading again, "I thought the story had everything I needed to hang my Parisian experiences on. Almost 30 years later "The Half Moon" is the result. I've known some version of the many

characters in the book," etc., etc. Is this a disguised autobiography?

RD: No, it's not autobiographical but it's entirely based on my experiences in Paris.

SC: With French characters.

RD: There's only one American. He's a professional skateboarder and an aspiring novelist. It's a Parisian story. "Unplugged Yellow" was a New York story, although it does go to Paris.

SC: And to Timbuktoo. So this has been a huge project. And you recently finished it.

RD: I did some readings and handed out copies of the book in POD form to anyone who would write back to me about it. Quite a few people did. Basically I crowdsourced the editing process and I did a significant rewrite based on some of the comments.

SC: In terms of plot?

RD: No. There's a 14-year-old Roma boy in the book. He was always an important character, but in the course of writing I kind of fell in love with him and he grew in importance. He was in the opening and closing chapters. It's really him that we follow. And I hadn't fully taken that into account, that shift occurred while writing, and it unbalanced the book. It needed rebalancing.

SC: You cut it down?

RD: I made it longer. I gave him more weight. I developed his character in ways I needed to. I made him rounder. I'm very glad I did it.

SC: I look forward to reading it.

RD: Everyone says it would make a fabulous film. Maybe that will be my next project.



ALREADY RICH ID

APPENDIX A

PUBLICATIONS  
(selected)



Poems printed on a 19th Century handset letter press in my  
apartment on Mott Street in NYC Dec 23, 1984  
editions of 10, numbered & signed

## BECOMING LIGHT

the most becoming light is less  
slow than flatted pulp, years  
bend pure unre'ent and more.

i'm out of drawers to drop,  
up in circles, see. wonderment  
wins by a rouge, a pierced saint.

inside lithes go all  
up hard thin days, my Pet.  
not worst, such a thing burns  
brighter, dubs ribs. drops.

## SEASON

random scribbles of the dragonfly  
the thin days, many greens declare  
seasons of lethargy are divine  
in their time, pardoned or loved.

my eyes shiver like glass trees.  
the air of reasonable percentages  
half resuscitates some casualties  
of concrete all, daydreams we had.

it turns out you were behind it,  
in the way of details. how fully  
the parent patterns fit languishing  
delay, leaf prints on the page.

APPENDIX A

N° I

My first "published" poem, in *The Exquisite Corpse*, March/April 1986 - ed. Andrei Codrescu

WANTED FOR MURDER

by Philippe Soupault  
Translated from the French by Kirby Olson

We are looking for a man named Philippe Soupault  
he is big for his age  
six feet six inches or just about  
cruel like a tiger with green eyes  
slippery and too hot to hold like a crimson flume  
he likes to punish shadows  
by reflecting them back to the light  
hair of a little cloud or of a bird of fog  
gloves of blue smoke  
some wings with talons and some arms which never end  
outrageous perfume like a snake of sweat water  
a smile of a shark from the lower depths  
stars in his hair  
nightmares in his hands  
dangerous because he is always armed  
with his daily dreams  
of a machine gun of the latest model  
he doesn't hesitate to shoot  
and would kill all the world  
before he was finished having a good time  
in his pocket a little pocket mirror  
and on his lips a daubily cutting smile  
within reach are a pair of glasses  
and a longgun for those blind as birds  
held back by a hangman's string  
a gleam in the eyes which says nothing of bravery  
one should distrust all of his fingers  
they are long like carresses without end  
fingers which follow and are friendly  
aiming at your breast which are hairless  
and which swell like they mock the world  
his voice is dangerous like a refrain  
screaming always to disappear when one is waiting for  
it  
preferring the perpetual to the eternal word  
loves passion in women who are like saars  
Eve is armed with indifference day and night  
on he pretends that he is pretending that he is dangerous  
he doesn't hesitate to shoot and fire continuously  
don't play around  
shoot  
shoot with all your force  
and fire  
because his phantom waits for you tomorrow  
after tomorrow and all other days  
he never forgets those who he detests  
or those he loves  
be on your guard: he never forgets  
reward for those who take him dead or alive:  
a speck of dust

TENEMENT TWO TIME

by Richard Dailey

They that must be the E train  
Out of windows, time's many  
Blow, laundry and all that  
Bumbers decouple the neighbors.  
Days after belly bottom.  
Worlds winnow up, cock fights.  
Protagonist fuck yourself.  
Reverend time, don't get up.  
Wisps of window across the way  
Will get to you, a voice  
Bristling with trains, half-asleep.

THE ROSE OF MARION

for Harold Talbot  
by James Schuyler

is pink and many puffed:  
it rests on the rim  
of a shot-glass on the desk  
in my room in this  
Eighteenth Century house in,  
of course, Marion, Cape Cod,  
Massachusetts (for  
further details, see Thoreau  
or "The Ousemass House" by  
what's-his-face).  
The window is filled  
with leaves! So different  
from my urban view  
in sorry-hearted New York.  
I love leaves, so green,  
so still, then  
all a shimmer. Would  
I like to live here? I  
don't know: it's  
far from friends  
(for me) and others  
I depend on. But  
it's awfully nice to visit,  
a whaling port,  
like Sag Harbor, Long Island.  
Pink rose of Marion, I  
wish I knew your name.  
Perhaps one day I will.

I was really pleased to be in such good company. The phrase "Protagonist fuck Yourself" originated here and I used it in a piece in 1992 - see previous.

I went to NUIT BLANCHE in 2006 at the Goutte d'Or with Frederique Deschamps, photo editor at Le Monde at the time. Anne De Villepoix had rented a bar/restaurant on the corner of rue Affre. Barthelemy Togo, the French-Cameroonian artist, with her gallery at the time, had a piece in an empty lot next door - a huge block of ice with fruits suspended in it. The water was captured as the ice melted slowly. The next day Frederique asked me to send her my photos and she published this one of Wurm's amusing wall piece on the same street.



APPENDIX A N°2

APPENDIX A  
N° 3/I

I delivered this text at a conference at the Université de Rouen in 1992, when I was a professor in the English department. I am talking about my "Guillotines". They were on display. I wore my blue Romeo Gigli suit.

UNSEEMLY LIBERTIES

First I would like to thank M. Pichardie for the opportunity to make a late visual insertion to this conference on the eye. I have just a few brief remarks to make about my work, although I touch only lightly on some of the subjects Tony Brachet has considered in great depth.

I started superimposing short poems on Hogarth's engravings two months ago because his images embody popular possibilities of intense visual and narrative condensation. Consider Hogarth's Picaresque narratives: in less than a dozen images they span periods it takes Richardson, Fielding or Defoe hundreds of pages to cover. This is not to suggest that they achieve the same effect. In traditional terms, we recognize here with Lessing, the author of The Laocoon, that images are spacial and writing is temporal. Even so, I quote Lessing, "Painting and poetry should be like two just and friendly neighbors, neither of whom indeed is allowed to take unseemly liberties in the other's domain, but who exercise mutual forbearance on the borders." It is the tension along these borders that I work with, making my pieces what Clement Greenberg, the American art critic, would call "impure art." Allegorical clusters of association, resembling Benjamin's monadic constellations, or even westernized Chinese characters, structure our "reading" of Hogarth and allow for a transformed fusion of text and image.

Prints, like photographs, have a particular status as works of art. They are not "original" in the sense a painting is original, they are multiple by nature but they are regarded as authentic. The difference between authentic and original is a

APPENDIX A  
N° 3/2

contemporary artistic cunundrum on which I am commenting by making "original" pieces out of reproductions. Through my poetry, I also emphasize the allegorical and fragmentary in Hogarth's work. Like Hogarth's engravings, my work is meant to be seen both as a series and as individual pieces.

Hogarth's engravings also contributed, along with the work of novelists, to the mass development of shared and potentially subversive subjectivity in the 18th century in the same way that today artists such as Jenny Holtzer or Barbara Kruger might be said to visually incorporate poeticised political rhetoric to the same end. Of course, the beauty of a democratic context is that work can be both "mass" and "subversive" at the same time. My texts, like those of Holtzer or Kruger, are tonally aphoristic, but they lack almost all political intention. They are more like "haiku in perukes." The relation of my text to Hogarth's images is always oblique. Most depend upon details in the engravings which do not stand out. The text may be "spoken by" or "be about" an animal such as a cat or a dog. Linguistic inversion, paradox, cunundrum, find themselves in the employ of disarming simplicity and glancing description.

The stands are meant to accomplish three things beyond the purely aesthetic presentation of my work in lines, circles, or semicircles. First, they play with the form of the book, a contemporary concern we find in the work of many artists. The doublesidedness recalls a page, which the stands place in a sculptural relation to the eye. Second, they emphasize the complex nature of the series as a unit made up of individual and "free standing" pieces. And finally, although I said my work is almost entirely unpolitical, the stands resemble guillotines and thereby invoke the capability of severing all relations, whether between viewer and viewed or between text and image.



APPENDIX A  
N°4

Slug

I

Slug yaws in the pit,  
Nuzzles a latticework of earth.  
He caresses himself in the failure  
of motion.

II

This fat moving root  
Clenches, curls, spurts  
In the soil.  
His earth becomes priceless  
With slime.

III

We inherit his garden,  
We have it his way:  
Green rind, red meat, white seed.

Richard Dailey

Poems published in CIRCLES  
N° 2, 1991 (Université de Rouen).

"Slug" was actually written at  
Bennington, one of the few things  
from that time I kept.

"Three Assaults" is a NYC poem.

Three Assaults

I

Consider the thigh, its windy plain  
of wheat reaching forever — its fields  
gold ripple and silver sea — the eye  
rides that horse, tilting to restrain.

II

Gold or bone-white, elliptical  
skirts and a blind tyrant —  
would obey the pondering tongue  
evince not, nor barter, nor cliché —

III

Would breach the limit of resolve,  
arrive at the pure church in the valley  
where the river opens her thighs —  
after waters ring, persistence —

Richard Dailey

"Entryway" is not from Bennington  
days, but it was written under the spell of  
Alvin Feinstein, who taught there.

Entryway

Through second growth or third  
You leave something behind  
While the path closes like water  
Over stone. Trees grapple,  
The blaze fades  
From their trunks.

Where light drops down a rift  
In the chill green closure  
You go through kudzu tangled  
To the knees, ivy clamped hard  
And weightless where it stops  
Or starts, where frost and root  
Wreck walls broken from the sun.  
Cold rock in the skitterish  
Dark is a thing to dream upon  
Or follow out;

Follow each wall's turn, one  
Man's ragged round of starts,  
The verge of his prosperity  
Wiped clean, just clear enough  
Now to pause.

As far back as you remember  
Nothing seems the same.  
Notice goldenrod blending through  
Certain borders light twists toward.  
You can't be sure of the field,  
How it came to look as it does.  
Only low in the mild sun  
Birds shake drops of water  
From their wings,

Pleasures in a song that forms  
And will not vanish here, or here.

Richard Dailey

APPENDIX A  
N° 5/I

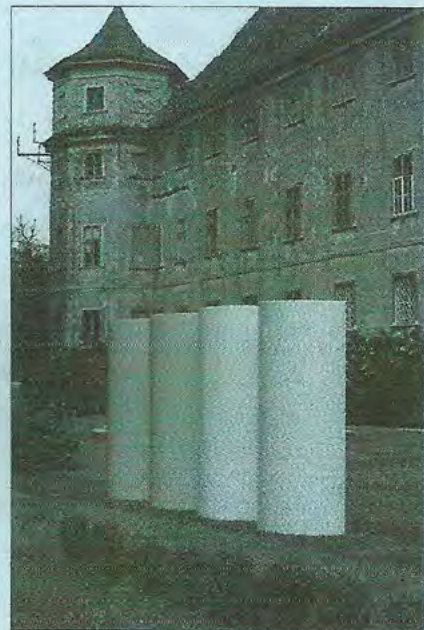
SEBASTIEN DE GANAY invited me to his studio in the schloss (outside Vienna) to talk and hang out for several day's to facilitate writing this article. His wife Katrina and the kids were away, and we had fun drinking too much and smoking expensive cigars. I came away without my original illusions, impressed by Sébastien's industry and convinced of his Miro-like happiness as an artist. He whistled while he worked.

## Recent portraits & sculptures

*An essay on Sébastien de Ganay's recent works by Richard Dailey*

Sébastien de Ganay's recent work will intrigue you, if it hasn't already. For one thing, in the last couple of years he has almost single-handedly freed minimalism from its doctrinal shackles with his sculpture installations<sup>1</sup>. The ultra-cool logic of Judd & company's endgame in the lofts of Soho has found new purpose in a gigantic crumbling 18th Century castle in Petronell, a small town in eastern Austria on the Slovak border, where de Ganay lives with his wife and children in an apartment comfortably stanced against the weather's corrosive effects.<sup>2</sup> There among the vineyards, Roman ruins and windmill energy farms, minimalism is undergoing a one-man renaissance. And this is just a small part of the story.

At hand we have Sébastien de Ganay's recent painted portraits AND sculptures. Let's insist on the conjunction to start, for reasons that will be clear. You can see immediately how sculptural his paintings are, while at the same time his sculpture installations are perfectly Greenbergian in their pure paint on aluminium (the only way you could get more pure would be to do monochrome installations, including the room<sup>3</sup>). The walls in particular get as flat as sculpture can get from certain angles. And then in de Ganay's portraits are the trademark folds of plastic which literally create waves of relief, the balanced push-pull/ background-figure effect, the luminous white<sup>4</sup> void of a background over which all the figures float and by which



Cylinders in the park of Petronell.

they are supported, but de Ganay also layers on the paint heavily, etching his gestures in pigment. The closer you get the more the paint thickly insists on itself as heavy-duty brushstrokes.<sup>5</sup> Whereas in the walls, cubes, cylinders, and circles (like steel donuts) of de Ganay's sculptures with their bright car-paint monochromes we see geometric picture planes, curved or not, which foreground (particularly against the walls and cubes) the viewer almost like the figures in the paintings against their Ganay white voids, as if those figures suddenly found themselves freed from the veil of the painter's g(l)aze. Seen like this, we are all de Ganays.

Furthermore, these recent pieces are the result of more than 10 years of well-documented exploration of the relationship between painting and sculpture during which de Ganay has mined this juncture with all the means at his disposal<sup>6</sup>. The result is a suddenly massive resonance in his new work that startles you until you realize just how much meticulous attention, time and thought have been put into getting us here. De Ganay's new work has been brewing for a long time, but the effort is now no longer an issue: this artist whistles while he works.

### Portraits first.

Before viewing de Ganay's recent work, I would have told anyone who bothered to ask that portrait painting was a double dead end, personal likeness in painting having been finished off in the early rounds by cameras, while paint itself shriveled a decade or two ago to only one option on the conceptual palette.<sup>7</sup> So what is it about these paintings? How is it that they make plastic and paint look so pertinent?



Work in progress in Petronelli's corridor.

Their cool temperatures are one thing. The Ganay white backgrounds are an eye bath of light that stimulates and soothes at the same time. De Ganay is operating on many different levels in these portraits, starting with these backgrounds that shout 'studio' at first glance and then soften as they self-enrich. They contrast and support the informal poses, snapshots really, imbued with the sense that de Ganay gives us of having caught his subjects in unguarded moments. While isolating and heightening his subjects like studio portraits, these backgrounds function in exactly the opposite manner that, say, Gap advertising, or even Irving Penn's portraits of aborigines, do. That studio white was invented to create crisp cutouts, while Ganay white is as ambiguous an element as a dream. It's like deep water in that it supports the figures and yet looks capable of completely absorbing them. When the final veiling layer of plastic is layered on<sup>8</sup>, sometimes over still wet paint (insisting further that this is paint), the effect is serenely eerie: the figures look suspended in their fields.

And then there is their silence, enhanced by the background and final plastic veil, which, crossed with the narrative insistence of their figures, also makes one think of photographs. As the artist puts it, we feel like the painted figure is inside a bubble, which confronts two

worlds, our noisy one and the one of the person portrayed, silent.<sup>9</sup> Just compare the effect here to that of Pistoletto's well-known mirror pieces, where the founder of *Arte Povera* silk-screened figures onto mirrors. Pistoletto's pieces are "noisy," meaning that the mirrors include the viewer and everything around him/her. The Ganay white background absorbs everything and liquidates any spatial reference. The notion of time/epoch is only betrayed by what the people are wearing.

In fact, de Ganay is working with a certain zeitgeist here, frankly artful portraits in the sense of Ruff and Struth, Wall and Tina Barney, or, alternatively, "found" portraits such as Streuli takes, except de Ganay is working in a totally different medium from these photographers. Yet his portraits, especially before their plastic veils are applied, are almost photorealist from the right distance, an astonishing feat considering the economy of gesture in de Ganay's paintings. De Ganay works fast, rendering them in an unbelievable 3 hours on average. Of course he goes back after the heat of the moment and retouches them where necessary, but still the astonishing ratio of intense economy of gesture to power of visual impact hits right where we like it. And isn't there is something of the charming simplicity of Alex Katz's work here, too? Finally all of the allusions resolve themselves behind that quiet veil.



Left: Erwin, right: Christophe, 2003

Sheer visual and narrative intrigue are also part of our pleasure in these paintings. Visually, they fill the eye but refuse to lie still, playing with our normal efforts to locate the picture plane. They undulate, or they shift forward and back. Newcomers to de Ganay's technique may even find themselves blinking as they begin to dissect the initial visual impression. The more you look, the more you wonder how it was done.<sup>10</sup> And out of that visual game, narrative and contextual questions are in turn provoked by the subjects and then frustrated by the denuded circumstances until the mind, tantalized, can't help but try to fill the void. Who are these people? Where are they? What is that guy thinking about as he sits in his chair ("seated man in blue jacket")? Who is the smiling man waving at ("man looking out through a window")? What's with the old woman, so familiar and so unsettling at the same time ("old women walking")? The viewer's pleasure is further enhanced when he/she realizes the game has been deliberately constructed to remain open ended, that our imaginations have been subtly and willingly engaged in a kind of perpetual play. De Ganay's sense of play is profound, and I'll get back to it when discussing his sculpture.

Which brings us to the subjects of these paintings: people and chairs. Here's another built-in contradiction: the intimacy we feel with de Ganay's subjects in spite of (or because of) their extreme isolation. The effect is diametrically opposed to that of the aristocratic oil paintings in the portrait gallery next to which he works, and perhaps this in itself is de Ganay's answer to tradition. What we do know are de Ganay's subjects, or feel we might, even if we never will. In fact, you may recognize one or even many of these people, but ultimately it doesn't matter. They are palpably human. They wear Gap as well as Yves Saint Laurent. They smoke. They take pictures. They throw



Erwin, detail, 2003

sand at the beach. They touch. They wave goodbye. They suffer and they love. De Ganay has produced a revealing slice of life for us. Even his chairs feel imbued with personality; and let's not overlook the marvelous bilingual word play in the word "chair," which means flesh in French. De Ganay's sense of play isn't limited to the visual.

And then the size of these paintings, particularly the big ones, feels right, especially when they are hung away from the wall or on hinges, which sets them at a variable angle to it. Their size forces us to take them seriously without imposing unpleasantness; it also tells us that these paintings have been made to be lived with and not simply stashed away in museums. And de Ganay's conceptual engine is running in tune here too: real size becomes a questionable concept under the circumstances, particularly when our artist begins scaling small figures (children) large and vice versa, as he has very recently begun doing.<sup>11</sup>

Most people will assume, rightly, that these portraits are of De Ganay's friends and family, just as we get that immediately about Nan Goldin's portraits of her world or Tina Barney's of hers. And de Ganay, like Barney and all those other photographers, gives us his world as he finds it.<sup>12</sup> The more you look at these portraits, the more radical that becomes.

### Now Sculptures.

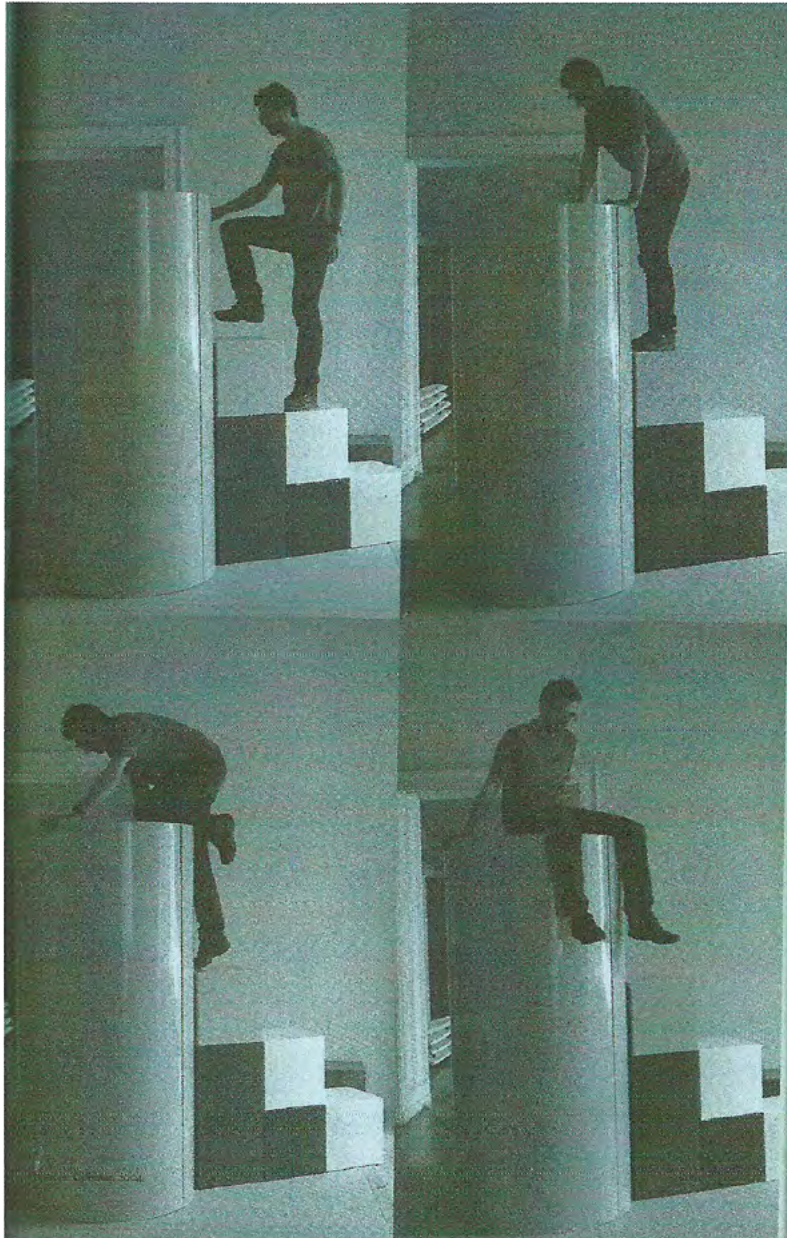
Impeccable pedigree is the first thing about de Ganay's recent sculptures that will strike anyone who remembers Conceptual art's analytical offspring, Minimalism. De Ganay spent his art school years in New York City in the 1980s, a decade that saw the apotheosis of Donald Judd. And De Ganay has in part spent the last 4 years trying to liberate sculpture<sup>13</sup> (without sawing any cows in half) from the deep systematic hole Minimalism had dug for it, and now he has circled back to meet it again on his own terms. His approach is similar but critically different from the generation of artists like John McCracken (with his "surfboards"), who grew out of minimalism in the 60s.<sup>14</sup> In de Ganay's painted aluminium walls, cubes, donuts, and sliced cylinders are all the pure anonymity the badass monks of Minimalism could possibly require. And yet something is different. This work just doesn't feel like another branch on the same old logic tree, it feels like one of those conceptual hybrids that open visual vistas: industrial leggo? And what has happened to Minimalism's glinting severity, its unyielding rigor, its humorless analytical reductionism? How has de Ganay managed to humanize the sight of aluminium and paint?



Rudolf and Siagrun in front of Walls, 2003.

Leaving aside for a moment the eye-pleasing power of these pieces, critically speaking it is important to understand the body of de Ganay's recent sculpture, as a whole. Taken together this work implies infinite variability, a promise Minimalism had forgotten, where objects over time theoretically work together to become a kind of chaos machine that will never make the same motion twice. These sculptures are all freestanding "installations" that by their nature are

IX  
APPENDICE A  
N° 5/5



Hans Schabus monkeying around on  
Séb's sculptures

infinitely and pleurably variable. They are modular. Here is another critical departure from artists like McCracken. De Ganay is divisible. Mobile. Scalable. These are his conceptual tools. To see de Ganay demonstrating this principal on his concrete prototypes will do the work of many words here...

De Ganay also encourages people to bring his sculptures into their living spaces as tables or seats, and he scales his work to fit the function. Then again, his big wall pieces actually make architecture the point, and of course function is a fundamental consideration in their installation simply by virtue of their size and shape. Here de Ganay scales his work up to jumbo, public installation and museum sizes, with all his nonchalant elegance intact thanks to his old friend Minimalism.



At work in the studio

There's a lot more, of course, to expound on in the way of theory here. De Ganay's roots are in the 80s, when Conceptual art (essentially art in language and language in art) went into supernova mode, and he is true to those roots even as he tends to his business on the border of Eastern Europe and in the Argentine heartland. He's playing a mind game with

your eyes. Even an old color field theorist can have a good time with this stuff. Finally, though, all the critical industry on planet art couldn't help him if the material at hand wasn't so evidently eye candy of the inspired sort. Just think about walking around those monochrome, rectangular walls with their glossy, reflective surfaces: the concealing and revealing, the mysterious (in places almost crushing) intimacy amidst the gigantic planes, all the permutations of basic geometry and the way they comment on the surroundings.<sup>15</sup>

As with the portraits, in de Ganay's sculpture his sensibility and intelligence interact with tradition using contemporary materials and original techniques. And as I tried to point out at the start, it is at the juncture of sculpture and painting that Sébastien de Ganay's work really starts to resonate. Yet one is left wondering, finally, where de Ganay's sensibility will lead him next. We have not touched here on his political works, or his wide-ranging support of the arts in general. Behind his delightful sense of play lies an inquisitive mind in perpetual search of formal incarnations of artistic truths, be these the humanized verities of Minimalism or the universal particularity of his portraits.

<sup>1</sup> While this is demonstrably true, no artist works in a cultural vacuum. The California artist John McCracken also works in a similar vein, as will be discussed below. McCracken is onto some of the same territory as de Ganay, but the two artists are very different.

<sup>2</sup> The schloss actually belongs to de Ganay's wife's family, and its state of decay is due to a long-stalled renovation.

<sup>3</sup> These sculptures are mostly meant to be interior installations, but they certainly work outdoors too. The biggest change in the outdoor pieces is the effect of light, which is perhaps more intense in the interior installations.

<sup>4</sup> Hereafter referred to as "Ganay white."

<sup>5</sup> De Ganay uses paint brushes, though, so please don't get the idea that he is plastering the paint on with a trowel. One of the effects he achieves this way is to widen the visual zone where paint becomes people and vice versa, an effect (not unlike slow motion in film) which further calls attention to the medium.

<sup>6</sup> From de Ganay's 1994 catalogue at Richard Salmon LTD in London and Galerie Jacqueline Mousson in Paris: "For he has opened up an area for work for which he is still only just beginning to impress with features, only just beginning to fold into relief." (Thierry Davila).

<sup>7</sup> Of course there is and always will be a commercial market for painted portraits, but that market doesn't concern us here. See for example the web site of the Royal British Academy of portrait painters.

<sup>8</sup> Hereafter referred to as the "veil."

<sup>9</sup> Sébastien de Ganay (note, 29/04/04).

<sup>10</sup> "The plastic paintings consist of getting a custom made plastic (one ton minimum) delivered in a roll which I stretch and pleat over canvas. After the folding is ready I paint on it. Then I cover/seal the whole with a last layer of plastic which I paint over with an anti UV varnish made for pvc/plastics." Sébastien de Ganay, email 6/04/04.

<sup>11</sup> I can't resist relating that when I visited de Ganay in Petronell in preparation for this article, we leaned all of his paintings against the walls in his in-law's portrait gallery, a windowed corridor perhaps 70 meters long, 6 meters wide, and five meters high, presided over by a dozen or so august 17th and 18th century types and a few historical scenes. The effect was a knockout, in part because it became obvious how successfully de Ganay has updated one of painting's oldest and most venerated genres.

<sup>12</sup> The world of each of these artists is radically different, obviously, as different as photography and painting. De Ganay is no voyeur, finally; he disembeds his subjects from their social context in search of a degree of abstraction that perhaps invites a deeper recognition of oneself in the other.

<sup>13</sup> "I made my first fiberglass sculptures in 1994. But I have been working on sculptures only for three years. *Farbe* - with Heilman, Stockholder and Marcaccio - was the first time I came out of the wall with the monochrome colored-polystyrene-filled bags." Sébastien de Ganay (note, 30/04/04).

<sup>14</sup> What de Ganay most fundamentally has in common with McCracken is the sense of a "specific object", "things in themselves which refer solely to themselves, an art whose strength lies in its raw presence, imposing silence the better to act physically and intellectually on the onlooker." (John McCracken, press release, Galerie Almine Rech, Paris, 2000.)

<sup>15</sup> There's more to come in the way of art, too. De Ganay is already embarked on new angles (literally) as he explores the permutations and possibilities evolving out of this recent work. Here's an unrealized idea of his: take one of those steel donuts, scale it up to 10 meters and install it outdoors on a hill in such a way that it looks poised at the point of rolling down. Maybe the idea is so interesting that we don't even need to see the project realized, but who could possibly object?



Concrete models of *Cylinders*, 2004.



Early days at the Palais de Tokyo  
published in a hipster rag in NYC

JE T'AIME PARIS  
Palais de Tokyo

by Richard Dailey, editor in chief of Alterart News in Paris



Call it a mini-renaissance - reminiscent of New York's in the late 70s. Suddenly artists want to be in Paris again and there is one popular repository of this new energy. The Palais de Tokyo is an official Paris squat of sorts, one with no permanent inhabitants besides its director and a few long-term curators like Claire Stabler. It is meant to be a Petri dish of international contemporary art, a theater of creative activity where the French Ministry of Culture functions as a midwife for art while the public looks on. Or, as the museum's website puts it, "a kaleidoscope of contemporary art."

In practice these noble goals have managed to anger just about everyone at one time or another since the Palais de Tokyo's opening in January 2002. Most angered are the real French squats, who feel as if their MO has been exploited by official culture while they remain disenfranchised. Everyone except Joe Public - the million or so visitors whose passage testifies to the Palais de Tokyo's success in being a "richly convivial, uninhibited space, propitious for meetings and generating dialogue - accessible to everyone."

In fact the Palais de Tokyo - constructed in 1937 for the International Fair of Arts and Techniques and reopened with a man-



date to present contemporary creativity - isn't quite the disaster one might expect when the French Ministry of Culture gets contemporary.

Sure there are a lot of hokey details. The interior fake industrial dilapidation in a gorgeous Art Deco shell built in 1937, for example. And there's confusion. The current Minister of Culture, Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, recently surprised everyone when he suddenly offered the Palais to François Pinault, the French billionaire and art collector who is leaving the country and setting up his collection in Venice out of frustration with French *laissez-faire*. Pinault turned down Vabres' offer. There's bad art too. (No names!)

But despite the negativity, here is a fairly big space in the center of Paris given over to contemporary art. To put it bluntly, Paris needs this space (and others like it) if the city's mini-renaissance isn't going to be choked off by commercialization or co-opted by London or Berlin.



## CORINNE MARCHETTI

Catalogue text for the first one-woman show Corinne had in Paris, at Laurent Godin's gallery.

"If Louise Bourgeois had married Walt Disney they might have had a daughter like Corinne Marchetti."



### STAR FUCKERS

Corinne Marchetti's seductive subjectivity & faux low-tech (embroidery, drawing, modeling) talents bring us purposefully into an artistic universe that transforms its sustaining cultural elements into proof of the imagination's superiority over the spectacles of our consumer culture.

As she says, she just tucks Matthew Barney into her bed. Barney is associated in Corinne's work with Hollywood, in part because of cinematic elements in his *oeuvre* but more importantly because of his status as an art star. The piece I'm referring to (*I MEET MATTHEW BARNEY*, 2002) is a triptych so deliciously loaded with significance (overdetermined, as the psychoanalysts say) that it merits a meditation all of its own. But let's just note the final phrases in the last image: "So I tuck him in my bed... That is my relation to strangeness." Indeed. "Tuck," of course, is the perfect verb choice here because it invokes

one of the most privileged and intimate of parental acts, tucking a child into bed; but as anyone with an ear has noted, tuck rhymes loudly with fuck. So what does our artist do with the strangeness of stars? She domesticates it, welcomes it into the world of her dreams, renders it childlike and puts it at the mercy of her maternal instincts - and at the same time manages to give it that odd sexual charge that informs much of her work.

Like needlepoint pornography, an oxymoronic art.

Corinne is the mistress of punked-up domestic arts. If Louise Bourgeois had married Walt Disney, they might have had a daughter like Corinne Marchetti.

And isn't any star's actual reality is less important than one's experience of that reality as projected through various cultural lenses? Take Corinne's recent work, drawings of celebrities made with her eyes closed and then, in a masterly touch, embroidered onto fabric. This artist has cyclids like guillotine blades: isn't this the point of drawing celebrities with your eyes closed?

Off with their heads! What are these representations if not the icons of an absolute subjectivity that takes its own dominance as evident? Even if, finally, the artist's subjective imagination craves the validity conferred by others, however strangely unknowable they ultimately are, as (un)knowable as Rocco or Pamela Anderson.

#### & DOMESTIC HEROES

The domestication of stars like Mathew Barney functions inversely when the artist transforms her entourage into home-made celebrities, in the sense that every young girl's fantasies (and don't forget, "JE SUIS JEUNE") revolve around herself and her friends. Again, Corinne says it best: "AU PAYS DE MARCHETTI TOUT EST PERMIS VOS REVES VOUS DISSENT OUI LA REALITE SE PREND POUR VOS DESIRS IL SUFFIT D'EN AVOIR ENVIE." And am I wrong, or is that her friend Pauline in "I MEET MATTHEW BARNEY"? Of course, most of us are mere voyeurs when it comes to MARCHETTIHAND, like Proust on his boardwalk in Normandy longingly absorbed in the shimmering band of complicitous girls who pass before him on the beach, or maybe like the poor guy with his eye pressed to a peephole in Las Vegas. Spend some time with Corinne's work, though, and something surprising happens: Authority is subverted by the pleasure principle, and the heart-breakingly remote heroes of childhood are unmasked to reveal: ourselves.

Corinne's punked-up representations of intimacy often remind us that our imaginations can become so powerful that nude reality may seem inadequate. For example, take the hilarious "Hi Coco, I'm the hunk that you pinned up in your bathroom wall. Do you want to play with me now? No, I'm sorry, I'm don't want to play I'm not interested!" The layering of little-girl capriciousness with the problematic of an overpowering imagination that finds its own fantasy more satisfying than reality is rendered in an image that makes Proust's dilemma contemporary: Corinne's style, which is indeed "Trop cool, trop sympa", is partially so because of the way it makes a virtue of simplicity

without treating content as disposable. These are images even a hard-core minimalist could love.

#### INNOCENCE & EXPERIENCE

What philosopher would be fooled for a second by the kid's stuff in Corinne's work? Anyone can see that our girl isn't kidding even when she's just fucking around with her eyes closed. Remember, her innocent eyes have lids like guillotine blades. In the peep shows or art world freak shows of certain of Corinne's images, where porn stars male and female deliver philosophical conundrums in the guise of banalities, the « children » just give the final twist of the knife in the back of our culturally received notions. The childish handwriting, the fairy-tale formulations, the deliberately crude drawing, work with and against Corinne's ironic mercilessness and complacency-crushing mini-parables.

This push-pull effect opens up territories every bit as vertiginous to meditate upon as the reflections of Jean-Paul Sartre on his patron saints of existentialism, but in Corinne's case this meditation is so fantastically at the mercy of her absolute subjectivity (the maternal imagination?). There is something profoundly existential about Corinne's work, but the crippling sense of nausea is gone: instead of feeling like we're standing on a trap door in the floor, not daring to move for fear of falling, we have the have the image of a hovering dream figure which is as energizing and full of hope as a desired pregnancy. Corinne's imagination is deeply imbued with recovered childhood innocence, but innocence now empowered by experience. Ketchup is blood! Identity is fluid! We can fly!

For example, in «On a movie set I met Mr. Rocco» this push-

pull dynamic is quite amusingly rendered in a way that coldly deflates the kind of calculating mutual admiration that so often drives the art world, but it does so without pretensions to any better idea of how things should be done. After all, being a porn star is probably a step up from being a whore, isn't it? The ironies resound throughout: an almost bare porn location is a « movie set; » Mr. Seffredi, whose sole feature of interest is a huge cock, is « a truly wonderful artist;» and our heroine « can't hide her love for his work » (only love and a cough can't be hidden, as they say). Her imagination invests the world before her with an innocent significance and then the circle snaps shut with « That's it, » and everyone's been fucked. The childlike patina that has been thrown over this parabolically loaded image gives it the amusing quality that let's it suspend deliciously in the hypothalamus while cognitive gears grind to a halt: Heidegger seated on Dr. Doolittle's Puushmepullyou, the storied zebra with two facing heads that can never agree on which way to go.

#### OF DOLLS, SCULPTURE, AVATARS AND ACCESSORIES

When it comes to Corinne's sculpture, it's not unusual to hear the word « doll » bandied about or the adjective « doll-like » applied. The artist resists this classification and takes her antipathy to such terminology even further: « L'enfance m'ennuie. Les formes que je présente sont des formes adultes. Quand ce qui peut être poupée, je le nomme statue c'est qu'il y a bien là le désir de me froter à la grande sculpture. » I think she is both right and wrong in her resistance to this take on her work: right to correct the limiting reductiveness of associating her sculptures with dolls (I mean, what doll ever looked

so sardonic/malicious or happily guilty as some of Corinne's figures?), but wrong to compare them to traditional sculpture. It seems to me equally limiting to align her work with « grand sculpture. » This is not Richard Serra we're talking about here (or even Jeff Koons, although that's closer, except that Corinne is anything but kitsch). The soft sculptures and doll-like forms of Annette Messager, Mike Kelly and Paul Macarthy are her true antecedents. Try imagining Paul Macarthy married to Madame Tussauds.

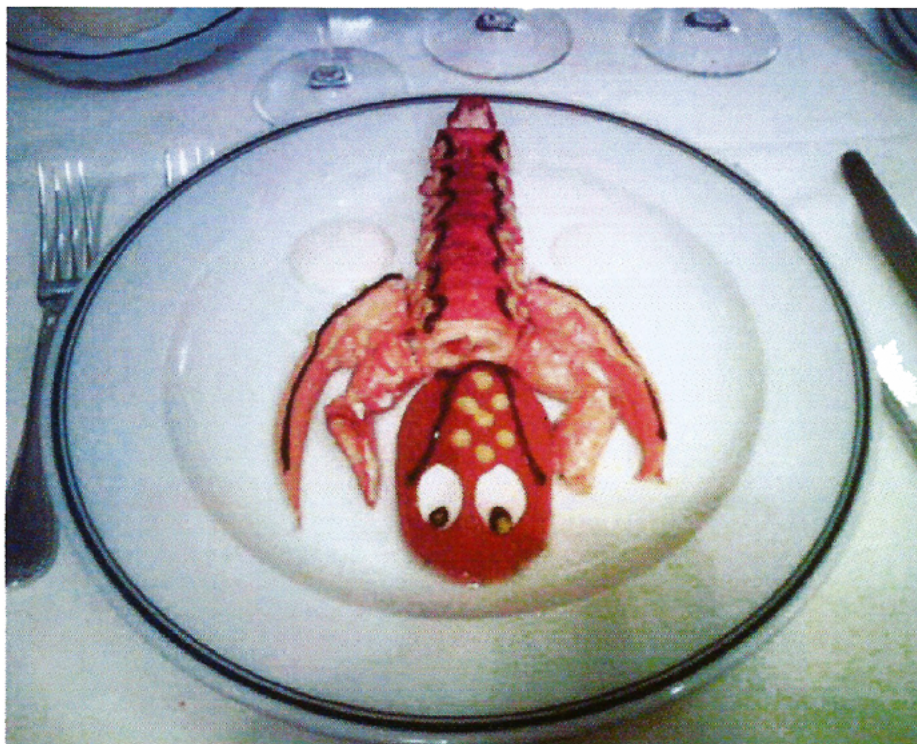
But Corinne takes their groundbreaking work to another level. In some ways her sculptures have more in common with contemporary avatars, originally the incarnations of Hindu deities of course, but today the representations of characters in virtual worlds like Second Life. Corinne's figures are far more sophisticated than the typical avatar, which can run the gamut from smileys to the 3-D creatures being created by the art folks at MIT or the VIRTUAL HUMAN INTERACTIVE LAB at Stanford University in California. Corinne's sculptures are characters, not caricatures, they are imbued with personality and style. The mind immediately works to create a context for them, searches for narrative, wants to know what's behind that ironic little twist of the lip or that raised eyebrow. There's narrative at work here, even if it's not obvious. Like good portraits, entire worlds are hinted at in these sculptures. Not to mention the fashion boutiques invoked by the shoes, clothes and accessories.

So while there may be something doll-like about this work (Corinne IS the mistress of punked up domestic arts), there is nothing childlike about it at all. Virtual worlds may just be catching up to Marchetiland. The art world is rightfully excited to get this advanced peek at something evermore about to be.

A review of the Koons exhibit at Varsailles.  
Byline appears earlier.

Versailles gave us diamonds, and diamonds are forever. Versailles gave us fashion, and hemlines have never been the same. And today the most touristed site in the world (5.5 million visitors/year!) gives us Jeff Koons. He never looked so good, and probably never will again. He looks even better than Cicciolina flashing her pussy getting out of a limo: vulgar, beautiful, exciting, bright, irresistible as catnip is to cats. Afterart News went en masse, flashing our press cards and finessing the endless lines to get in. It starts in the exterior courtyard, before you find yourself immersed in the odorous river of humanity (overheard: "It's that New York subway smell!") that courses through Versailles all day every day: BALLOON FLOWER (green). Standing on a misconceived platform, BALLOON FLOWER (green) is royal eye candy in polished stainless steel, a gem set in the kingdom of kitsch. All dismissive Koons criticism ("What's he done that Claus Oldenberg didn't do?") evaporates from right minds on a glorious fall day in Versailles like dew from the long lawns. Then you really start looking at it. Classical sculptural elements like surface and depth have been pushed to marvelous levels: the "highly sanded" surface both absorbs and reflects the world in its seductive curves. There's no way into it, there's no way around it, and there's no way out. It's immaculately manufactured, of course. Conceptually BALLOON FLOWER (green) plays a high/low kitsch/classical mind game in perfect pitch. It's hilarious and majestic. It's the apotheosis of the banal. And you haven't even entered the chateau yet. So go, you'll love it. The only thing missing is Cicciolina in Louis XIV's bed. But that's not hard to imagine. As everyone knows, two polemical arguments surround this marriage of ageless in-your-face French pomposity and American kitsch on steroids. The first is best expressed by the grumbling tourists who paid good money to get in and don't like these pimples of contemporary art on the face and backside of their blue-blooded fantasies. This matter of taste actually works for Koons in a way 10 million tourists would never imagine: it gives the exhibition the de rigueur subversive element it totally lacks and yet needs to succeed. In fact, there is absolutely nothing even mildly subversive here. And yet where would good contemporary art be without a dash of the indecent? The second so-called polemic involves the supposedly troubling conflict of interests. The tourists don't care about this, but a chattering art class of culture vultures and bitter woodchucks does (kind of). For anyone who doesn't already know, the former French Minister of Culture, M. Aillagon, used to work for François Pinault, the French billionaire who owns six of the Koon's pieces in this exhibition. To quote Louis, the French Gendarme in the film Casa Blanca: "I'm shocked, Rick, shocked to see that there is gambling going on here!" That may not be exact, but who, ladies and gentlemen, in the art market today does not do his or her absolute best to financially valorize his or her investments? Aillagon and Pinault and Larry Gagosian just do it better, that's all. I can think of a lot of artists who, after visiting this exhibition, might go home, take a handful of valium and hide in the back of their closets for a couple of months. Dealers likewise. Because they are playing the same game, and they will never, ever play in this sandbox. So let's not hear the pot call the kettle black. Plus ça change... If you want to get upset about this exhibition, try this: Koons could only sigh "Profound" when asked what he thought about it all. Profound isn't much to go on, but he's right if by it he means that the sublime and the ridiculous co-exist here in king-sized harmony. If the French King hadn't had his head removed by M. Guillotine's invention, he'd have his arm around our artist instead of Larry G. Afterart News attended Larry's dinner for a couple of hundred of his collectors in a restaurant near the Champs Elysees. Here was the contemporary equivalent of the Sun King's court, here were frivolities worthy of Marie Antoinette. Rock stars burning flatbeds of hundred-dollar bills have nothing on the discreet charm of this utter waste.





*Photo AAnews.*

The best we mere mortals can hope for is that Larry, François Pinault, Eli Broad, Dakis Joannou, Edgar de Picciotto, and the rest of them have left enough crumbs behind so that we won't starve to death here on the street, or where art is still being made in the garrets, garages and cellars of Paris. Meantime we wish them all the best in Moscow, where Larry is opening his brand new gallery. Maybe Damien Hirst will come back into the fold if Larry gets him a show in the Kremlin. Richard Dailey

Comments Off

Comments are closed.

