

ONCURATING.org

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Notes on Curating, freely distributed, non-commercial

They Printed It!

Ephemera

Invitation cards, press releases,
inserts and other forms
of artistic (self-)marketing

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Part I

Editorial

Maja Wismer

This issue of *OnCurating* is dedicated to artistic ephemera on the occasion of the exhibition project *They Printed It! Invitation cards, press releases, inserts and other forms of artistic (self-)marketing* at Kunsthalle Zurich (21 November 2015 – 7 February 2016). Along with the presentation at the Kunsthalle, which will change on a weekly basis, the project also includes seminars for university students in Zurich, a blog, and a public workshop with international participants. The first part of this issue aims to contextualize the broad category of ephemera, including the invitations, press releases, and magazine advertisements mentioned in the title, and to reflect the numerous voices of the participants in the project. The dominant format of the texts presented here is the conversation. The second part of this issue is introduced by Dorothee Richter, and it consists of a project on (self-) advertisement by contemporary artists. The project was conceived and developed by students of the Postgraduate Programme in Curating at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK). During the period of the exhibition *They Printed It!*, the visitors have the opportunity to print out these „(self-) advertisements“ in the exhibition space, and now the current readers of this issue can benefit from their digital format and explore them as the advertisement part of the journal in the printed version.

Ephemera, aside from their common trait as media of communication produced to be distributed at a specific moment in time, are a nebulous category that is defined differently depending on one's point of view. Historically, with the exception of Dada, Surrealism, and the "father" of Western contemporary art, Marcel Duchamp, ephemera became increasingly relevant after the Second World War as ambivalent products (part means of communication, part art) of artistic activities. At this time, as Clemens Krümmel wrote, the "Harpo Marx model, which presents a modern author who knows the rules of the game and thus above all creates chaos," had become established among contemporary artists who also worked outside of the studio or didn't have a studio in the first place.¹ Most of these ephemera were printed items that were conceived as (self-)marketing materials to be circulated—if not by mail, then by other means—and that in some cases revealed production contexts, played with areas of responsibility, and maintained networks by naming other participants (curators, sponsors, lenders, etc.) in addition to the artists themselves. Self-reflexive action in the public arena carries the same weight of credibility as the symbolic capital of an institution, a publisher, a gallery, or a private collection in the context of which something takes place. In general, implicitly or explicitly, such ephemera comment on the art world or the economic system in which artists necessarily participate if they have decided on a career in this field. In her review of the exhibition *The Design Show* curated by Jean-Noël Herlin in 1993, Roberta Smith wrote: "Invitations are style statements in a minor key, ancillary artworks of a collective sort. Designed by artists, by graphic designers, by art dealers and museum curators—usually a combination of the above—they are the advance guard for the real thing. Their merit is judged in the very act of reading one's mail."²

Thus, when ephemera not only serve to announce an exhibition, for instance, but are also the material evidence of a performance, or the work itself in the sense of conceptual art, their classification becomes unclear, and the categories are blurred. And so it is not surprising that institutional art collections have tended to avoid such materials until recently; after all, it was too much trouble to store them, especially when the respective responsibilities among curators, librarians, and archivists are unclear, not to mention the challenges that exhibiting these documents entails for modern institutions oriented toward autonomous artworks that traditionally require contemplative viewing. In 1983, the director of the Kunstmuseum Krefeld at the time, Gerhard Storck, known for his exhibitions of American conceptual art in the 1970s, remarked with frustration: "You must ask private collectors to show you this art simply due to the fact that its materials require personal care. [...] If this art consists of words, images, or symbols between a few pages of a book, then there must be someone who, after eating, and after washing his hands, opens the book up to these pages."³ Indeed, Storck recognized that those who were opposed to the ideals of as wide a distribution as possible associated with ephemera were private collectors. Today, by contrast, a reflective approach to ephemera is part of the system, which is conscious of the artistic or institutional credibility that is judged based on ephemera. Along with artists who see ephemera as part of their work and reflect on their exhibiting as a form of publication, like the conception of printed materials themselves—at least in regard to the presentation of historical art within institutions—the "institutional and critical neglect of artists' ephemera" noted by Steven Leiber and Todd Alden⁴ is no longer prevalent. On the contrary, it appears as if the legacy of conceptual art, which required transparency with regard to production and distribution as part of the work, has now become established as a curatorial method. In light of the global situation, artworks that are created "cut off" from any societal context can no longer be credibly presented. The earlier in the twentieth or even the nineteenth century that art was created, the more ephemera in the exhibition space take on the role of objects that are trapped in their time and recall a historical situation through their own media of paper, illustrations, and language.⁵

In a discussion, David Senior, who works as a bibliographer in the library of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, remarks on this reorientation of museum exhibitions from the perspective of someone who has been able to discern curators' interest in artists' books and ephemera from the fact that the status of his department within the museum is changing. Rare today is an exhibition that does not reflect the integration of art into its historical time by including ephemera. The question of what the ephemera of the future will look like and whether they will continue to record the details of (art-)historical developments remains to be answered. Senior is convinced that publishing will continue to be a way for artists to present their works to the public according to their own ideas. Dealing with historical documents is one part of Senior's work. Searching for an approach to archiving that is relevant to the present with what is currently an overwhelming amount of digital ephemera in circulation is another. Printing a screenshot and placing it in a folder, as is common practice in most cases, is a strange anachronism that requires an updating of the discourse. In his own curatorial work, most recently for the acclaimed exhibition *Please Come to the Show* (New York, 2013; Liverpool, 2014), he is primarily interested in ephemera that are not only perceived as an artistically interesting product, but furthermore bear traces of their actual circulation. In his daily work with ephemera, Senior is fascinated by the idea that these objects were sent, passed around, and read—in short, that, before they were archived, ephemera had a real life out in the world.

AA Bronson, whose name, along with his work as an artist with General Idea (1967–1994), has been synonymous for twenty years with Printed Matter, Inc.—the shop that is considered by aficionados to be a reference point and meeting place for all kinds of ephemera, artists' books, and zines—speaks about how magazines and multiples were crucial to his beginnings as an artist. The geographic location of Canada in general and the long distances between cities made publishing and sending printed matter almost a necessity in order to stay current with what was happening in other places in the art world. Bronson's remarks offer a vivid illustration that ephemera have a life "outside." By sending printed matter by mail, especially with *FILE* magazine by General Idea as well as the shop Art Metropole in Toronto, Bronson and his fellow artists established an incredibly efficient and far-reaching pre-digital network on which they successfully built their international careers.

The art historian Barbara Preisig, who wrote her dissertation on ephemera of American conceptual art from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s, is interested in these network strategies from a historical point of view. Her study focuses on the artistic practices of Eleanor Antin, Robert Barry, Daniel Buren, Dan Graham, Adrian Piper, and Yoko Ono. She sees the period's artistic concepts of self-marketing as on the one hand closely linked to concepts of advertising that emerged at the same time, like those that were developed and sold on Madison Avenue in New York, and on the other hand as precursors for the demands of the contemporary, post-capitalist world of work that dominates all of our jobs. Her specific interest in ephemera is based on the fact that they are usually used for self-marketing and can occasionally also be art—that is, on the ambivalence that makes these products difficult to classify and has only recently made them attractive objects for institutions.

The reprint of a text from 2001 by Anne Mœglin-Delcroix, a French art historian and expert on printed matter and artists' books, presents a wide range of artistic uses of printed matter. "Art for the Occasion," the title of her text, which appeared at the time in the standard work on the subject, *Extra Art: A Survey of Artists' Ephemera, 1960–1999*, emphasizes the time-dependent quality of ephemera, the element that unites historically, geographically, and discursively different positions. Mœglin-Delcroix's text attests to her French background—an indication that the reception of ephemera in daily life depends on what mailing lists one belongs to, what exhibitions one sees, and what magazines one reads. Her text from nearly fifteen years ago shows that, even though there is currently a great deal of interest in printed matter and everything that circulates under the name of ephemera, this discussion ties in with a previous one. The current situation differs in that, in view of what is largely a continuation of these artistic concepts, the medium of print still exists, but presumably assumes a different role. After all, today communication takes place digitally, even though our perception is still influenced by which e-mail lists we belong to and what Twitter accounts we follow.

In the conversation "Unraveling the Exhibits," the curator and director of Kunsthalle Zurich Daniel Baumann, the artist Marianne Mueller, and the critic and curator Martin Jäggi talk about the reasons and impetus for the exhibition project *They Printed It! Invitation cards, press releases, inserts and other forms of artistic (self-) marketing*. The foundation of the show is the curator's collection—a relatively uncommon situation for institutional art exhibitions. This collection, as is typical of ephemera, is closely linked with his biography and at first took shape almost incidentally; since the mid-1990s Baumann has increased his collecting with regard to artistic strategies of dealing with institutional demands. Based on a series of examples, Baumann, Mueller, and Jäggi discuss artistic influences on institutional printed matter; they remark on an affinity among Swiss institutions for ambitious design,

and they analyze invitations and their digital formats as those places in art where power struggles between various players and interest groups become visible.

Notes

1 Clemens Krümmel, "Der Tod des Autors (Spoilers!), Dokumentation, und 'Deleted Scenes'," Helmut Draxler (ed.), *Shandyismus: Autorschaft als Genre, Secession Wien, Kunsthaus Dresden, Merz Akademie Stuttgart, 2007. Exhibition catalogue*, p. 155.

2 Roberta Smith, 1993. "Art Invitations As Small Scraps Of History, Gallery View," *The New York Times*, May 16. Accessed 26.11.2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/05/16/arts/gallery-view-art-invitations-as-small-scraps-of-history.html>

3 Gerhard Storck, "Wahrnehmung; Aneignung; Darstellung. Die Sammlung Reiner Speck, 1983," Julian Heynen (ed.), *Gerhard Storck. Es besteht ein nicht erklärbarer Zusammenhang*, DuMont, Köln, p. 252.

4 Steven Leiber and Todd Alden, "Extra Art: Surveying Artists' Ephemera, 1960-1999," Pilar Perez (ed.), *Extra Art: A Survey of Artists' Ephemera, 1960-1999*, Smart Art Press: Distributed by RAM Publications, Santa Monica, CA, 2001. Exhibition catalogue, p. 21.

5 This method is also used for older art—for instance, with books. However, the discussion of ephemera is tied to the possibilities of technical reproducibility.

Captions

1 Ghislain Mollet-Viéville's photo spreads and advertisements installed during the launch of the first issue of PROVENCE magazine as part of an exhibition curated by Egija Inzule and Tobias Kaspar at Cafe Hammer, Basel, June 2009.

2 Installation view, *IM FULL OF BYARS. James Lee Byars – A Homage*, Kunstmuseum Bern, 2009, Photo: Kunstmuseum Bern.

3 Clemens Krümmel, *Der Tod des Autors (Spoilers!)*, Vitrine, Helmut Draxler (ed.), *Shandyismus: Autorschaft als Genre, Secession Wien, Kunsthaus Dresden, Merz Akademie Stuttgart, 2007. Exhibition catalogue, 2007*, pp. 150/151.

4 Installation view, *Dwan, Los Angeles / New York: The Ephemera of a Gallery, 1959–1971*, Specific Object, New York, 2001.

5 Hinrich Sachs, *Don't tell me the result - I'm videoing it! Printed matter, Drucksachen, Imprimés*, Salon Verlag, Köln, 1997, pp. 14/15.

6, 7 James Lee Byars, *LETTERSHOW*, Galerie Toni Gerber, 1975, Kunstmuseum Bern, Sammlung Toni Gerber (donation), Inv. Nr. D 1996.674.

8 Installation view, *Posters Hanging in European Collections, 16 novembre – 20 décembre 1989*, Sous-sol, curatorial program, ESAV (HEAD). Photo: Claudio Merlini, Geneva.

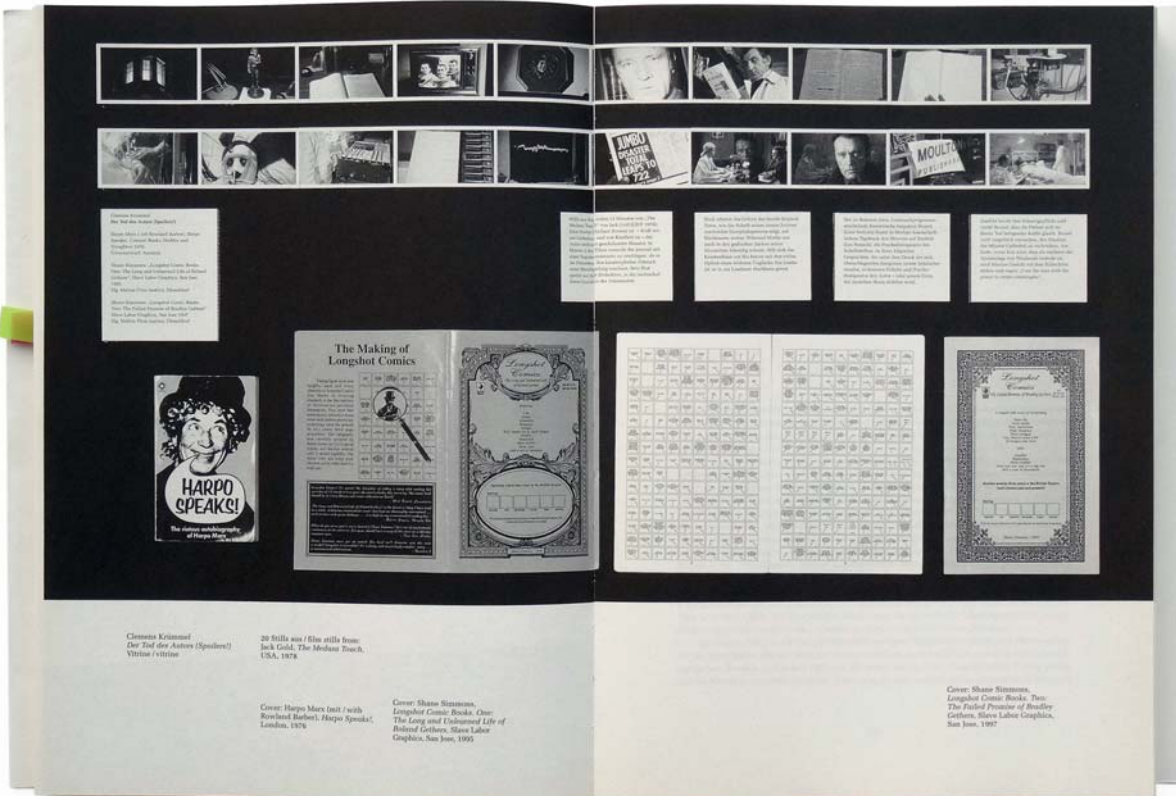
9 Installation view, *Colección Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*, © Photographic Archives Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

10 Installation view, *Please Come to the Show, Part I (1960–1980)*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2013.

11, 12 Installation views, *The Design Show. Exhibition Invitations in the U.S.A. 1940–1992*, Exit Art, The First World, New York, 1993. Photograph: Lamay Photo. Courtesy of the Fales Library at New York University.

13 Installation view, *They Printed It! Invitation cards, press releases, inserts and other forms of artistic (self-)marketing*, Kunsthalle Zurich, 2015.





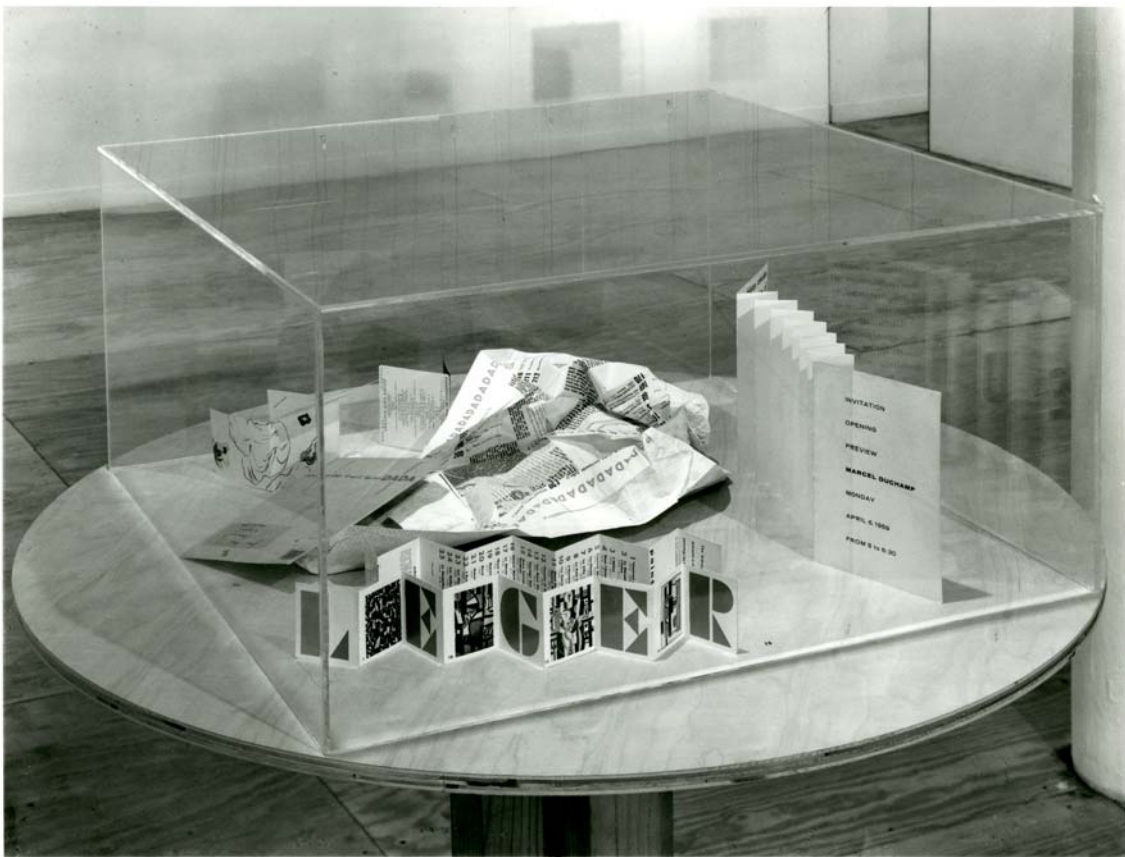
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Maja Wismer is a PhD candidate at the University of Basel, where she is writing a dissertation on the multiples of Joseph Beuys, discussing them as products of 1960s and 1970s West Germany. After studies in Basel and Berlin, she received her MA in art history in 2009. Beginning with her MA thesis on *The Uncanny by Mike Kelley*, her exhibition work and academic research have consistently explored how exhibitions and publications unfold as forms and translate into the public sphere. She has since worked at an international level on a variety of exhibitions and publication projects within the field of contemporary art. From 2012 through 2014, she was Renke B. and Pamela M. Thye Curatorial Fellow at the Harvard Art Museums.

Gabriel Sierra: Before Present

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Building Modern Bodies. The Art of Body- building

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Did Frank O'Hara Go?

David Senior interviewed by Maja Wismer

New York / Basel, October 2015

Maja Wismer: You are a bibliographer at the library of the Museum of Modern Art, one of the leading resources for anyone researching Western art of the 20th century. What does your work consist of?

David Senior: The library is a historical collection with publications that trace the history of modernism, but we also try to keep the collection relevant in the contemporary context. So my job is twofold: to work with the historical collection, and to keep building the collection, especially by working directly with contemporary artists, designers and small publishers that are making innovative new publications.

MW: Does MoMA collect what I call, for lack of a better term, "digital ephemera"? In other words, is an exhibition like your very well-received exhibition *Please Come to the Show*, which you curated in 2013 and which traveled from MoMA to Liverpool, where in 2014 it was on view at the Exhibition Research Centre, still imaginable twenty years from now?

DS: This is a really good question, and I think it's something we're struggling with. So much of what we work with gets transmitted via electronic email invite or even via Facebook, and many archivists and librarians are not quite sure what to do with this material. The current situation creates a heavy dependency on people who know how to manage digital storage and technology, whereas that's not my specialization at all. It makes us rely on external providers of technical support. This often puts a librarian and an archivist in a strange place, in having to speak in a language that they're maybe not trained in. I can, of course, save a PDF of all the invitations I get via email, but where does this ultimately go? What context would be best to save it according to archival standards? Printing something is still sort of the state of the art [in terms of archival best practices], which seems ridiculous. At MoMA,

we work with the libraries of the Brooklyn Art Museum and the Frick, we collaborate on archiving websites to document how a website changes over time, and I could see that being used for artists who use their websites or other sites as their location to speak with an audience, whereas maybe a poster or a card is how they would have done it in the past. But it's still a completely open question to which people have many different answers. I haven't heard one yet that is as simple as putting an invitation card in a folder and putting the folder on a shelf.

MW: And the other way round, I suppose. How can people access these records?

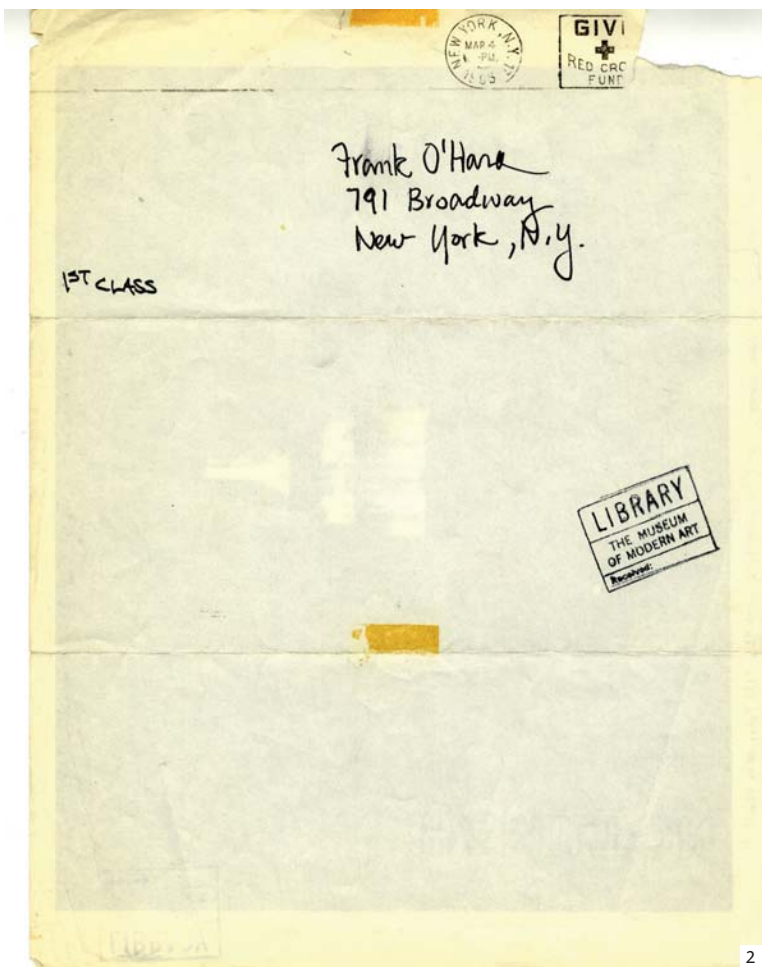
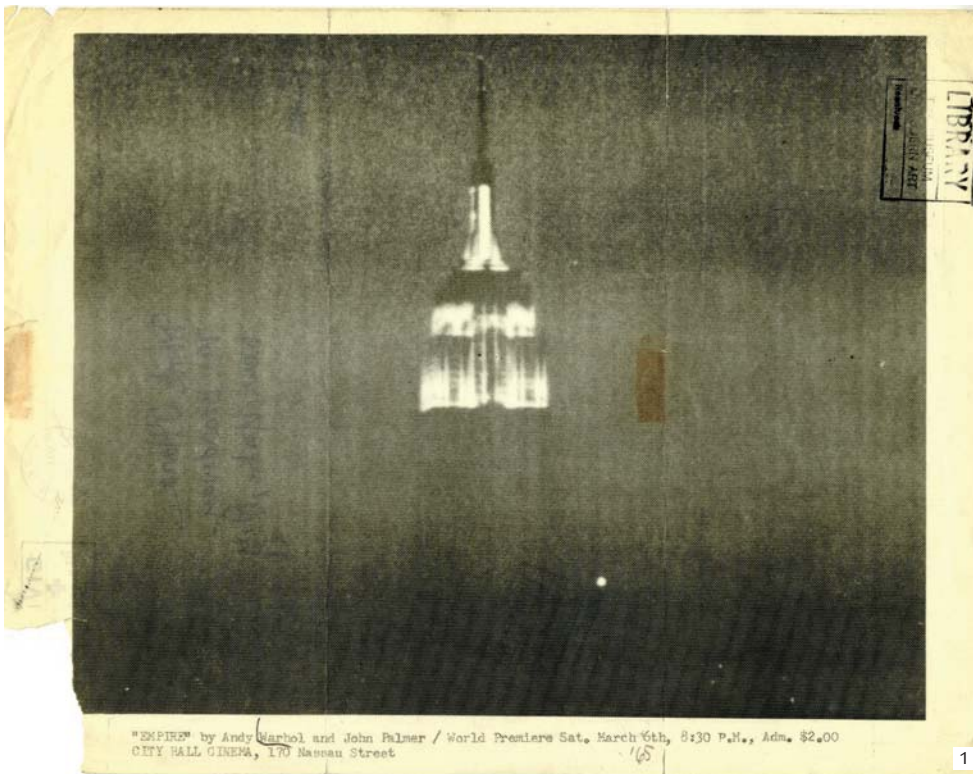
DS: It's interesting to see libraries developing themselves as digital sites that link to other digital sites rather than being a repository where things are kept. This is definitely a paradigm change.

MW: I've noticed it to be a recent trend among bibliographers or librarians to curate exhibitions or programs. Do you agree, and why do you think there might be such a trend?

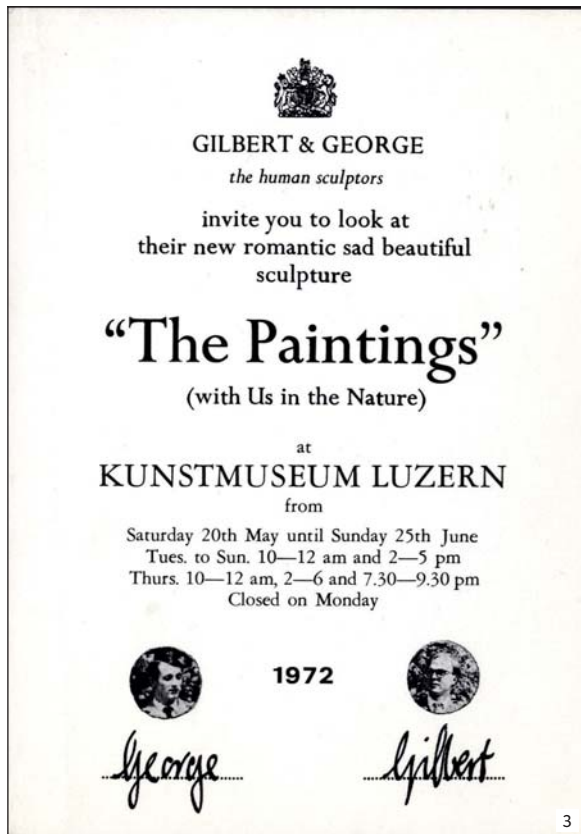
DS: Do you mean with contemporary material or with historical documents?

MW: Either or—it seems that there is this tendency of a profession that traditionally acts rather behind the scenes instead becoming visible. Maybe providing links for an audience is a sort of curation?

DS: I think so. Currently, there is a lot of thinking in the curatorial world about different narratives and about different voices and objects that can tell different stories about an artist's practice or about a setting like an art space or, most importantly, how networks of people communicated across space—like, for example, through something like an avant-garde journal. With a periodical, where a lot of



people were participating, you can show sort of a snapshot of a network, and in terms of curatorial practice this is one strategy to expand a story beyond the white cube. I think this is currently done with things that happened in the 1960s and 1970s, when the locus of the work could be a score or an instruction that was printed and then sent out to, for example, possible performers. In that case, publications and little ephemera objects become a source for curation.



MW: What you just described is what has become a method to thematize contextual information on art through artists' ephemera as documents—I think that this might be a legacy we owe to conceptual art practices. Do you see reasons for the current interest in artists' ephemera other than their status as historical documents?

DS: I think that there is a certain romance with the actual object, with the directness of the medium. Informal printed matter can be employed as an anecdote within a more formal gallery setting—it adds a bit of warmth maybe? From my perspective at least, the informality makes a curatorial concept more approachable and interesting.

MW: Including ephemera in, for example, the presentation of a collection can help to communicate a certain tone of an era.

DS: Tone is a good word. When I was working with the collection here at the museum to prepare the exhibition *Please Come to the Show*, some of the works that were really resonating with me were invitations or posters that had a little note from the artist. We have collections from Lucy Lippard in the ephemera collection, and there was one by the artist David Wojnarowicz to Lucy Lippard very early in his career saying, "I really hope you can make it, David." Knowing that artist's back story and the fact that he died of AIDS at a very young age, or more generally even, that he was a young artist trying to get people's attention, has an emotive quality that is intriguing. The poet Frank O'Hara worked here [MoMA] in the '60s and the invitation to the premiere of Andy Warhol's *Empire* in our collection is addressed to him. The simple idea of that piece of paper arriving in Frank O'Hara's mailbox opens up this imaginary scene that you can play out: Did Frank O'Hara go? Is the address that was written on the back of the card in Warhol's handwriting? Aside from the graphic nature of the things themselves, that's part of it for me: the hands that handled it.

MW: When curating an exhibition, do you think that your approach as a bibliographer differs from the one a curator would take?

DS: Yes. In a very clear-cut way, in that library exhibitions in the museum don't have the same resources as the regular program. So it's kind of like making a scrappy little exhibition within MoMA. We don't have a lot of space, and it's a little separate from the main exhibition building, so it's definitely a space apart. In a way this gives you a lot more independence, and I like that a lot; it has allowed me to do the exhibitions that I've done. But there's also a sense that it's not totally a part of the main agenda of the curatorial program.

MW: I was assuming that recent interest in archival documents has changed the status of your department within the institution.

DS: It definitely has. Nowadays a lot more books, ephemera, and archival documents are appearing in the regular exhibition program, sort of feeding into how the curators are displaying monographic shows. There is, for example, a show right now of early Gilbert & George works that features a

huge amount of library material. There is also presently a show of art from Latin America and Eastern Europe from the 1960s and 1970s that has a lot of library and archive representation. Even in the past, when there have been shows about the Bauhaus or about early abstraction, a significant amount of material was drawn from the library. In these cases, we basically take a support role in the larger exhibition program.

MW: For quite some time, ephemera—which had been left out of major museum collections—are now being integrated. I think we talked about reasons why. Do you think this is a fortunate situation?

DS: It's interesting in terms of these other spheres of influence. One is curatorial interest in specific art historical moments in which these things play a larger role. I think that there's a shifting of the reception of the historical window of the 1960s and 1970s; it is now a sort of a new, canonized era for historical shows. And I think that's part of the reason why it's being recognized that one of the ways to tell this narrative is through printed matter, whether it be Fluxus, or things coming from Seth Siegelaub, or the importance of ephemera and posters in telling the story of the history of performance. What can be shown from the Judson Dance Theatre? There's not much of a moving-image record, so the posters or other programs from these events become even more important and allow a graphic representation of an event that curators are trying to recreate in all sorts of ways. The other sphere is the art market. There are things that have become less accessible for our collection. Like Martin Kippenberger's posters or even some of his books—they are unbelievably expensive and have become part of the curatorial departments' domain.

MW: Since your tenure at MoMA, has an object that was originally kept among your files been recognized as an artwork instead and therefore been moved into another category, and consequently to another department?

DS: Yes. The postcard project by Eleanor Antin, *100 Boots*. We had a copy of it, but the photo department did not. And we had more than one copy, so we gave them a set of that work. That's an example of some sort of a cross-departmental collaboration, of us sharing.

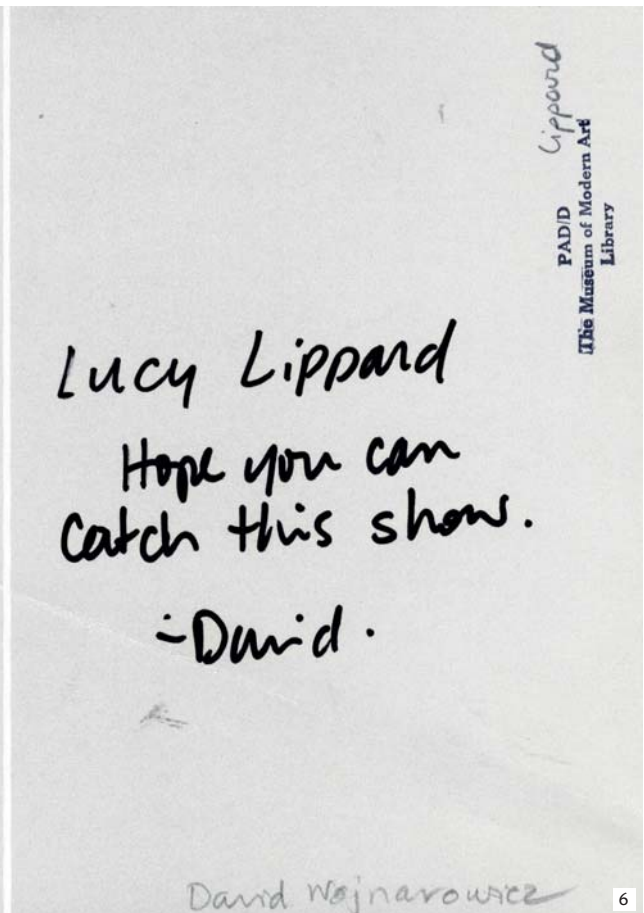
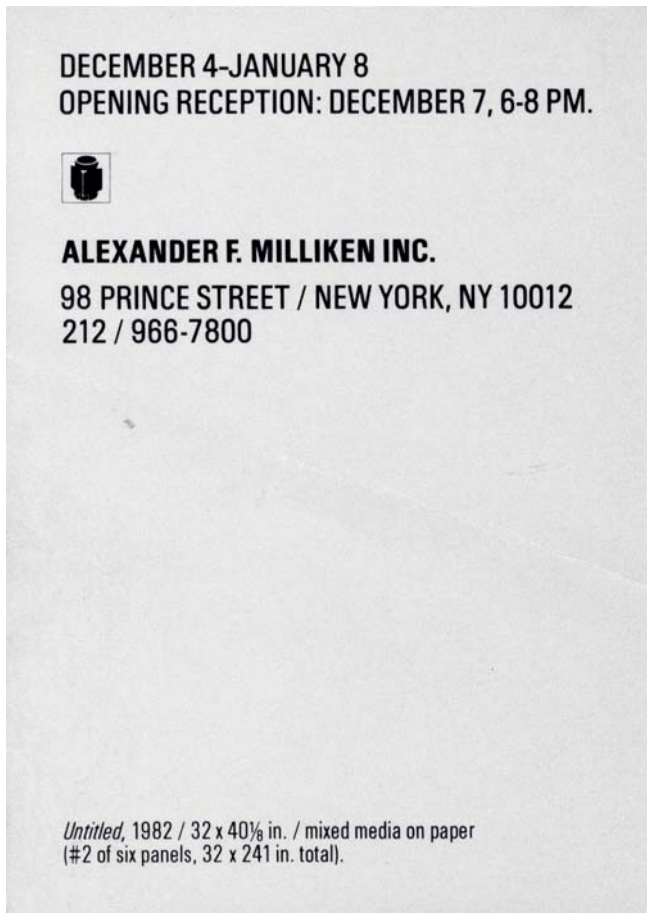
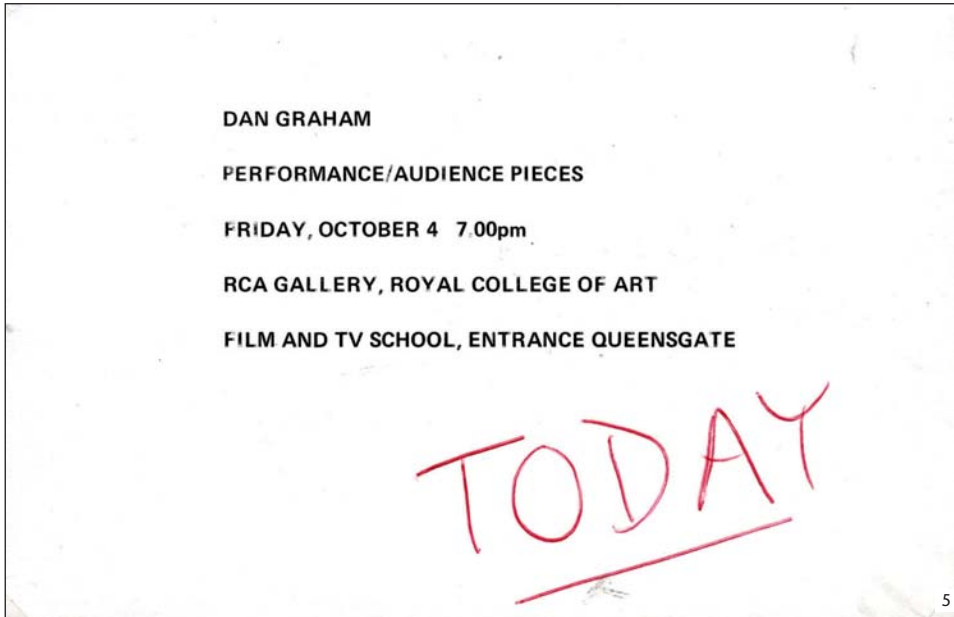


MW: Or have objects just become too valuable according to market value for storage conditions at the library?

DS: Yes, and if things get very fragile, we hand them to another department. At MoMA, the library has very specific overlaps with the Drawings and Prints Department and with Christophe Chérix and David Platzker who are the specialists in this field. But we also have a lot of overlap with the Architecture and Design Department. Especially with regard to posters. Within the museum, the poster has slipped through the cracks of the Prints Department and the Design Department and the library. The Design Department has a huge amount of posters in their collection, but they don't collect in the same way as we do. They collect individual works rather than, like us, simply getting things from galleries and, as they arrive, putting them in folders.

MW: Do you have to accept everything that comes into the library? Do you select? Might this be another differentiation between your job and that of a curator?

DS: We don't have an infinite budget, and we don't have infinite space. So some choices have to be made. But I definitely differentiate what I do from curating. At the New York Art Book Fair, for exam-



ple, the work of a huge variety of people is shown, and it is my job to acquire a representation of the spectrum. I think that's the difference, to collect in a way that represents what is being produced now, while also having some relation to things that already exist within the curatorial departments and that lie within the scope of the museum itself. And we collect what comes in [as gifts or exchanges from other institutions and galleries]: anything from exhibition catalogues and monographs to gallery publications and artists' books and invitations. Strangely this has become a larger volume now than even ten years ago, which seems counterintuitive...

MW: Could that be due to the fact that MoMA's library has become visible as an acting department with a public visibility?

DS: We definitely think of what we do [with library exhibitions and the digital presence] as part of our outreach to get people to know that we're here. The agenda of my colleagues here is that the library only makes sense if researchers are using it. So there's always an idea that what we do helps make us relevant to people not just in New York but also to an international audience.

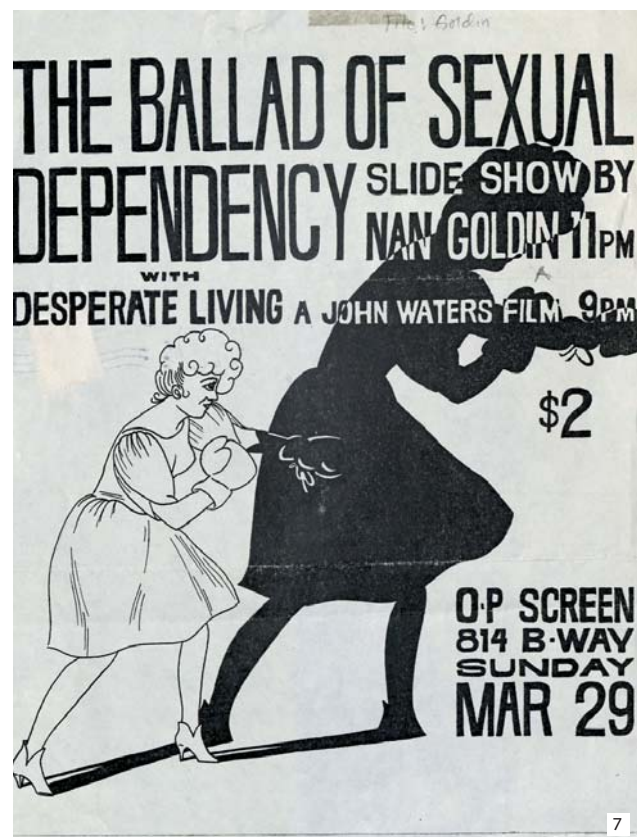
MW: You also serve on the board of the publishing initiative Primary Information. What's your relationship to the printed document apart from a certain nostalgia?

DS: Primary Information is going through a record of books that were relevant to the history of conceptual art or the history of artists' books. They find titles that had been out of print and are seeking to make them available and to distribute them at an accessible price rather than treating them like rare scarce things. Their motive is to realign them with the original intention: to circulate an object cheaply.

MW: Their website is indeed a very generous resource. On the one side, there is this struggle with what to collect from contemporary production—we talked about the unsolved archiving questions—and on the other side, it seems to me that the real asset of digital possibilities within the field of ephemera seems to be the possibility of bringing the documents to desktops all over.

DS: I think there's no idea that's replacing the original document. But yes, it's allowing us to circulate in a different way. I started a Tumblr page for the museum library and just put things up that were

newly acquired or things I chose from the collection. This page became very well followed, and it became very clear that these things are of interest to someone somewhere. Our Tumblr site now has 250,000 followers. It wasn't a project that was branded or advertised, it was just a person at his computer in the library putting stuff up and hoping that he wouldn't get in trouble. It's interesting how minor gestures like this one can exist in this space and become a part of what we do and how we communicate with the world. The paradoxical situation that this printed information has another life in digital frameworks, being reblogged and shared, is really interesting, especially with the invitation cards and posters whose primary intent was to be just passed around.

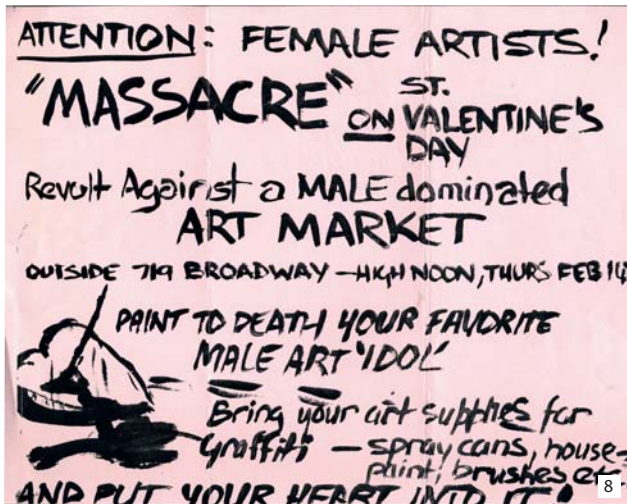


MW: This is something that occurred to me -, most of these objects have been distributed into the wider world through the mail. But then they become part of MoMA's collection, so does MoMA hold the copyright?

DS: That's another way to differentiate the library from curatorial collections: when researchers come, they can take scans of all the books and documents and it's up to the researchers to figure out a way to publish them. I'm really interested in this second life of our materials,, especially to initiatives

like Primary Information who often scan our material and find ways of republishing it. Meanwhile, museums are trying to figure out how to maintain their ownership of images of objects in their collections.

MW: As a last question—MoMA does write history, what is shown there is considered to be of relevance. Is this statement applicable to the realm of artists' ephemera as well?



DS: There was a director here, Clive Phillpot, who was interested and connected to artists who publish, first in London and then in New York in the 1970s and 1980s. He was working alongside people that were making things and organizations that were helping distribute them, like Printed Matter in New York. I think that Clive definitely helped construct a narrative of how artists' publications were discussed and established a terminology used to identify things within that genre. In the current context, however, I think that a new terminology needs to be defined and thought about. It seems to me that in terms of the current tendency of artists' publishing, the engagement with graphic design is different and a more complex matrix. It's more about designers and artists joining for a collaborative experience. We're trying to document this tendency. This connects to how, in previous times, marginal things would have been collected at the library prior to curatorial departments thinking about these artists or designers. Often these works could enter the museum through the library first. And I think when I engage with younger artists now, there's an ease with which I can collect things in comparison to the procedure of how a younger artist's work would be considered for the collection. This is particularly true for artists that make books and use them in a way to produce



works, or to have first interactions with a public. The printed page is still another kind of alternative space for artists who are disinclined to engage directly with a gallery market, or just want to create a space completely on their own terms.

Captions

- 1,2 Andy Warhol and John Palmer, *Empire*, front and back of a flyer for the first screening, New York, 1965.
- 3 Gilbert & George, *The Paintings (with Us in the Nature)*, Lucerne, Switzerland: Kunstmuseum Luzern, 1972.
- 4 Flyer for *Artists for Survival*. New York: ABC No Rio, 1980.
- 5 Dan Graham, *Performance/ Audience Pieces*, London: Royal College of Art 1974.
- 6 David Wojnarowicz, with inscription to Lucy Lippard, New York: Alexander F. Milliken, 1982.
- 7 Nan Goldin, *Ballad of Sexual Dependency Slide Show*, New York, 1981.
- 8 *Massacre on St. Valentine's Day*, New York: Liberty, Equality and Freedom for Female Artists, 1985.
- 9 Angie Keefer: *An Exhibition*, Portland, Yale Union (YU), 2013.

David Senior is the bibliographer at the Museum of Modern Art Library, where he manages collection development, including the library's artists' books collection. Senior often lectures on the history of artists' publications and contemporary art and design publishing. He also curates exhibitions of MoMA Library materials including: *Ray Johnson Designs*, *Please Come to the Show*, *Millennium Magazines*, *Access to Tools: Publications from the Whole Earth Catalog, 1968–74*. *Please Come to the Show*, a book documenting his exhibition of artists' invitations and show flyers from the MoMA Library, was published by *Occasional Papers* in 2014. His writing has appeared in *Frieze*, *Dot Dot Dot*, *Bulletins of the Serving Library*, *ART PAPERS*, and *C Magazine*. He organizes a regular program of events for the New York Art Book Fair and the L.A. Art Book Fair called the Classroom. Senior edited an artist's book series through *Printed Matter* and the NYABF from 2008-2014, which included publications with Dexter Sinister, David Horvitz, Emily Roysdon, Aaron Flint Jamison, James Hoff, and Eve Fowler. He serves on the board of directors of *Primary Information* and *Yale Union*.

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Conceptual art

MoMA Library
Franklin Furnace

AUG 07 1995

Artist File

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THE MUSEUM OF
MODERN ART
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MOMA
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FILE

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Please Come to the Show

LIBRARY
THE MUSEUM OF
MODERN ART

The Museum of Modern Art Library

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MOMA
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*Study
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Edited by
David Senior

WOMEN

ARTISTS

music + art

SUBJECT
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ARTIST
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Illustration

The King of Zines: AA Bronson's Reflections on Artists' Books and the Shifting Nature of Self-Publishing Culture. Interviewed by Michael Birchall

Berlin, October 2015

Michael Birchall: How did you become interested in printed matter as a practitioner, and how has this become an integral part of your work, both as a solo artist and with the collective General Idea?



AA Bronson: I can't remember when I wasn't interested, frankly. From the time I was young, I used to raid the local library, and my bed always had heaps of books around it. I've always been a book and paper kind of guy. When I was in university, in the mid-'60s, I was approached by the student newspaper about designing a monthly insert. It was an arts and culture insert, and the editor had an idea about updating it; we turned it into something more psychedelic in nature. That was my earliest direct involvement in making printed matter.

I dropped out of university in 1967 to start a commune, a free school, and a free store with a group of people in Winnipeg, Canada. We began an underground newspaper called *The Loving Couch Press*.¹ I didn't design all the issues, but I co-edited and designed about four or five of them. That was my second real publishing project. At the same time, together with Clive Russell from the commune, we began publishing *The Magazine*.² We only published two issues—and that was very artsy-fartsy, printed-pieces-in-an-envelope kind of thing—one on the theme of radical education and the other on the theme of networks.

So I was already well involved in independent publishing before; together with Felix Partz and Jorge Zontal we started up *General Idea* in 1969. I think Canadians relate to magazines, and especially did back then, because Canada is such a big spread out country with so few people. 90% of the population live within one hundred miles of the U.S. border. Our relationship to the art world back then was entirely second-hand, mostly through print media, magazines, and newspapers; TV wasn't so predominant. *Artforum* featured very largely in 1969 in the first days of *General Idea*, and also a number of other magazines. There was a British one, I can't recall the name. For each issue they offered you a multiple, and one of the issues was the Joseph Beuys "Intuition Box" (1968). We sent away for the multiple and it was an unlimited edition, and they returned the money and said it was sold out. Beuys later made more. That marked our first interest in editions. We

began to look into Beuys and his philosophy around the production of low-cost publications, and his Free University. I think that is where the biggest influences came from in relation to publishing. We made a decision then, at that point in 1969–70, that we would produce as many low-cost multiples and publications as we could possibly do, every year that we were together. We were together twenty-five years and we published more than 300 low-cost editions.



MB: Was that a conscious decision to develop General Idea as a publishing press?

AB: Already by 1971 it was clear we had a big local audience. None of them were people with money. We knew we had to relate to the world more like the Coach House Press, more like an independent publisher, rather than the way that a painter would. Our audience might be able to afford a book but not a painting.

In fact, I was an apprentice at Coach House Press when I first arrived in Toronto, in 1968. I apprenticed there for two or three years. During the first few years of General Idea, I was working there. I learned to do letterpress, to set type, and a lot about the design of books and manipulation of negatives. Coach House was very clever with how they used old-fashioned materials. They started at a time when printers were switching to offset printing and throwing away their old equipment. It was all rescued from the garbage—old-fashioned, but with a modern '60s sensibility. I learned a lot there.

MB: Where did the idea come from to start publishing?

AB: At the end of the '60s, we used “quick copy” a lot—it was a little like a photocopy would be now—a form of offset with a paper negative instead

of a metal negative. We took to publishing like ducks to water. Maybe when it started to change shape was in 1979–80, when we did the Boutique from the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavillion (1980). We started making multiples that were props for the Boutique, and also became illustrations for the cocktail book (*The Cocktail Book* from the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavillion, 1980). We made sets of editions that together told a story, and in themselves were a work.

MB: At that time you started producing *FILE* magazine?

AB: *FILE*³ started in 1972, so quite early. *FILE* came out of my experience of publishing underground newspapers. I realized if you just put a glossy cover on a newspaper then it looked like a magazine, and Web offset material was extraordinarily cheap. We began *FILE* out of disgust with Arts Canada.⁴ The editor, Ann Brodsky, had asked us to do something on our performance *The 1971 Miss General Idea Pageant* at the Art Gallery of Ontario. She asked us to do the layout and everything ourselves, to make it an artists' project. In typical General Idea style, we did a parody of Arts Canada. It was identical to the rest of their magazine, and she was not happy about that, so she didn't run it. We were so pissed off, so we thought we should start our own magazine, because Arts Canada was not representing our generation, or the kinds of things that we knew were going on across the country and elsewhere. So, in 1972 we started *FILE* Magazine. It was an early example of new kind of visual magazines. A flood of these magazines followed—not only in Canada, but also internationally.

MB: Do you think there was a particular moment, a proliferation of publishing, not just in North America but also in Europe?

AB: Yes. It kind of starts in the '60s, and I think it begins with the underground newspapers, and spreads out from there. The underground newspapers mostly represented people in their early twenties, and as they got older their publishing activity began to change and morph.

By 1974, we had enormous success with *FILE*. We sent the first issue free of charge to everyone we could think of in the whole world who we wanted to see it. Which was a lot of research, pre-web days. And that spawned an almost instantaneous network.

MB: Who did you send it to?



AB: For example, Joseph Beuys and Andy Warhol. We sent it to every person on the masthead of Warhol's *Interview*,⁵ which at that time was a newspaper. We found clusters of people: many artists who we were in touch with, like Gilbert & George in London. We sent off hundreds of copies all over the world. *FILE* never really took off in Canada, it was mostly overseas. Canadians seemed less interested. It did especially well in New York. We could sell more copies in one store in New York than we could in all of Canada.

MB: Did *FILE* influence you to open Art Metropole?

AB: One of the things about *FILE* was that it was a kind of communication tool between artists, and it came out of an idea about using the postal network and the whole scene of mail art that was happening at that time. Looking back on it, I see we were all very much involved in the idea of networking in a pre-electronic environment. We were all well versed in Marshall McLuhan and his ideas about the electronic revolution,⁶ and doing it as best we could in our own way. Our distribution became so good that people started sending us their publications; we thought there was a need for a distribution network.

In 1974, we opened Art Metropole, which was intended as a distribution center and archive for independent art publishing, by artists. We were able to use the distribution system from *FILE* and distribute other people's products as well as our own. Very quickly, artists approached us about distributing audio and video as well. And it grew rapidly from there.

Because of our connections, it was easy for us to get publications from Joseph Beuys, Gilbert & George, Sol LeWitt, Lawrence Weiner, or whoever. Two years later Sol LeWitt, Lucy Lippard, and others started a similar organization, Printed Matter, Inc., in New York City.

MB: What else was going on during this period overseas?

AB: In the late '60s, Ulises Carrión opened a bookstore in Amsterdam called Other Books and So. It was half political pamphlets and half artists publishing. He was from Mexico, and Amsterdam was a major center for Latin American artists, most of them escaping various repressive regimes. In Latin America, the majority of artist books were political. The only way you could deal with the political situation as an artist was to publish. You couldn't say anything publicly, but you could make a pamphlet and give it to friends. The same situation existed in Eastern Europe behind the Iron Curtain. In Yugoslavia, Poland, and Hungary a lot of artists were making artists' books; that way they could be politically minded. Other Books and So in Amsterdam provided access to crossovers between art and politics. It was really a phenomenal store.

Then there was Ecart in Geneva, which John Armleder started in about 1971. That was a little bookstore where you could buy books by John and his friends, which they published using a mimeograph machine—he was making little artists' books and pamphlets—and that was another model. Basically he would serve tea, and people would come and look at books and art by him and his friends. John still does that today at Art Basel.

The third model came from Florence, Italy: Zona was an independent gallery started by a group of artists. It still exists now. Maurizio Nannucci organized complex exhibitions in the early '70s that were surveys of independent publishing, mostly art publishing, including historical material. The futurist material was originally published in Florence. Up until 1978–79, you could still buy early futurist publications at the original price there. An American

dealer came through town and bought every single copy, and that was the end of that. But Maurizio's exhibitions were the first to explore independent publishing in the visual arts and the collection he amassed at Zona remains one of the best in the world.



MB: How did you finance your projects?

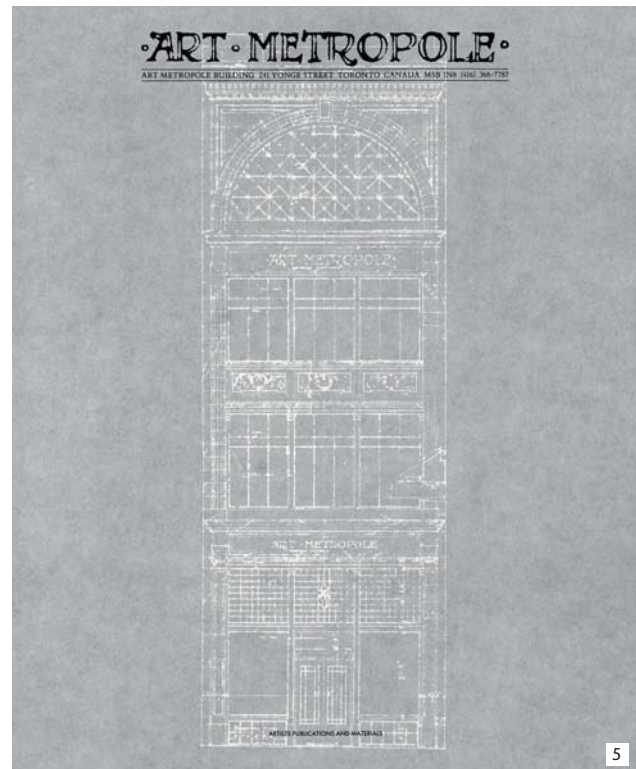
AB: In Canada, the government brought out the Local Initiatives Grant in 1971. The idea was that young unemployed people could propose a project for their community and get materials donated by their community, and the government would pay them a minimum wage for a few months to execute their projects. Mostly this resulted in an awful lot of children's playgrounds using recycled materials. We proposed that our community was non-geographical, that it was located all across Canada, and that what artists needed was communication. They agreed to two rounds of funding before they freaked out at what we were publishing. That grant started *FILE*, and by extension Art Metropole, too.

MB: How did you coordinate the distribution and the projects to all these different places—was it through regular mail?

AB: Yes, via mail, the mail thing began around 1969; we were frankly just bored. There was nothing in the ludicrous little Toronto art world, and it was worse in other parts of Canada; there was nothing to sustain us. Everything came by word of mouth. A lot of what happened, though, came through the Coach House Press, through their publishing network of writers and poets, from California and New York and Vancouver; we met a lot of people through them, people like Allen Ginsberg. The poetry scene was a model for self-publishing, as poets were already self-publishing so freely.

There was a hunger for an exchange of materi-

als and information. The idea of prestige and celebrity hardly existed then; the only celebs in the art world would be Salvador Dalí and Andy Warhol. The idea of being unavailable didn't exist.



MB: How did you connect to other artists in New York at this time?

AB: Warhol and Beuys were two of the first subscribers to *FILE*, and I started delivering it in person to Andy. It was while *Interview* was still a newspaper. I remember Warhol saying to Glenn O'Brien, "You know this glossy cover on this, there's just newspaper inside, look, it looks like a magazine," and the next thing I knew they were putting a color cover on *Interview*.

In 1977, we went to New York for six months to produce a New York issue of *FILE*. By that time, we had dramatically enlarged our circle of friends and acquaintances. We hosted an open house every Sunday—anyone could come. Each Sunday we would invite a new group of people, so we kept widening our ring of contacts.

MB: During these weekend open houses, was there a particular emphasis on the queer community?

AB: Probably it was more than 50% queer, but it was much more mixed up in those days; anybody could show up. We'd rented an apartment across the

street from The Dakota on West 72nd. The '70s was all open-door policy. You could meet anyone with no problem at all. I guess Warhol being shot was the first instance when doors started to close. Even after that he was easy to see, but not how he had been.

MB: Could you say you were a dealer, an artist—how would you distinguish yourself?

AB: I would say that I worked with this group General Idea, that I was an artist. I've never thought of myself as a publisher or as a book dealer, just as an artist. Artist and healer, as I like to say now to make people uncomfortable.



MB: When and why did you move to New York?

AB: We moved in 1986, near the end of *FILE* magazine. We only produced three issues after that. We'd had a big career in Europe before that, we'd had a travelling retrospective, and the reason we moved—beyond having many friends there and loving New York—was that our career in Canada was in hiatus, every major museum had bought a major piece, and they weren't going to buy another for at least ten years; that's how it worked in Canada. At that time, all the curators in Europe were passing through New York, and many artists passed through. It was the one place where you could see everyone, meet anyone, it made a lot sense.

MB: How did you get involved with Printed Matter, Inc.?

AB: We had a strong connection with Printed Matter, Inc. from the beginning because we were sharing materials, selling many of the same things. However, as time went by, due to the AIDS/HIV situation in New York in the mid-'80s, everything

became political. The printed materials and ephemera of all kinds had a utility as well as being kind of trendy in the artists' scene. There was an explosion of printed matter. Douglas Crimp's book⁷ included a lot of printed material, examples of how artists used printed materials. I like to say that is when the West intersected with what had already been happening in Latin America and Eastern Europe.

Once Jorge and Felix were diagnosed with HIV, we went back to Toronto where we still had had our studio. They died in 1994, and I came back to New York five years later with my husband Mark. I was at sea. I wasn't sure what I was doing, how to be an independent artist, didn't want to be; I was still interested in printed materials and editions, and at that moment, Printed Matter invited me to be on their board, in 1998.

And then a lot of things happened, notably 9/11, just after Printed Matter had moved to Chelsea. They weren't eligible for the assistance to arts organizations that was offered to those below 14th Street; if they had moved to Chelsea three months later they would have been in a better state. Business completely stopped and the financial difficulties became extreme. The board asked me to take over the directorship for six months to judge whether I thought the institution could be saved or whether it should be closed.



MB: Until this point you weren't involved in an institution?

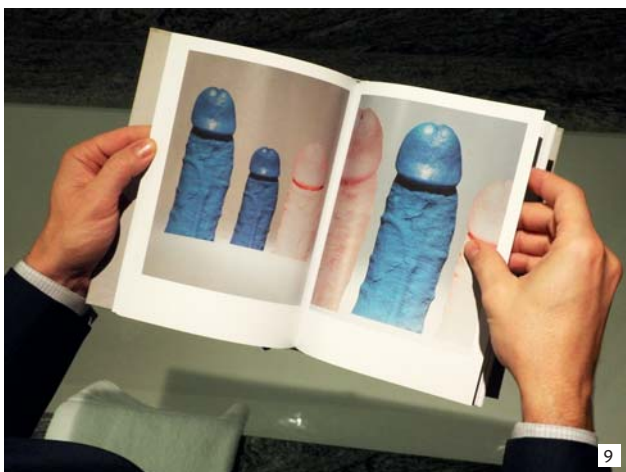
AB: I ran Art Metropole from 1974-1984, and I was the president of the board for a long time after that. I published perhaps thirty books in my time at Art Metropole, and I was still doing all the organizational work around *FILE* magazine until 1989. There was this AIDS hiatus, where all my energy was going into AIDS work, then this happened.

When I started working at Printed Matter, there were essentially two bookstores in one space: "artist books" by known artists, such as Ed Ruscha, etc., were on table tops and in glass cabinets; and on

the vertical shelves were thousands of books packed closely together by artists you probably hadn't heard of. These latter books hardly ever sold. At the same time, the real community of Printed Matter were the artists who were represented on these shelves. That community always wanted something of us, to launch their new zine or publication, to hold an event at Printed Matter, and they were the people who came in the store and kept the place going. Before then, events had been fairly limited. But now we started having events, for a completely different category of artists than had been featured for some time. That's when the place really took off. It wasn't curation; there were very few value judgments. My policy was "If they ask, we say yes." It became much more of a community service, as it had been when it began—much less about curation. I like to say that it was self-curating.



8



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MB: In some way, was this very similar to the model you had established in the 1970s?

AB: Yes, much more horizontal and meant to encourage people who really had no other outlet to reach the world. That was more what Printed Matter,

Inc. had been in the early days as well.

Out of that experience came the idea to start the NY Art Book Fair. We could showcase this kind of hidden publishing, mix it up with various audiences in a more structured way. We could have a section of people like Sternberg Press, medium-sized and small publishers, and another area for more politically minded artists, an area for zines who couldn't afford anything, and they could have their stand for free. And then a few university presses and mainstream publishers to bring in some money. Publishers like Taschen and the university presses could be mixed in in a different way. The NY Art Book Fair was an instant success, with seventy exhibitors and three thousand visitors in the first year, and most recently with some 350 exhibitors and more than 35,000 visitors, most of them in their twenties and thirties.

This turned Printed Matter, Inc. around—gave it a different visibility. It gave us access to suppliers of books as well as to the buyers of books. I think that strategy of saying "yes" is what informed the book fair and led to an enormous audience of young people.



10

MB: In many ways, this is indicative of the wider shifts in art publishing in the current moment?

AB: Independent publishing is proliferating at

an amazing rate. I think it's partly new technologies—this makes it easier and cheaper to publish—digital printing being the most recent as opposed to on-demand printing a few years ago. At Printed Matter's L.A. Art Book Fair this year there were 950 applicants and only 250 stands to give away—that was crazy. And the number of fairs has been growing in a crazy way, too.



MB: What have you been focusing on in the last few years? You made an anthology of queer zines?

AB: I put together an exhibition of queer zines, first shown at the NY Art Book Fair in 2008. I also included it in the *Temptation of AA Bronson* at Witte de Witte in Rotterdam in 2013. For Rotterdam, we re-printed the original publication, with corrections, and added a second volume to bring it up to date, and a box. The design is based on the *Whole Earth Catalogue*⁸, and the *Canadian Whole Earth Cata-*

logue.⁹ It's organized like those books, alphabetically: on the one hand a kind of catalogue raisonné, on the other hand more like a series of book reviews, with sample pages and articles. You just keep going until you've finished. We had three months to put together the original publication, and we began at A and just kept going. It just assembled itself, and arrived the day before the fair. The zines are from the collection of Philip Aarons.¹⁰ We showed queer zines again at Maureen Paley's gallery in London this year. Now it's up in Kunstverein Graz, as part of AA Bronson's *Sacre du Printemps* (2015).



MB: You are an ambassador for queer zines—one could almost call you the "King of Zines"...

AB: It keeps me in touch with the young generation. People contact me, send me a zine they've done, or wanting to meet me. Queer zines fit into my own history of publishing and totally interest me. I'm very curious how artists today are reinventing the form of the queer zine, which itself morphed out of the phenomenon of punk zines. It's interesting to see how the visual language changes as it goes along.

In more recent years, I've moved towards the zine end of things, rather than the more formally published things. Artists' books have become institutionalized. I'm not against that, I just have always been more interested in things that are done on the fly, and are less institutional. Artists are using different technologies; books like this can occur and be printed in a more casual way.

MB: In some way it is also historicizing queer history?

AB: There's a university library in the Ameri-

can Midwest that has an enormous archive of queer zines, but not so art-related; they have many thousands of titles. A lot of people ask why don't we include more women, but we initially had problems finding zines by women. But each time the exhibition is shown, the number of zines by trans and women artists grows dramatically. It's grown quite fast—there's also an interest in the category. For me, it starts with *LTTR* (sometimes called *Lesbians to the Rescue*) and goes from there. Women's zines seem to overlap a lot with trans stuff, especially FTM materials.

I should tell you about my own little publishing house, "Media Guru," which I began in 2004. I publish material that is mostly not very publishable, sometimes by me or my friends and sometimes my collaborations. They tend to be a little transgressive, there's even a video. *PLAID*, my collaboration with Keith Boadwee, is the 13th and most recent issue. So far I think the series is 100% queer, but that might just be a coincidence.



Notes

1 The *Loving Couch Press* was the first underground newspaper AA Bronson produced; it began in Winnipeg, Canada in 1967.

2 The *Magazine* was a collaboration in 1967-1968 in Winnipeg.

3 *FILE Magazine* was founded in 1972 by the Toronto-based artists' group General Idea (A.A. Bronson, Felix Partz and Jorge Zontal). It ran for 26 issues until 1989.

4 Currently known as Canada Council for the Arts.

5 *Interview* is a publication founded by Andy Warhol in 1965.

6 See for example: Quentin Fiore and Marshall McLuhan, *The Medium Is the Massage: An Inventory of Effects*, Bantam Books, New York, 1967.

7 Douglas Crimp, *AIDS Demo Graphics*, Bay Press, Seattle, 1990.

8 *Whole Earth Catalogue* (WEC) was an American counterculture magazine and product catalogue published by Stewart Brand several times a year between 1968 and 1972.

9 The *Canadian Whole Earth Almanac* (Toronto: 1970-1972) followed similar principles to WEC, but with a more idiosyncratic choice of materials. Each issue focused on a single topic: for example, food, shelter, and healing. The organization operated informally as a sister organization to Coach House Press.

10 *LTTR* was a queer art journal started by the feminist genderqueer artist collective of the same name in New York City. They published five issues between 2001 and 2007. See: <http://www.lttr.org/about-lttr>

Captions

1 AA Bronson, *Canticle* issue 9, 1967. (Insert in *The Manitoban*, December 8, 1967, pp 4-5). Offset on newsprint. Image courtesy the artist.

2 AA Bronson and Clive Russell. *The Magazine* no. 2, 1967. Envelope: offset on paper. Contents: Mimeograph and Blueprint on paper. Image courtesy the artist.

3 AA Bronson et al. *The Loving Couch Press* (pictured: cover, image of Yoko Ono), 1968. Offset on newsprint. Image courtesy the artist.

4 *Canadian Whole Earth Almanac*, 1970. Offset on paper. Image courtesy of AA Bronson.

5 General Idea. *Art Metropole Letterhead*, 1974. Offset on onionskin paper. Image courtesy the artist.

6 General Idea. *Getting into the Spirits Cocktail Book: From the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavillion*, 1980. Edition of 900, signed and numbered. Hardcover. Photo by Cathy Busby courtesy AA Bronson.

7 AA Bronson. *Lana* (pictured: covers from three editions, cover of 2009 edition by Richard Prince). 1970-2009. Softcover. Image courtesy the artist.

8 General Idea. *XXX Voto*, 1995. Edition of 900. Hardcover. Published by René Blouin Gallery, Montreal and S.L. Simpson Gallery, Toronto. Photo by Cathy Busby courtesy AA Bronson.

9 Matthias Herrmann. *FH*, 2015. Edition of 550. Hardcover. Published by the Grazer Kunstverein. Image courtesy Matthias Herrmann.

10 General Idea. *FILE Magazine* vol 3 no 4, Fall 1977. Offset on paper. Image courtesy AA Bronson.

11 AA Bronson. *Untitled (Media Guru 12)*, 2015. Digital print on paper. Edition of 50, signed and numbered. Image courtesy the artist.

12 AA Bronson. *Untitled (Media Guru 8)*, 2009. Digital print on paper. Edition of 50, signed and numbered. Image courtesy the artist.

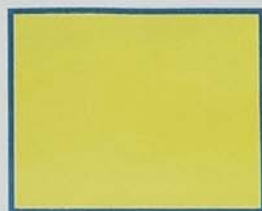
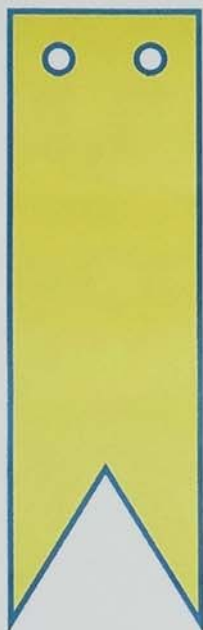
13 AA Bronson, Keith Boadwee and Georg Petermichl. *PLAID*, 2015. Media Guru #13. Digital print on paper. Image courtesy the artist.

14 AA Bronson and Phil Aarons, eds. *Queer Zines* vols 1 (second edition) and 2 (first edition). Offset on paper, boxed, published by Printed Matter Inc. and Witte de With Centre for Contemporary Art, 2014.

AA Bronson lives and works in Berlin. In the sixties, he left university with a group of friends to found a free school, a commune, and an underground newspaper. This led him into an adventure with gestalt therapy, radical education, and independent publishing. In 1969, he formed the artists' group *General Idea* with Felix Partz and Jorge Zontal; for the next twenty-five years they lived and worked together to produce the living artwork of being together, undertaking 119 solo exhibitions, and countless group shows and temporary public art projects. They were known for their magazine *FILE* (1972-1989), their low-cost publications and multiples, and their early involvement in punk, queer theory, and AIDS activism. In 1974, they founded *Art Metropole*, Toronto, a publisher, distributor and archive for artists' books, audio, video, and multiples. From 1987 through 1994, they focused their work on AIDS. Since his partners died in 1994, AA has focused on collaboration and healing. From 2004 to 2010, he was the Director of Printed Matter, Inc., in New York City, founding the annual NY Art Book Fair in 2005, and the LA Art Book Fair in 2013. He founded and directs the Institute for Art, Religion, and Social Justice at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, where he is Honorary Professor of Art, Religion, and Social Justice. He has taught at UCLA, the University of Toronto, and the Yale School of Art. He is an Officer of the Order of Canada (2008), and a Chevalier de l'ordre des arts et des lettres of France (2011). AA Bronson's work—as artist, curator, and educator—is dominated by collaboration and consensus. From his beginnings in a free school and commune, through his twenty-five years as one of the artists of *General Idea*, he has founded and developed collaborative social structures such as *Art Metropole*, the NY Art Book Fair and AA Bronson's School for Young Shamans; through his current collaborations with younger generations, he focuses on alternative distribution systems, on art as publishing, and on living life radically as social sculpture.

Michael G. Birchall is a curator, writer, and PhD candidate in Art, Critique and Social Practice at the University of Wolverhampton, where he is researching the role of the curator as a producer in socially engaged practices. He has held curatorial appointments at The Western Front, Vancouver, Canada, The Banff Centre, Banff, Canada, and Künstlerhaus Stuttgart, Germany. His texts have been published in *Frieze*, *Frieze d/e*, *thisistomorrow*, *C-Magazine*, *Modern Painters*, and various monographs and catalogues. Michael's recent curatorial projects include *Wie geht's dir Stuttgart?/How are you doing Stuttgart?* at Künstlerhaus Stuttgart. Since 2012, he has been lecturing on the Curating Program at the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK), and is co-publisher of the journal *OnCurating*. He lives and works in Berlin.

POSTERS HANGING IN EUROPEAN COLLECTIONS



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16 NOVEMBRE - 20 DECEMBRE 1989

MARDI A VENDREDI DE 16H A 19H

Art for the Occasion

by Anne Mæglin-Delcroix

"Dance cards dropped like flowers that have lost their petals,
a concert program, a list of dinner guests,
all make up a special literature having in itself the immortality of a week or two.
The existence of nothing can be forgotten in an era:
everything belongs to everyone."
Stéphane Mallarmé, *La Dernière Mode*

Could it be that the genealogy of contemporary art goes back further than Marcel Duchamp? In fact, he was the first to recognize in the work of Mallarmé the model, *par excellence*, of a "dry art."¹ "Mallarmé was a great figure. It is in this direction that art should go—towards an intellectual expression rather than an animal expression."² The importance of this late nineteenth-century French poet could thus be wider than the specific influence that *Un coup de dés* had on concrete poetry or on Marcel Broodthaers. It affects the very spirit of contemporary art.

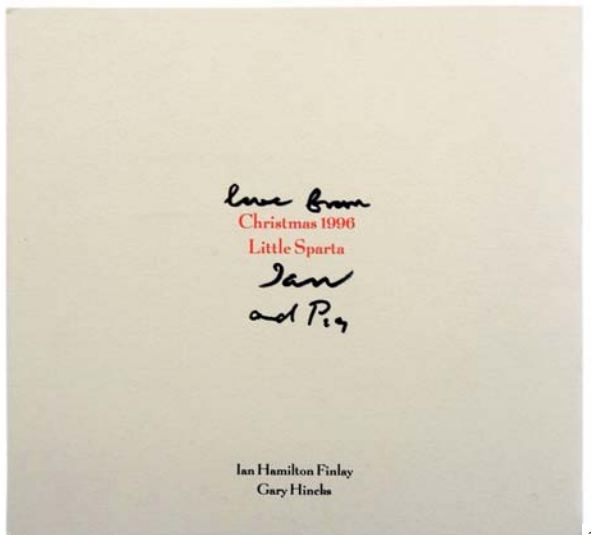
Mallarmé, then, can help us to understand what is involved in artists' ephemera works, at least up to a certain point. If we rely on the Greek etymology, ephemera works should be works that last no more than a day. But if we rely on common usage, they are works made for a specific day or announce what will take place on a given date. Their short life is simply the result of their immediate obsolescence. Over a period of nearly twenty years, from 1881 to 1898, besides his major works, Mallarmé dedicated many very short poems to his friends for different occasions. He turned postal addresses on envelopes into verse, he wrote poetic lines on stones that he picked up on the beach at Honfleur, on bottles of Calvados, and on fans; he created invitations for the launch of a periodical, and he sent little verses to his friends to celebrate all manner of occasions. These verses share two characteristics with artists' ephemera works. On the one hand, they are made for special occasions and the content is specific to a given day; for this reason, they are often modest and unpretentious. On the other hand, they are nevertheless works that make an original artistic contribution to the information they communicate.

In this respect, artists' greeting cards are obviously the closest to Mallarmé's own personal messages: greetings for Christmas or the New Year which, at the same time, are little printed works sent as gifts to friends. The tradition of this type of message is old, even if over the last forty years it has taken very different forms from the traditional little print slipped into an envelope and sent by mail, such as a postcard, a flyer, or a little book made for an occasion, like those that Ian Hamilton Finlay used to send every year to his friends at Christmas with the words, "Christmas 19..," either printed or handwritten.

Since the 1960s, the number of artists' ephemera works has grown considerably, and their nature, as their function, have become increasingly diversified. This phenomenon can be explained by new directions in artistic creation, generated by a general mistrust of the object. One way in which artists translate this mistrust is by emphasizing the importance of time over that of space in the visual arts. The dimension of time then takes on one of two aspects: either the duration of a pro-

cess, or the appointed moment. In both cases, whether it is to record short-lived actions or announce an event to come, it becomes necessary to develop strategies of documentation and information that become integral parts of the artistic activity. Printed paper in all its forms is one means among others, but as an invitation to an artistic event, it is obviously more suitable than video or photography.

This is why, no matter how great their diversity, artists' ephemera works have something in common that distinguishes them from Mallarmé's occasional verses. His poems are a kind of aside, an addition, to his work and are not intrinsically related to it. The only relation is one of contrast: they are doggerel, poetic games, frivolous and unimportant, and they demonstrate the poet's virtuosity in writing little nothings that have no other purpose than to entertain those who receive them. Artists' ephemera works are also part of the realm of the "little" and of the detail, of the secondary and the minor. But, unlike Mallarmé's occasional verses, they rarely stand on their own, and most of them belong to and complement a larger work. In some cases this complement is accessory; in others it is necessary. Even though ephemera works are marginal to the work as a whole, their function is not always marginal. Using a few particularly significant examples, we can demonstrate this.



In the following discussion, the main outline of a typology will be briefly sketched out. We do not intend to be exhaustive, for, even if we tried, we simply could not be since the production takes on so many forms. This attempt at a typology merely aims at isolating several major trends. It is based not on material criteria (filing of documents by types: cards, posters, flyers, etc.), but on criteria of function in relation to the different ways in which ephemera works take hold of the factor of time.

The Announcement and/or the Work

As for the accessory complement, the most common type is that of announcement cards that are for the most part invitations to an exhibition and on which is found all the relevant information about it. Since the 1960s, the artist has often been the author, for during a period when there was an increasingly widespread claim to freedom in all areas, the artist also sought to control the manner in

which his work was presented and in particular, the information circulated about it, from announcement cards and posters, to the catalog. Thus, each card becomes, in addition to being a means of information, a work printed for the exhibition. Usually they are simply cards with an image printed recto and practical information on the reverse. But it is the artist who has conceived the content and the design.

Nonetheless, some of these announcement cards are exceptional in the genre. Because of his own and barely readable typography and the unusual presentation (card cut in the shape of a star or a strip of wrinkled paper, for example), the announcement cards of James Lee Byars are probably the most easily identifiable examples of a document that is first of all a work. This is all the more so because, generally, these cards have no information about the exhibition; instead, this is printed on the envelope, which is also conceived by the artist. Visually and conceptually, these announcement cards are thus an introduction to the work exhibited and, depending on the work itself, provide a little fragment of it or an enigmatic introduction to it.



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Nearly all the "bulletins" published by Art & Project in Amsterdam between 1968 and 1989 are in the format of a large sheet of paper folded in half along the vertical axis so that there are four pages; these are then folded in three horizontal sections so that the bulletin can be sent as a letter. On the first page, in addition to the number of the bulletin—thus presenting it as a kind of periodical—is the name of the artist with, where appropriate, the dates of his exhibition. The three other pages are put at the artist's disposal so that he or she can create a work for the occasion and for the format. Several of the issues are particularly remarkable, such as *No. 43*, for which Sol LeWitt simply folded the white paper into squares; or *No. 24*, a non-project by Buren, who decided that this issue would not have a material existence but would be nevertheless numbered in the series. The role of these bulletins thus goes beyond the straightforward announcement of an exhibition. They immediately suggest little moveable works that travel by post or are taken away from the gallery by the visitor. In this way, art and information on art become one. They also make it possible for the artist to reach a much wider public than that of the gallery. But above all, the traditional relation between publication and exhibition is reversed: following a strategy similar to that of the catalogs published by Seth Siegelaub, also as of 1968, the publication becomes more important than the exhibition and sometimes takes its place.

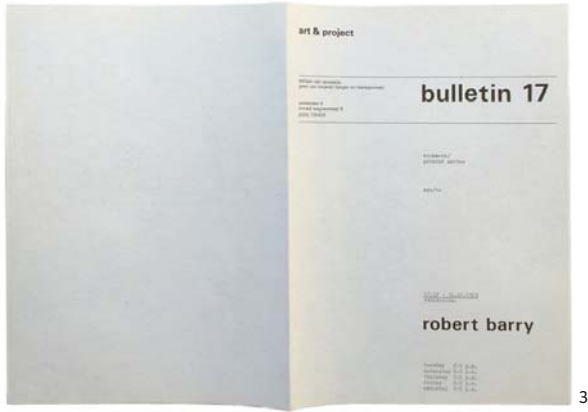
The distinction, then, between the occasional invitation and the occasional work is not always easy to make, particularly in the realm of conceptual art. A series of eight announcement cards (in fact, seven cards and one flyer), conceived by Robert Barry in 1972-1973, is a good example. Together, they make up *Invitation Piece*, a circular path that took place over one year, month to month and gallery to gallery, each gallery announcing "an exhibition by Robert Barry," to be held not in their own gallery but in the next one. "The piece describes a large geographical circuit (the itinerary that I normally take each year to make my exhibitions) and an artistic season, from October to June."³ Artist's ephemera work? Autonomous conceptual work? Both. This piece is in the same vein as works on the invisible which, in 1969, led the artist to send announcement cards where it was stated that the gallery would be closed during the exhibition. One might think that such a series of cards was inviting one to a series of exhibitions which, in the logic of conceptual art, use printed space as an alternative to the physical space of the gallery. The paradox is that, in order to do this, these invitations utilize the invisible network of contemporary art galleries and by so doing, make it visible. The sequence of mailings made it clear that the participating galleries in Europe and the United States were not only offering gallery space, but each gallery became a link in the solidarity of an international organization that is the contemporary art market. In other words, the eight announcement cards are also a fully-fledged work that is both analytical and critical. In this context, the calendar of exhibitions announced—which in fact is vague because only the months are given—proposes no specific occasion but a formal structure: any series of sequential dates could be used to demonstrate this.

The Announcement Before and After

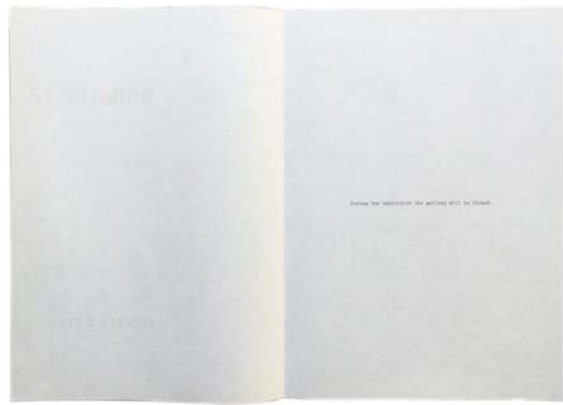
Thus we have touched on those necessary complements that are often ephemera works. It is no longer only a question of announcing an exhibition but, in using this announcement, to make a work exist. Also belonging to this category are all the little printed matter such as flyers, posters, cards, and advertisements in newspapers and magazines, which are all part of the preparation of a project. Among them we find invitations to happenings, such as those of Allan Kaprow, to performances and other actions which could not succeed without the participation of the public invited by the artist and to whom a program, a score, or instructions are sometimes given. These invitations function like announcement cards for an exhibition except that, without them, the event could not take place: the announcement is not separate from the project and is an essential condition to its realization.

In recent art there have been real citywide publicity campaigns that have taken the place of the mailings, common in the 1960s and 1970s, to a selected audience that was often limited to professional networks. There have been posters stuck up on city billboards or announcements published in the major local daily newspapers that invite a public outside the art world to participate, for example, in lecture-demonstrations by Matthieu Laurette. Thus, we read that on such and such a date and in such and such a place, the artist will explain "how to make refunded purchases" in department stores. In this case, posters and advertisements in newspapers or flyers are not only the means necessary to the realization of the work, but also, they are the only documentation that records it. The announcement is at the same time the archive of the event.

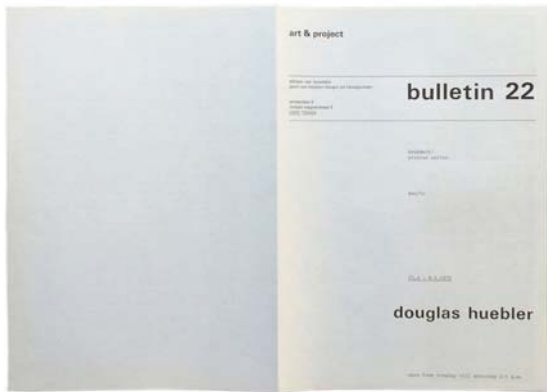
When the action is private it does not require any announcement or advertising in order to be realized. Only documents that record it are necessary. The artist no longer needs to invite anyone to an appointed time and place but only to certify that the action took place. Without a publication, it would remain known only to those who participated and would have no artistic existence. When actions are being documented, photographs or video recordings are invaluable; however,



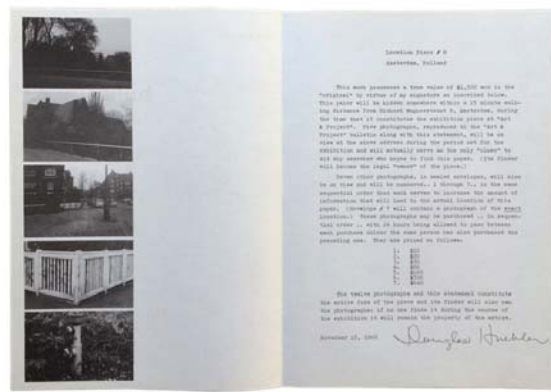
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the objection to them is that they transform into images what was an experience, and into a permanent object what was of the moment. But the little cards announcing the walks taken by Christian Boltanski, Jean Le Gac, and Paul-Armand Gette in 1970 and 1971, sent after each walk to around one hundred addresses, say simply that a walk had taken place in such and such a month and to such and such a place, and it carries a number in the series. In announcing the action, these little cards make it public but without illustrating it. They play the role of a certificate or a registration.

Similar to Laurette's publicity flyers, these cards-certificates reveal the conceptual significance of an art that cannot be separated from information, whether the latter is prior to or follows the action. In both, the documents are in any case the only visible form of the event or the action and, as a result, the only possible form of the exhibition of the work. We could, then, rightly call them primary documents.

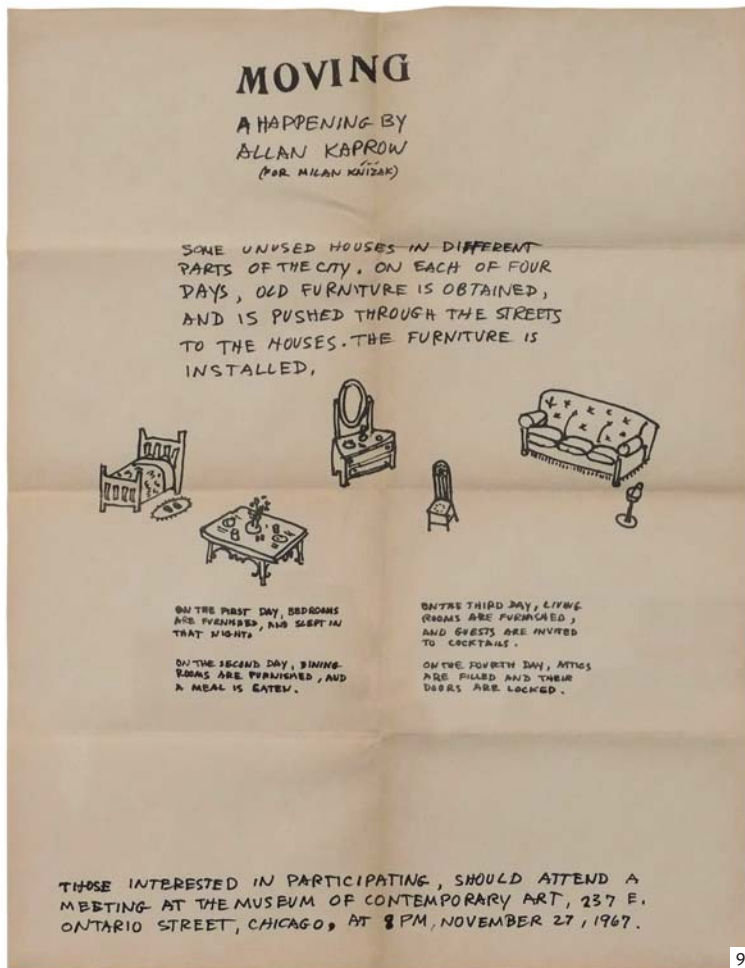
The Announcement and the Relic

Different from the document of a past action that proves after the fact that it once took place and retains, abstractly but absolutely, its memory, the relic is a material vestige that remains from what once existed but has now disappeared. It is a real part of what was. That is why it is a concrete but fragile memory. To this category belong the remains of actions like, for example, bits of paper used by Byars during certain performances, or the stickers, "Caution Art Corrupts," which Jochen Gerz stuck up in public places in 1968, especially in Florence and in Basel, at the time of his first street actions. To this same category also belong the remains of environments as, for example, all the little printed matter added by Martine Aballéa to her sets to enliven the atmosphere, which visitors could take away: publicity cards, beverage coasters, notepads, coupons, stationery, and so on.

It is worth discussing in a bit more detail a case that is more complex—that of an ephemera work that brings together both the announcement and the relic. This is the series of announcement posters by Daniel Buren for his five exhibitions at the gallery Wide Wide Space in Antwerp as of 1969. The posters were printed on both sides, the one with striped bands and the other carrying the practical information about the exhibition. They were folded in the format of a large envelope. From one exhibition to another, the only changes were—other than the obvious correction of dates—the color of the stripes, the choice of which the artist left to the gallery owner, Anny De Decker. But the most interesting point is that Buren used the announcement poster as the element of construction of his work *in situ*: he glued the posters edge to edge in the space of the gallery, each time in different places. The information on the work as announced became the primary material of the work itself. The announcement poster became the key element of the exhibition from three points of view: that of the material, that of the form, and that of the significance of the work exhibited. As a result, the sequence of exhibitions can appear in retrospect as so many variations generated by the original announcement poster. Each one can be considered not only as a fragment of the work or of the exhibition, but as its basic module. It thus becomes the very condition of the exhibition. Reversing the normal relation of the invitation as secondary to the exhibition and of the exhibition as secondary to the work, here the invitation is primary, that which makes possible both the work and the exhibition. But once the work *in situ* is taken down, the invitation now becomes its last relic.

Whether it is an accessory or a necessary complement, whether it is a secondary or primary document, whether it comes before or after, or is part of some-

thing that took place on a given date, the ephemera work takes up a challenge: to archive the ephemeral, and in so doing, to inscribe the moment in duration. It doesn't prevent what is temporary from disappearing, but it does prevent it from disappearing from memory. Just as the meaning of the word "monument" was understood in the Renaissance to be a written document, so the ephemera work can be said to be a fragile monument that retains and transmits what takes place only once.



Works for Occasions

As we have seen, ephemera works depend on works made for an occasion that they announce or record or of which they are a relic. Yet, they may also be sufficient unto themselves. Then they are independent works but whose existence, that is, their publication, either depends on a precise day or is rooted in the present. This present is, by definition, imposed. Yet it happens that the present can be invented. It also happens that it can be denounced.

To this category of works for occasions belong greeting cards, discussed at the beginning, as do works that celebrate a particular event. For example, there is the commemorative stamp designed in 1972 by Joyce Wieland for World Health Day, which does not distinguish itself from the many commemorative stamps published regularly by the post office, except for the fact that it was commissioned from an artist.

There are, however, examples that are more exceptional, such as the publication by Yves Klein dated Sunday, 27 November 1960, or the advertisements by Stephen Kaltenbach published in the advertising section of twelve numbers of *Artforum* in 1968 and 1969. In Klein's publication, the layout of the four pages was based on a tabloid newspaper. All the articles were by the artist and relate to his works, which made it a kind of manifesto. On the first page we find, in particular, the famous photograph of Klein jumping into the void. This single issue was actually sold in newstands on the 27th of November and it was the artist's work for the Avant-Garde Festival of Paris of November to December 1960.

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- 11 h place Caroloux
- 16 h place des Dervallières
- Mercredi 15 octobre**
- 15 h rond-point Abel Durand (dit des «Châtaigniers»), à côté du parking de Carrefour Saint-Herblain.
- 19 h cinéma Concorde
- Judi 16 octobre**
- 8 h place Zola (marché)
- 19 h conférence Maison de quartier des Dervallières
- Vendredi 17 octobre**
16 h place Zola
- Samedi 18 octobre**
- 8 h place des Dervallières (marché)
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* Ce camion délivrera des informations gratuites.

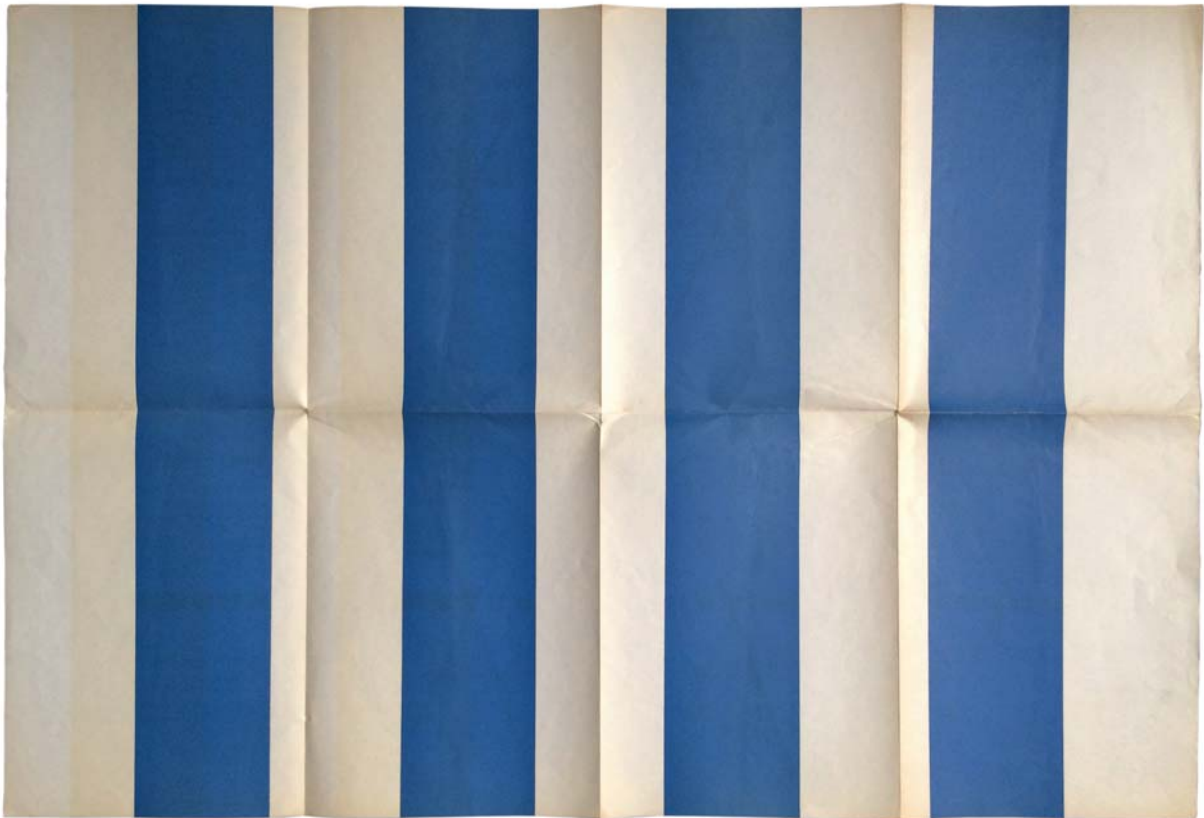
« Comment faire ses achats remboursés ? »
Méthode et conseils pratiques par Matthieu Laurette
Judi 16 octobre, conférence à 19 h, Maison de quartier des Dervallières, 5 rue Auguste-Renoir
Une dégustation de produits aura lieu à l'issue de la conférence

Entrée gratuite

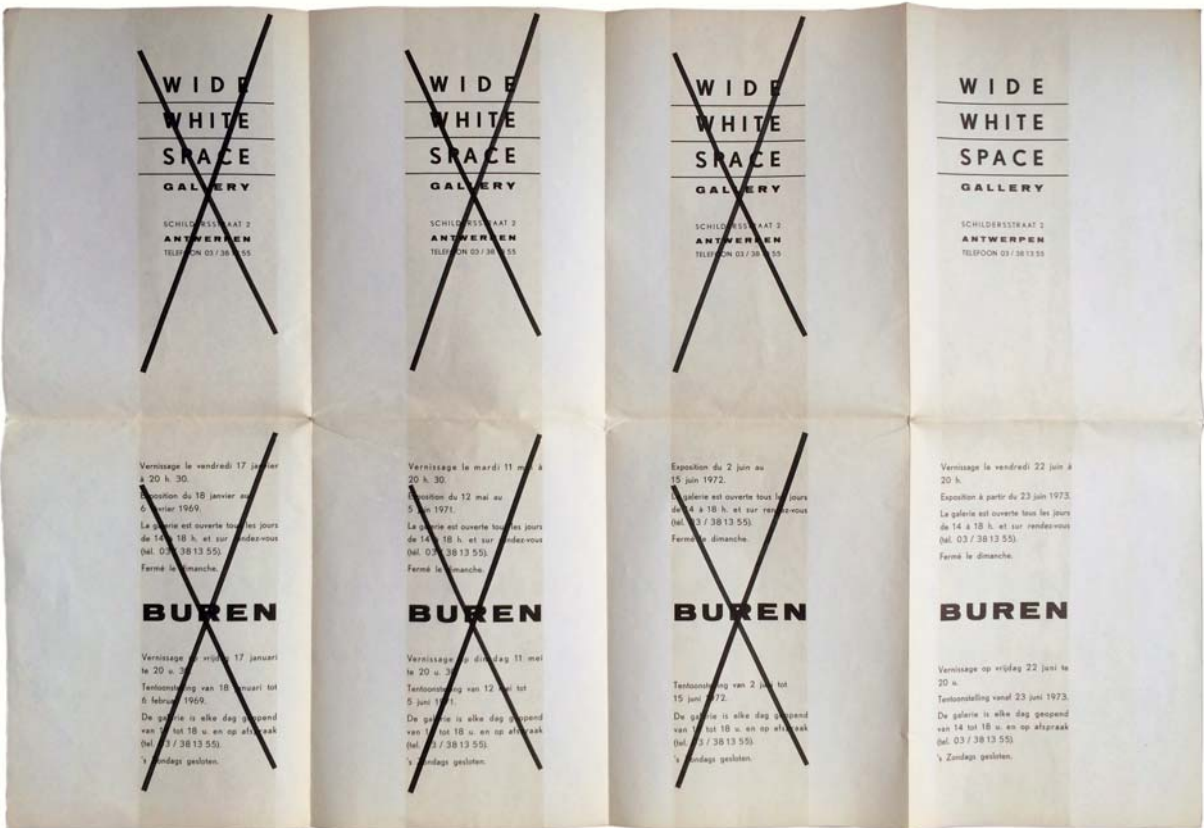
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The Kaltenbach ads are statements, on the contrary, that stand on their own, like, "Art Works," "Tell a lie," "Teach Art," and so on. They had a short life and were soon out of date because they changed each month with each new issue of the art journal. Unlike Klein's publication, they have no sense in relation to any external event, but only within the precise context in which they are published: the advertising pages of an art journal. Placed at the crossroads of art and advertising, Kaltenbach's ads force us to question the possible relationship between an art journal and advertising methods: are not both of them intrinsically part of today's world and similarly committed to the promotion of selected objects?

Although they are rare, there are works for occasions whose occasion is invented. We can cite the amazing case of seven posters conceived by Henri Chopin and Gianni Bertini in 1967 announcing different evening events at a fictive Festival de Fort-Boyard, to be devoted to avant-garde poetry. These posters were stuck up at night near places committed to contemporary art, in particular, the Museum of Modern Art of the City of Paris (Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris). They announced the program for each of the evenings of the festival, to be held during the month of June, and people were invited to come to the fortress of Fort-Boyard,



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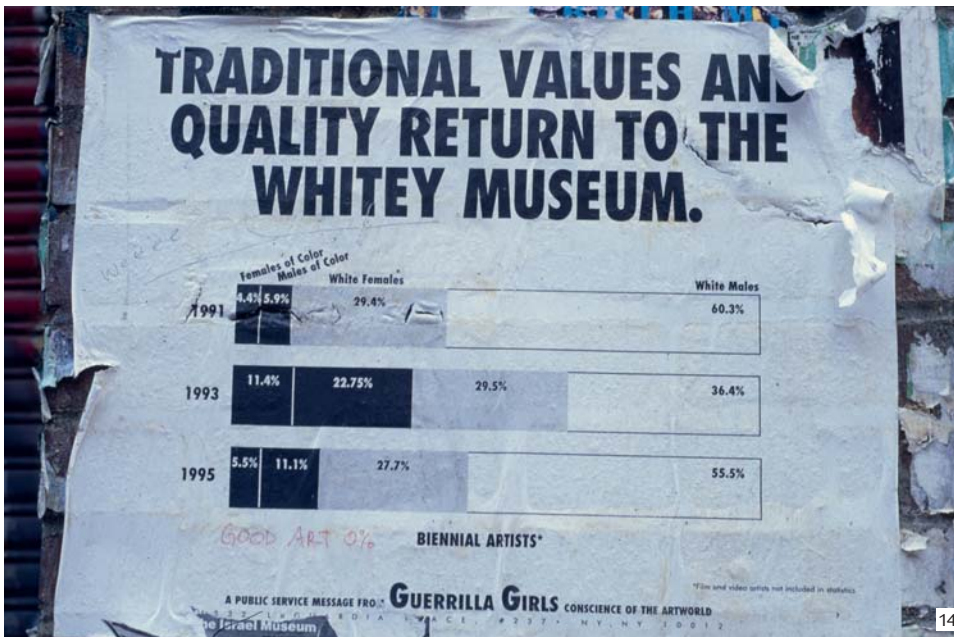
the old prison situated on an island off the French Atlantic coast, to listen to or watch works by Finlay, Julien Blaine, Brion Gysin, Gil Wolman, Françoise Dufrêne, Mimmo Rotella, among others. But the two artists had decided that this festival would take place only on posters. There were some, however, who made the trip! It was not only a joke, but a homage to the power of the imagination and of the independence of art in relation to reality. Some time later, in a collective booklet in which the posters were reproduced and the story recounted, Chopin concluded with the claim that a year before May 1968, the organizers had already put imagination into power: "We were not post- or pre-revolutionaries, not even revolutionaries, but living beings who placed creation in non-creation above all else."⁵ The event was thus not a festival but a series of posters with their imagined program, apparently written into the calendar, but in fact, totally independent of its constraints and even beyond the possibility of failure. These announcement posters give the lie to common sense, which expects works for occasions to be regulated by the principle of reality even more than other works.



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At the extreme opposite, that of an actual engagement in real situations, we must make room for a last category, one that is rich in examples of work that reacts to the burning issues of the day in the form of protest and indignation. These are committed publications in the tradition of lampooning pamphlets of the eighteenth century or of agit-prop in the twentieth century. These ephemera works are the weapons of a war against certain aspects of the contemporary art world or simply of the modern world itself. The tone is often that of irony or of anger. There is no shortage of examples: derisive open letters by Broodthaers aptly named "polemical postcards" by Simon Cutts; anonymous postcards by Le Gac, poking fun in recent years at several bizarre tactics in the functioning of contemporary art in France; "occasional cards" ("cartes de circonstance") sent by Ernest T., of which a large part of the printed production is openly polemical, in particular the periodical *Cloaca maxima*, named after the sewers of ancient Rome, printed on yellow onion-skin flyers and self-published spasmodically between 1985 and 1988; the militant posters of the Guerrilla Girls against sexism in art; Finlay's letterhead paper on which he had printed various scathing quotations taken from eighteenth-century French revolutionaries in support of his battle against the regional Strathclyde officialdom and police assault on his garden, which he called Little Sparta for the occasion; or, also by Finlay, the countless cards and booklets inspired by the French Revolution and directed against those of the Paris art world who intrigued against him at the time he had received an official commission for a garden to celebrate the

bicentenary of the Revolution of 1789; the first tract by Roberto Martinez and Antonio Gallego as a reaction to the war in Yugoslavia in 1993 (*Tombola Paris-Sarajevo*), and so on.



The pressure of events is sometimes such that it can transform temporarily an artist's magazine into an ephemera work. This is the case with *Eter*, edited by Gette, that contained contributions from various artists and appeared irregularly two or three times a year, but which changed radically in May 1968 in order to intervene rapidly and effectively. It took the title, *Eter contestation*, and was printed on heavy card whose single sheet was folded in half. Created collectively by Gette, Jean Degottex, Claude Bellegarde, and Constantin Xenakis, the three issues appeared in quick succession: on 30 May, 3 and 18 June. "No" is the "mot d'ordre" branded across the inside double page spread of the first issue, which carried a list of everything that should be rejected in contemporary society, to which the second issue supplies this slogan as a response: "Yes create the continuous revolution" ("Oui créez la révolution continue"). The third issue contains a folded poster printed in big red block letters and whose text is about strikes, demonstrations, confrontations with the police, etc. Each of the issues was left in several places for anyone to take, and for a few days the magazine became a kind of political tract.

Of course, these weapons are paper weapons but, for the same reason, they can be printed and circulated quickly. Most of them are self-published, inexpensive in time and money, intentionally unassuming, and unintentionally clandestine. Because they are meant to respond to the urgency of a situation, they last only for the time it takes to hand them out or send them.

More generally, we can say in concluding that ephemera works have something that is intrinsically provocative as regards the common practices of art in so far as they claim to be in the here and now. Thus their lack of pretense to timelessness. In their essence they are the most "contemporary" of the art we call contemporary, for they are absolutely *in time* and *of their time*. That being the case, that is why they retain, perhaps more than other works, the most radical of what contemporary art has brought to the history of the visual arts: a relation to work that is no longer contemplation but reading.

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Translated from the French by Patricia Railing.

Notes

- 1 Marcel Duchamp, "Interview: Marcel Duchamp – James Johnson Sweeney," in Michel Sanouillet ed., *Duchamp du Signe: Écrits*, Flammarion, Paris, 1976, p. 179.
- 2 Cited by Octavio Paz in *Marcel Duchamp: L'Apparence mise à nu ...*, trans. Monique Fong, Gallimard, Paris, 1977, p. 81.
- 3 Lucy Lippard and John Chandler, "The Dematerialization of Art," *Art International*, February 1968. Ursula Meyer, "De-objectification of the Object," *Arts Magazine*, Summer 1969.
- 4 Robert Barry, *L'Art conceptuel, une perspective*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, 1989, p. 122.
- 5 *Festival de Fort-Boyard 1967*, Punto, Turin, Italy, 1970, unpaginated.

Captions

- 1 Back of Ian Hamilton Finlay, *Midship Section*, Christmas 1996, Little Sparta, Sammlung Stampa, Basel.
- 2 James Lee Byars, *A Drop of Black Perfume*, Invitation for performance at the Furka Pass, Switzerland, 1983, Sammlung Francesca Pia, Bern.
- 3, 4 Outside and inside of Robert Barry, *Art & Project*, 1969, Sammlung Christoph Schifferli, Zurich.
- 5, 6 Outside and inside of Douglas Huebler, *Art & Project*, 1970, Sammlung Christoph Schifferli, Zurich.
- 7, 8 Outside and inside of Alighiero Boetti, *Art&Project*, 1972, Sammlung Christoph Schifferli, Zurich.
- 9 Allan Kaprow, *Moving*, Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1967.
- 10 Matthieu Laurette, *Vivons remboursés*, Nantes: Association Entre Deux, 1997.
- 11, 12 Daniel Buren, *Buren*, Antwerp, Belgium: Wide White Space Gallery, 1973, Sammlung Christoph Schifferli, Zurich.
- 13 Stephen Kaltenbach, *Artforum Ads*, November 1968 – December 1969, series of twelve artist's advertisements. *Tell a lie*, *Artforum*, New York, February 1969.
- 14 Guerrilla Girls, poster in the urban space, photographed in New York City, 1995.

Anne Mæglin-Delcroix is professor emeritus of philosophy of art at the Sorbonne. From 1979 to 1994, she was in charge of the collection of artists' books and small press at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France. She curated several exhibitions on the international production of artists' books, notably at the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris, 1985), the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris, 1997), Casa del Mantegna (Mantua, 2004), and FRAC PACA (Marseille, 2015). She is the author of several books on this subject, among which the revised and expanded edition of *Esthétique du livre d'artiste* (2012). She has been co-curating the artists' book collection *Reprint* since 2012.

[Faint, illegible text in the left column, likely a list of participating institutions or artists.]

[Faint, illegible text in the middle column, likely a list of participating institutions or artists.]

[Faint, illegible text in the right column, likely a list of participating institutions or artists.]



THE DESIGN SHOW

Exhibition Invitations in the U.S.A.
1940-1992

May 1 - June 12, 1993

The Design Show
Extended to
July 23, 1993



Invitations / Postcards / Business Cards / Works of Art

Barbara Preisig interviewed by Maja Wismer

Zürich / Basel, September 2015

Maja Wismer: What is your definition of ephemera?

Barbara Preisig: Ephemera are printed matter that are produced for a certain occasion and therefore have a fairly short shelf life, but are nevertheless collected beyond their expiration date. This also includes things such as plane tickets, admission tickets, and print advertisements. But in my work I only deal with a small subset of ephemera: exhibition invitations and newspaper or magazine advertisements. I'm also mostly interested in ephemera that are intended not only as advertisements, but also as artworks. These include works by Eleanor Antin, Robert Barry, Daniel Buren, Dan Graham, Adrian Piper, and Yoko Ono. By this definition, ephemera have emerged as a genre in their own right in contemporary art since the 1960s.

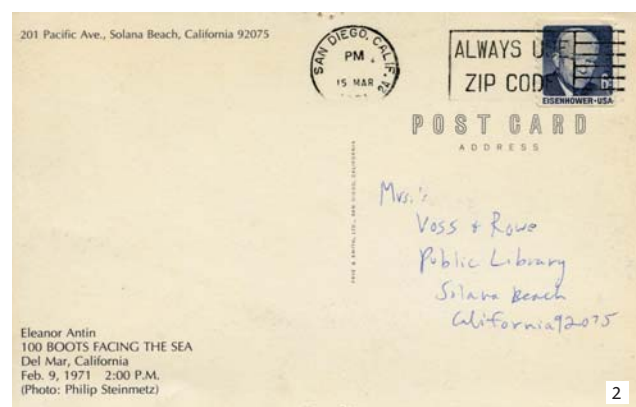
MW: So, to you, ephemera are more objects than temporal phenomena?

BP: Ephemera are objects with a specific temporality. They announce events and exhibitions. In this role, they accompany, frame, and comment on the production of art at a certain time and in a certain place. Ephemera make it possible to understand art in its historical ties.

MW: Why do you limit your research to invitations and advertisements?

BP: I took this decision because posters were not used very often in conceptual art in the '60s and '70s, which is my area of research. But the decision also had very practical reasons: namely, because posters have their own form of distribution. While

advertisements and invitations reach their recipients by post, posters are often found in public spaces; the reception takes place "directly," by eye contact, so to speak, and this could be the subject of another study altogether.



MW: To you, being sent by mail is a condition of ephemera. Does that mean that proofs or artists' copies of the same document, for example, don't belong to the category of ephemera?



BP: These elements are part of the production process, but I don't consider them ephemera. But proofs, sketches, etc., are important for other reasons. Artists have always looked for ways to define individual copies of mass-produced items as unique works, to sign and sell them. Such elements, which often also bear the artist's handwriting, are ideal for this.

MW: To me, designing an advertisement seems to be an active part of being an artist, and when a design was brought to the printer, or even just laid on a copy machine, one copy was always kept for the artist's personal archive, and it was not necessarily signed, since it was simply evidence of one's activities, of a project, or of the fact that this project took place. I would claim that later, when this archive has been entrusted as an estate to a museum, a research library, or—as has recently become common—a gallery, for example, this document should be classified as ephemera. But perhaps this doesn't contradict your argument at all, since these copies still have the potential of being sent, or they are documentary evidence of ephemera.

BP: I think that such documents are simply elements of work within the corresponding production process. They are like a sketch that ultimately

leads to a painting. In this sense, the sketch is not a painting, but part of the production process.

MW: How do you explain your fascination with ephemera?

BP: I like the fact that a small disposable object can become a space for artistic activity under certain circumstances, and that, for example, an invitation itself makes the journey to the recipient. Then there is my fascination with the large number of copies, which were scattered into a thousand pieces and sent hither and thither by mail, and no one really knows how many copies of a work still exist and where they are. I also like the relation to pop culture. I have a great passion for postcards, since they are a medium that is used outside of art as a form of communication, quite unlike giant paintings, which belong to the domain of art.

MW: I would say that this is a paradox: conceptual art ephemera are anything but products of pop culture.

BP: I fully agree.

MW: So it has nothing to do with pop culture.

BP: That I would disagree with. Ephemera absolutely have to do with pop culture. For one thing, artists used a popular form of communication. Then, the medium of the postcard, and indeed also the idea of the large number of copies, expresses the desire for the democratization of art, though this aim was not realized. The practice of conceptual art was extremely elitist. Only those who belonged to a small professional network or important institutions were sent this exclusive mail.

MW: In that respect, posters, which are hung for everyone to see on advertising columns, are much closer to pop culture and the idea of democratic access to art.

BP: In a certain sense, that's true. There are, of course, also exceptions among the ephemera that I study. Dan Graham and Adrian Piper, for instance, placed advertisements in widely circulated tabloids or weeklies in the 1960s and 1970s.

MW: To what extent do you see communication by postcard as being rooted in pop culture?

BP: In the '60s picture, postcards were still a popular form of communication. Archival materials show that artists, gallerists, and curators conducted some of their business correspondence by postcard. The categories overlapped in some cases: invitations became postcards, postcards became invitations, and invitations in a sense also became artists' calling cards. So their uses were very fluid.

MW: Could you say that the same thing happened with postcards as with various other new media over the course of history? For instance, with photography, which at first was only accessible to a few and then became increasingly available and thus arrived as a pictorial medium in art. Communication by picture postcards seems a logical consequence for the context at hand. One that furthermore carries within it the desire for an art that is democratic, in a way.

BP: Yes, although the postcard was already destined to decline in the '60s, and I have often wondered why the use of such printed matter experienced such a boom at that time, and why artists didn't work with media such as fax or telephone, or with video, as others did. After all, it was a time in which technological developments had a strong influence on everyday life in society.

MW: And what are the reasons for this?

BP: I believe it has to do with a skepticism of the media. In the United States there were several art and technology exhibitions, such as *Software, Information Technology: Its New Meaning for Art* at the Jewish Museum in New York in 1970. But the media euphoria turned into a rejection almost overnight. This happened because people realized that there was a connection between the military industry and military interests of the American government and the very companies that also sponsored exhibitions. The famous exhibition *Information* at MoMA in New York in 1970 can be read as an expression of this skepticism. My assertion is that the ways these new media worked—especially the virtual possibilities of television, and the networked society that Marshall McLuhan dreamed of at the time under the term “global village”—were actually already realized and reflected in analog form in ephemera.



MW: In your view, was this also due to the fact that postcards made a kind of private reception possible, in the spirit of mass communication?

BP: Yes, I believe that it was a kind of imitation of the new electronic media. We are all familiar with the pictures from the '60s that show families sitting in their living room and watching the Vietnam War on television. Art, and thus ephemera, also sought to enter this private domain. The idea was that the media would find their way to the recipients, and

Dartmouth's Rezoning Problems Solved?

By CLYDE HORNER Staff Writer
 Dartmouth's rezoning problems may be solved forever. A motion by Alderman Allen Stockall passed by city council this week that requested the planning director draft a master plan outlining the sections of the city where multiple and low income apartment complexes could be constructed. It will virtually clear up the city's age-old rezoning problems.

Explaining his motion yesterday to The Mail-Star, Ald. Stockall said over the past several years citizens of Dartmouth have continually lived in fear of having property in their immediate area rezoned for some type of high density apartment building. He said people who spend 20 or 30 years beautifying their home don't want pro-

perly adjacent to their house rezoned from residential (single family) to multiple housing or commercial.

GOOD FAITH
 Ald. Stockall said it is very unfair to create an area comprised completely of single family dwellings. "Residents built and purchased homes in good faith with the understanding that the area was zoned R-1 (residential)."

"I made the motion regarding the multiple housing plan so residents could live without worrying that a large high-density community was going to spring up in their backyard overnight."

The master plan will designate the areas of the city where multiple and low income housing units may be constructed, he said.

Ald. Stockall said it is apparent Dartmouth requires

high-rise apartments but suggests a number of areas within the city where this type of housing can be established.

BE INFORMED
 He said residents constructing single-family dwellings in an area specified high density "have little to complain about because they will be informed of the zoning by the planning department prior to starting construction."

"Homeowners," he said, "should be assured that their area cannot be rezoned after purchasing or building a house."

Ald. Stockall said it is a step toward establishing an overall development plan for

the city. "If the master plan is adopted by council, the developers will be guided to sections of the city designated for multiple housing."

He said ownership changes and lack of consideration by developers cause some apartment complexes to deteriorate to slum conditions. It's the neighbors living

around apartment buildings who suffer when the owners are only interested in profit, Ald. Stockall said.

Laity Sunday At Grace United
 Laity Sunday will be observed at Grace United Church tomorrow at 11 a.m. in conjunction with the church's Thanksgiving celebrations.

Elder Philip Whyndacht, assisted by Mrs. Mabel DeBaie, past president of the United Church Women, and Harold MacPherson Jr. will conduct the service.

The message will be given by the church volunteer E. J. Nichols.

Ballet Classes
 Ballet classes for the 6 to 11 and 12 to 16 age groups start Tuesday at Friday School, Dartmouth. Lessons are scheduled to take place 4:15 p.m. until 6:15 p.m.

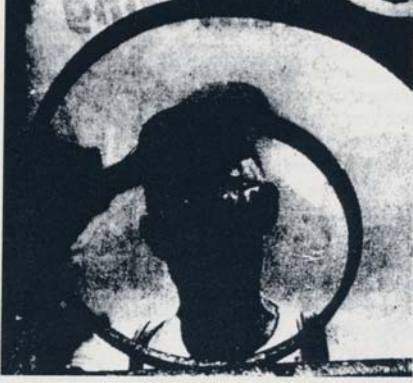
The season for the classes takes in 25 weeks of instruction.

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THE MAIL-STAR Dartmouth News

Saturday, October 11, 1969 9



JUST PAINTING AROUND
 Irving Keady spent part of yesterday "put painting around." His job was to paint the gate of the ornamental fence around Christ Church Cemetery, Park Avenue. A car had damaged the gate extensively when it rolled from its parked position on Victoria Road. (Horsner)

Take the family out and enjoy "THANKSGIVING DINNER"
 At The New **DARTMOUTH INN**
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SCOTIA SQUARE NEWS

By Betty Church
 Well, we're right into the last minute rush and preparations for our Grand Opening on Wednesday, October 15th. As you've seen by the paper and heard on the air, our office staff, even General Manager Bill Hardman, is on the site, sweeping and cleaning in order to have everything as nice as possible on Wednesday morning.

I'd be there, too, except for one important job. That job is to clear up the misunderstanding about the parking rates in the Scotia Square Parkade. I've been told that many people think that the basic rate for parking at Scotia Square is 65c. That is wrong:

The rates are as follows:
 ...first half hour 15c
 ...first hour 25c
 ...first hour and a half 40c
 ...first two hours 50c
 ...first two and a half hours 65c

Thus, a car can be parked in the Parkade for two and a half hours for 65c. However, for each additional hour, after the first two and a half hours, the charge will be 40c per hour - no maximum. So, if your car is in the Parkade three and a half hours the charge will be \$1.05.

New, a few of the benefits of parking in the parkade at Scotia Square:

- An assured place to park — no driving around and around looking for a vacant spot on the street ... where, mind you, it costs 25c an hour with a two hour maximum.
- IMMEDIATE, SHELTERED access to the shopping malls, theatre and restaurants. The sun won't dampen you, the wind won't blow you, the sun won't blister you.
- Protection for your car from the elements ... one thing in particular, that appeals to me, is that few cars of the car won't be hot when I slide into it. Also, the car won't feel like an oven on a hot summer day because it is protected from the rays of the sun.

Just before I finish, a word about so-called free parking. Is it really free? I know better and I hope you do. Just when do you think pays for paving the lot? Keeping them clear of snow? Acquiring the land in the first place?

The next column will be about things that are happening at Scotia Square, see you then. Now it's me for the broom ...

Because this is Scotia Square ... a growing living excitement that will be a new world of shopping, of Living, of Comfort and of Fashion ... A city within a City ... the heart of old Halifax.



WATCH FOR OUR BIG **GRAND OPENING**

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LIKE RELATIONS (select appropriate boxes):

DEFINING WHAT YOU ARE LIKE:
 Your sun sign is Aries () Taurus () Gemini () Cancer () Leo () Virgo () Libra () Scorpio () Sagittarius () Capricorn () Aquarius () Pisces ()

Name sun signs of others you generally like or relate to:
 Aries () Taurus () Gemini () Cancer () Leo () Virgo () Libra () Scorpio () Sagittarius () Capricorn () Aquarius () Pisces ()

How many others you generally like or regard as:
 -acquaintance () -average () -white () -black () -purple () -green-blue () -blue () -green () -brown-black () -yellow () -medium-dark ()

Do you like yourself? Yes, all the time () Yes, most of the time () Yes and No () No ()

What qualities do you like in a date:
 -intellect () -intelligence () -spring nature () -compatibility () -style () -enthusiasm () -interest in you () -mutual interest () -can't be defined ()

How do you generally like to pass the time while on a date:
 -smoking () -drinking () -dancing () -watching TV () -reading () -intimacy () -drinking () -of -movie () -drinking () -watching TV () -reading () -intimacy () -drinking () -of -movie ()

Does the time tend to pass quickly or slowly:
 -quickly () -slowly () -neither () -slowly () -of -movie () -drinking () -watching TV () -reading () -intimacy () -drinking () -of -movie ()

Do you wish relationship to last beyond initial infatuation: Yes () No () Open ()

Do you wish the time to pass:
 -quickly () -slowly () -neither () -slowly () -of -movie () -drinking () -watching TV () -reading () -intimacy () -drinking () -of -movie ()

DEFINING WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE:
 I see you as:
 -deep emotional feeling () -sex () -jealous () -poetry () -nothing () -sternity () -giving () -relationship () -everything () -sternity () -satisfaction ()

I see in me:
 -deep emotional feeling () -sex () -jealous () -poetry () -nothing () -sternity () -giving () -relationship () -everything () -sternity () -satisfaction ()

Do you wish relationship to last beyond initial infatuation: Yes () No () Open ()

Do you wish the time to pass:
 -quickly () -slowly () -neither () -slowly () -of -movie () -drinking () -watching TV () -reading () -intimacy () -drinking () -of -movie ()

EXACT TIME AND PLACE OF BIRTH DATE THIS PROGRAM WAS FILLED OUT:
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SEND \$2.50 REMITTANCE TO: LIKES, 501 LEXINGTON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

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Now you can build your new Garage-Fence-Kitchen Playroom-Patio Additions and repairs to your home!

HALLIDAY Craftsmen

they would no longer go to the theater or the cinema or the museum, for example.

MW: Target group-oriented communication.

BP: A very important term for the discussion of ephemera in conceptual art.

MW: What do you think is the significance of ephemera for or in art history?

BP: Ephemera have an enormous significance for contemporary art in the 20th and 21st centuries. Representatives of conceptual art recognized that the creation of value no longer took place only through material and object-based works. In advertisements and invitations, communication becomes the focus of artistic interest. The work itself serves to promote the artist. The way in which artists communicated was just as crucial as the strategic, project-oriented cooperation with various participants in the art business. In the 1960s, artists established “immaterial” working methods and an artistic self-conception that today are ubiquitous not only in art, but in our so-called service, information, or networked society. Interestingly, however, this economized innovation to which artists contributed had a very different significance than it does today. It was part of a social critique of the rigid, centralized, and hierarchical forms of administration during the post-war era.

MW: What does your work as an art historian consist of?

BP: I see my job as tracing a historical line and thus demonstrating that a certain form of artistic thought was practiced much earlier than was previously believed to be the case. But an important part of my work as an art historian is also to show that art does not take place in an autonomous space that is closed to the outside world, but participates in economic, social, and cultural developments, reflects them, and sometimes even questions them. I really do believe in the idea that the history of art can explain the present to us.

MW: Why have you focused on the United States and the city of New York?

BP: I see the United States and New York as an important Western center of conceptual art. This doesn't mean that all the artists that I deal with are Americans or that they lived there, but many works

were produced and exhibited there. Considering that conceptual art participated in economic innovations through the use of ephemera, this choice is not very surprising. In major cities such as New York, economic processes of innovation generally began earlier than in other places. Advertising was reinvented, so to speak, in the 1960s on Madison Avenue. The campaigns show striking similarities to works of conceptual art.

MW: Although conceptual art had its first successes in Europe.

BP: Absolutely, the reception did in fact take place in Europe. New York was an important place for its production.

MW: Doesn't this in a way local limitation contradict your observation that ephemera are something that is meant to be sent?

BP: As a contrast to the claim of mobility and decentralization? I would definitely say that there were and continue to be centers, and that New York was an important one. This is evident, for example, in the work of Eleanor Antin, who moved to California, and then between 1973 and 1975 made her postcard series *100 Boots* because, as she says, she could no longer go to every opening herself due to the physical distance, and so she needed to find another strategy in order to remain in the spotlight. It was a very effective strategy. After all, the work made the artist famous, and the series culminated in a solo exhibition at MoMA. Art became mobile, but not the power centers of the art business. MoMA is still MoMA, regardless of how many postcards are sent.

MW: Did Eleanor Antin continue to work with postcards after her strategy succeeded? Did she use postcards as her own stylistic device, so to speak, like On Kawara?

BP: The work with the boots spanned three years. Afterward she mostly worked with film. But, interestingly, this is still her most famous work.

MW: So not like On Kawara, who wrote a postcard every morning, almost as a meditation, or as proof of his own existence.

BP: On Kawara is a major exception. Interestingly, there are hardly any artists who worked exclusively with ephemera. That remains the case today.

Strictly speaking, however, *I Got Up* is not a work of ephemera. He sent only two cards at a time with the same motif and stamped them by hand.

MW: Presumably, if we take the meaning of ephemera seriously, the work of someone who only created ephemera would be quite ephemeral. Could you say a bit more about how you see your position as an outsider, as a non-native speaker in the context of New York as a center of production for ephemera?

BP: The only thing that comes to mind is that I had to do a lot of work to familiarize myself with the entire discourse, which is very American. On the other hand, at university in New York, I realized that I enjoy something like the privilege of fools. Especially because I attack very powerful positions, such as those of Benjamin H. D. Buchloh and the entire *October* school, and take an opposing position. American art historians don't think they can afford to do this, since these positions are still so powerful today.

MW: Your decentralization is an advantage!

Captions

1 Front of Eleanor Antin, *100 Boots Facing the Sea*, 1971, collection of the artist.

2 Back of Eleanor Antin, *100 Boots Facing the Sea*, Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York.

3 Front of Eleanor Antin, *100 Boots Enter the Museum*, 1973, collection of the artist.

4, 5 Dan Graham, *Likes*, 1969, Advertisement published in *Halifax Mail Star*, 11.10.1969, p. 9, scan from Dan Graham, *For Publication*, New York: Marian Goodman Gallery, 1991 (Original: New York, 1975).

Barbara Preisig is a Zurich-based art historian and critic. After studies at the Universities of Bern and Vienna, she was an assistant at the Galerie Francesca Pia and worked at the Institute for Contemporary Art (IFCAR) at the Zurich University of the Arts, where she holds the position of a research associate since 2014. In 2015, she received her PhD with the thesis titled *Mobil, autonom, vernetzt. Kritik und ökonomische Innovation in Ephemera der Konzeptkunst, 1966–1975*, and co-founded *Brand-New-Life. A Magazine for Art Criticism*. Her writings on contemporary art have been published in *Frieze* and *Kunstbulletin*, amongst others.



The Catalogues
of Steven Leiber
A Memorial Exhibition

THE NY ART BOOK FAIR, SEPT 27-30, 2012

Unraveling the Exhibits

Conversation between Daniel Baumann, Martin Jäggi, and Marianne Mueller

Zürich, October 2015



Martin Jäggi: How did you come up with the idea for the exhibition *They Printed It! Invitation Cards, Press Releases, Inserts and Other Forms of Artistic (Self-) Marketing?*

Daniel Baumann: Two elements of my own biography were crucial. In the 1980s, my father was sent invitations at home. I thought some of these were great, and I kept them. It was a cheap way of collecting art and pinning it to the wall. Then, a press release from the American artist Trisha Donnelly for her exhibition at Casey Kaplan in 2007 caused me to pay somewhat more attention to the development of invitations and similar documents. This invitation was minimal and apparently conceived by the artist herself, without any information about what would be shown in the exhibition or about the artist. Instead, there was a cryptic text that seemed to have been written on a typewriter. This was apparently part of the work, part of the exhibition, just as her refusal to make her work accessible or extol herself was part of her artistic position, her conception of art (she still hasn't published a catalog). The result was a fascinating range: on the one hand, the invitation produced by someone else as an advertisement for the artist, and on the other hand the press release or invitation designed by the artist herself, which was perhaps art. This is how I started to collect these kinds of products more intensively, especially press releases written by artists. I had already systematically set aside invitations from certain galleries, and then afterward noticed that something interesting has taken place in this area in the past thirty years. Now that the tradition of sending items by mail is disappearing, I thought that this overlooked chapter of art history deserves somewhat more attention.

Marianne Müller: For a long time, invitations were considered proof that an exhibition occurred in the first place. If you wanted to document your activities as an artist at the Swiss Institute for Art History (SIK), you had to send the invitation in analogue form, not digitally. Only then did they add an exhibition to the appropriate list.

MJ: Is that true? And the SIK still has all those invitations?

DB: Then they might have the largest collection of them. That reminds me of the invitation *One Behind the Other* by Lawrence Weiner from 1976. The invitation from Galerie Schöttle was the exhibition itself; it was an artwork and at the same time “only” the announcement. Weiner is, of course,

someone who used this medium very early on.

MJ: The field of invitations truly came to be actively cultivated only with conceptual art. This has to do with the proximity of conceptual art to advertising.

DB: Exactly. Of course, you have to ask whether people were already conscious of this proximity at the time. In the 1970s, there was that famous American VW advertisement that at least today almost looks like conceptual art.

MJ: You have to keep in mind that advertising in the Anglo-Saxon world at the time was very strongly text-based. Beyond the interest in written language, there is also a link to conceptual art, which became established around the same time.

DB: Building on this, according to my theory, artists such as Louise Lawler began to make active use of this hybrid field, and basically to take advantage of the perversion, the unclear boundaries of the announcement of the exhibition, which is the work and simultaneously an advertisement for the exhibition, for the institution, and for the artist. This was distinct from Fluxus—more disillusioned, or clear-sighted. Another artist who took the same line was Martin Kippenberger with his claim that all his invitations, which he actually made himself, made up his graphic oeuvre.

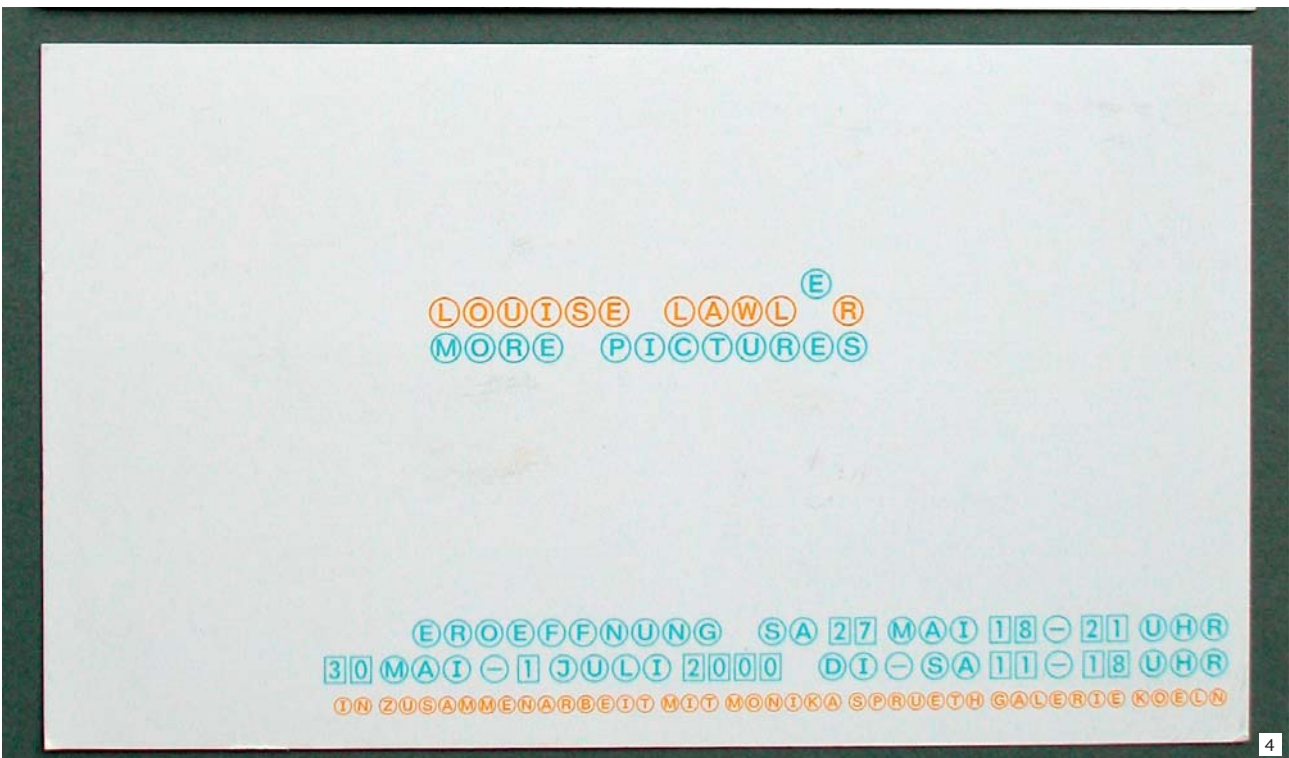
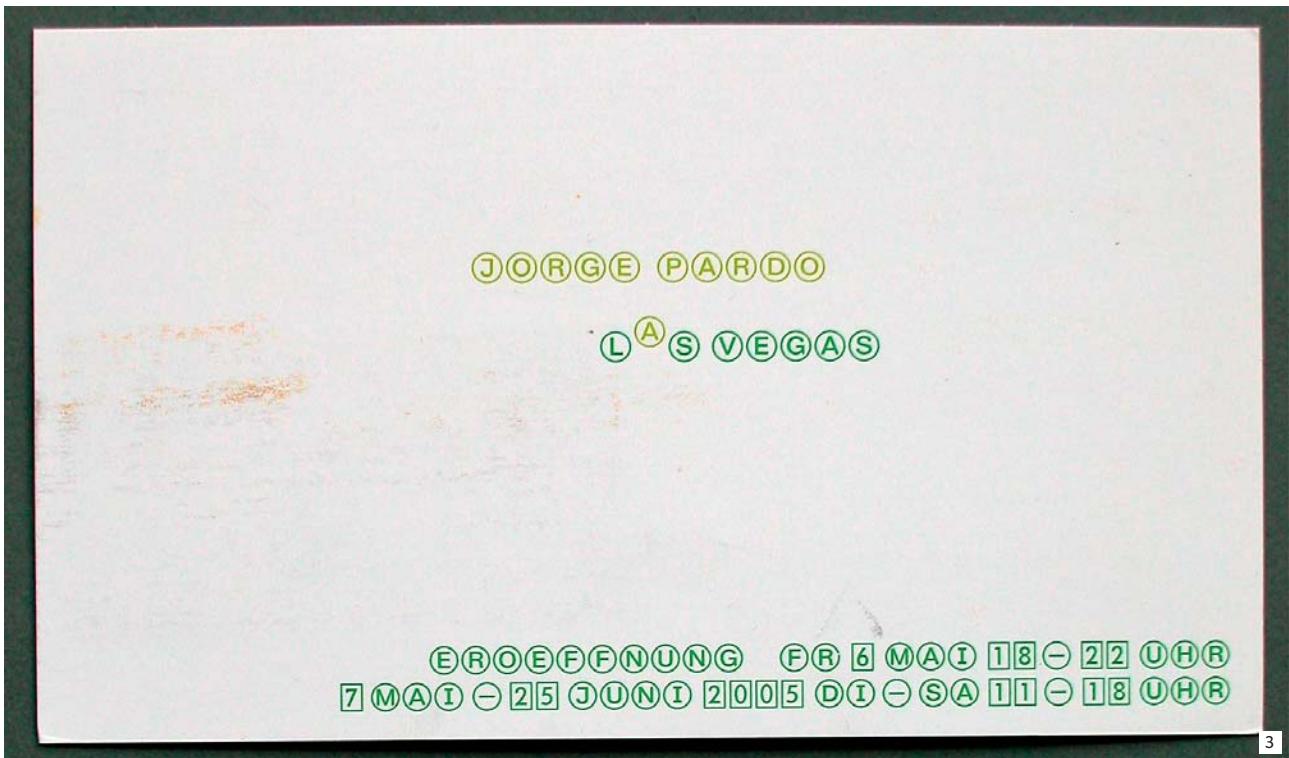
MJ: I find the aspect that you just mentioned interesting. It seems as if invitations are those components of the system in which something like a power struggle between artists, institutions, and galleries is fought out.

DB: You're right. It seems to be the only place where this power struggle, which otherwise takes place behind the scenes, becomes somewhat visible.

MM: And this can be disastrous, since you don't want to send a terrible invitation to anyone. The graphic design can cause you to no longer identify with an exhibition at all, which can mean that you either have to make a parallel product—which is difficult—or send out a small number of copies.

DB: This opens up another collection, or chapter: exhibitions with two or more invitations.

MM: The press release is another place where traces of such power struggles become visible.



MJ: At the moment everyone is writing such cryptic, pseudo-poetic, pseudo-theoretical texts. I think this is a kind of refusal to talk about oneself.

DB: It has to do with the question of the power of interpretation. Some artists simply don't want galleries or curators to write something or chatter, and so they prefer to write something themselves, often something that is not immediately understandable.

MM: Or like myself: they prefer not to communicate at all. That, of course, also has its advantages. I have the impression that artists have to do an increasing amount of work themselves. It's no longer enough to make art. Today you have to upload a self-portrait, provide a short CV in English, a text on the work, and the captions and technical information—and all that before you have even traveled to the venue and set up the exhibition. And, of course, you should also document the exhibition yourself before you leave.

MJ: In addition to a refusal, it is also an attempt by artists to annex the areas of poetry and theory.

DB: Of course, here too the old dream of artists being able to do everything plays a role. Film-making, writing, graphic design, music, dance, theater, WhatsApp... To me, an interesting example in this context is the Berlin gallery neugerriemschneider, which commissioned Jorge Pardo to do its graphic design in the mid-1990s. To this day, all the gallery's artists must subordinate themselves to this design, or can benefit from it.

MM: Although he provided a purely typographic solution.

DB: Which is also playful, elegant, and relatively open-ended. This makes every exhibition appear equal, and if people don't like it, then it's Pardo's fault. The gallery Meyer Riegger followed another approach for a while—a compromise, so to speak—by using a monochrome A3 format and inviting each artist to choose a text. The format and structure were thus set in advance, and the content could be freely chosen.

MJ: And so the gallery projected the image of a certain intellectual ambition.

DB: The same is true of a whole group of this generation of galleries that started up in the 1990s and whose invitations I systematically collected:

Contemporary Fine Art, Modern Institute, Gavin Brown, Meyer Riegger, neugerriemschneider, and several others. They all approached invitations conceptually, as an art project, invitation, advertisement, and self-branding in one. It could have to do with the fact that at the time they wanted and needed to make a name for themselves as young, new galleries.

MJ: These galleries all work in a similar manner in the sense that they strongly identify themselves with a consistent program. They are galleries that not only see themselves as showrooms, but—at least at the time—also to some degree as *Kunsthalle*.

DB: Yes, program galleries. I've noticed, though I haven't quite systematically looked into it yet, that the gallery 47 Canal, which is a generation younger than those that we just discussed, brands itself not through its graphic design, but by consistently having artists write the press releases—or at least, that's how it looks. This is how it established itself as an art gallery. Another typical element is the fact that they only send their invitations digitally. As I looked through my collection of invitations, I also noticed that especially in Switzerland, among exhibition spaces and institutions, there are a few who have conceptually set this business of invitations in motion. At the time, we also did this at New Jersey, but the exhibition space Low Bet already did it in the 1990s, as did Forde. And, of course, *Kunsthalle Zurich* under Beatrix Ruf as director.

MJ: I remember that the *Shedhalle* already had a fairly consistent graphic design under Harm Lux.

MM: Your observations assume that these institutions worked with professional graphic designers. I don't know if that was always the case. I could imagine that smaller galleries, such as Pablo Stähli in the 1970s, handled their graphic design more or less themselves.

DB: I remember that in its early days the leftist magazine *WOZ* had a bad layout, which in the early '80s people saw as a form of resistance. Was bad graphic design seen as authentic until people noticed that this is also a form of academism?

MJ: I think in the '80s, graphic design became incredibly important. This also has to do with the New Wave and the role that graphic design played in it. Alternative products suddenly distinguished themselves with a very striking design. A good example is the *Fabrikzeitung*, which is comparable to *The Face* and

the graphic design of Neville Brody, *i-D* magazine, or even the record covers of The Smiths, for instance. Stylish graphic design became part of a pop subculture.

DB: The gallerists at neugerriemschneider, Sadie Coles, etc., whom we just discussed were teenagers in the 1980s, like us. If you open up a gallery ten years later, then this experience with pop music and graphic design has an influence on your branding.

MM: Although in the '80s they still very much did it themselves. You could go to the cooperative print shop ROPRESS, and they could print things using black-and-white templates that you had prepared on a typewriter. You no longer had to use Tipp-Ex. You could correct a few letters here and there, but basically you pasted the various layers of film together yourself.

MJ: I think that the possibility of desktop publishing brought about a major change. Typesetting was no longer expensive, and more complex graphic design became possible.

MM: But, with regard to invitations, what I find interesting is the influence of conceptual art, which we mentioned at the beginning. I mean the idea that the artwork begins to exist for the viewer when an invitation or a press release is sent or received, and is only revealed on a visit to the exhibition. I find the period of time that lies between those points (the temporal and spatial shift) interesting, as well as the tension of idea/text and material/space in general and the spatial distance (one is found at home, and the other in an institution). I wonder, were there other artistic positions that were conceptually so beneficial to this "genre" of self-marketing, or other media in addition to invitations? Will you also show posters in the exhibition?

DB: Not so many. That would be a separate field in its own right. There are some by Michael Riedel, because his invitations and posters overlap. I have all of Wade Guyton's, because he took a very different approach with his posters, which seem to work so differently from his abstract art. Have institutions developed interesting concepts? It seems to me that the majority work with text and pictures.

MJ: Yes, many Swiss institutions are similar in that regard.

MM: It's mostly the same graphic designers.

DB: Do we see this so clearly because we ourselves are Swiss? Is this the case elsewhere, too? And yet, it is no coincidence that this exhibition is taking place now at Kunsthalle Zurich. We are always part of the zeitgeist, a mirror of it.

MJ: I believe that it is a Swiss phenomenon to a certain degree. Exhibition spaces here first make a graphic design concept and then the exhibition. I think that this has to do with graphic design education in Switzerland: there is a long tradition here of training graphic designers with their own individual style.

DB: Typography is very important, the Basel school...Perhaps we should say that the field where a typography-heavy design resonated most widely was art, since this is where writing was readable as a visual sign with the knowledge of conceptual art and minimal art. This continues to be the case today.

MM: But also because you can make beautiful things. I think that as a graphic designer in typography you have more freedom in art than in advertising.

MJ: How can you brand yourself as a gallery? With your program, but that is somehow immaterial. And otherwise with typography.

MM: That's how marketing works: when you want to be recognized, then you do something that is recognizable. I don't think that this is particularly Swiss. But I think that sending invitations also has to do with the fact that until recently people traveled less often. Today you might not remember the invitation so much because you aren't sent one in the first place. Instead, you might remember a gallery's exhibition booth.

DB: Or they're sent digitally. Nowadays it's actually only the less interesting galleries that send something by mail. The good ones don't send anything anymore, or they can afford very thick cardboards.

MM: I almost think that will make a comeback. What other strategies of artistic self-marketing are there besides subverting and ironizing common ideas?

DB: I see two main strategies. One is that you say that the traditional level of communication—the press release, the lecture, etc.—is part of your own

artistic position, and so you reflect on this level and give it a form that is also readable from the outside, but is recognized as art from the inside. Then there is another, in which the institution takes on this responsibility of communication on its own, without coordinating with the artist. In this case, artists rely entirely on the symbolic capital of the venue. There are all kinds of variations between these things, but they are not particularly interesting as artistic positions.

MM: I think that invitations are interesting when they don't have the appearance of invitations, but of life or art. Like the invitation for the exhibition at Pierre Huber in Geneva by Olivier Mosset, for example. It works because the pictures don't have anything to do with what is written on the card. And it has its own materiality. Why isn't mail art part of the exhibition?

DB: Because mail art declares itself as art, seeks to be art from the beginning, and this ambition is part of its appearance.

MM: But this somewhat contradicts the fact that you said that you're interested in artists' marketing materials.

DB: It's about who uses marketing or advertising also as a free space for art. None of these things claim to be art. Except perhaps Kippenberger's invitations, but these only in retrospect. And ninety percent of these things definitely aren't art. But it is absolutely possible for them to be received as art retrospectively.

Captions

1, 2 A Selection of Invitations and Other Ephemera. © Kunsthalle Zürich.

3 Jorge Pardo, *Las Vegas, Berlin*: neugerriem-schneider, 2005.

4 Louise Lawler, *More Pictures*, Berlin: neugerriem-schneider, 2000.

5 Trisha Donnelly, New York: Casey Kaplan Gallery, 2007.

6, 7, 8 Installation views, *They Printed it! Invitation cards, press releases, inserts and other forms of artistic (self-)marketing*, Kunsthalle Zurich, 2015.

Daniel Baumann is the director of Kunsthalle Zurich. He was co-curator of the 2013 Carnegie International in Pittsburgh, worked for the Adolf Wölfli Foundation at Museum of Fine Arts in Bern, and co-founded the project space New Jersey in Basel. He started an ongoing exhibition series in Tbilisi, Georgia, in 2004, and is a regular contributor to magazines such as Artforum, Mousse, Spike, et al.

Martin Jäggi is a critic, curator, and lecturer at the Zurich University of the Arts. He has widely published on photography and contemporary art and lectured at F&F Schule, Zurich, Zeppelin University, Friedrichshafen, as well as at Universität der Künste, Berlin. In 2009, he was honored with the Greulich Culture Award for his writings on photography.

Marianne Mueller is a Zurich-based artist, mostly working with photography and video. Her preferred formats are installations and books. She collects observations of quotidian environments that she later re-contextualizes in her works, often in reaction to the specific site of an exhibition. She is a professor at the Zurich University of the Arts. She has participated in numerous group and solo shows in Switzerland and abroad. Her books include *Stairs Etc.*, 2014; *The Proper Ornaments*, 2008; *The Flock*, 2004; *Standing Still / Travelling Slowly*, 2002; *A Part Of My Life*, 1998.

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Part II

Editorial

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Ephemeral production by artists occurred beginning in the '60s and '70s—suddenly all formats of exhibition making, of the arts, of the distribution and production of invitation cards, press releases, inserts, and other forms of artistic (self-)marketing became part of the reorganization of the art field. From my perspective, this reformulation was embedded in a radical institutional critique. Ephemera, editions, and invitation cards were seen as specific interesting objects; they did not only offer a space of self-representation, they also made art available to everybody. So this was meant as a critique of power relations and was part of a re-evaluation of artistic paradigms, but also of value systems and hierarchies. It is in this light that historically ephemeral products started to circulate. Ironically, through the consecration of these new products as art, the “junk got value” as Emmett Williams muttered, somewhat disappointedly.

From its revolutionary beginnings to its acceptance as a new genre, this kind of work is endangered today. Invitation cards are vanishing; they are being replaced by email, Facebook invitations, Twitter, and other fluid digital news. So in a way we started from that point to work on a project to accompany the exhibition *They printed it!* at Kunsthalle Zurich, which deals with historical ephemera. This mirrored in a way our own experience with archival material—when we (Barnaby Drabble and I) started to collect material on Curatorial Practice, we assembled a body of catalogues, printed matter, invitation cards, and DVDs. All of which is now situated in the library of the ZHdK. But the newest project, the web journal *OnCurating.org* (publisher Dorothee Richter, co-publisher Michael Birchall, designer Ronald Kolb) is related to digital space. The possibility of sharing and to reaching out internationally is what interests us. So in a way we would like to keep the message but change the form.

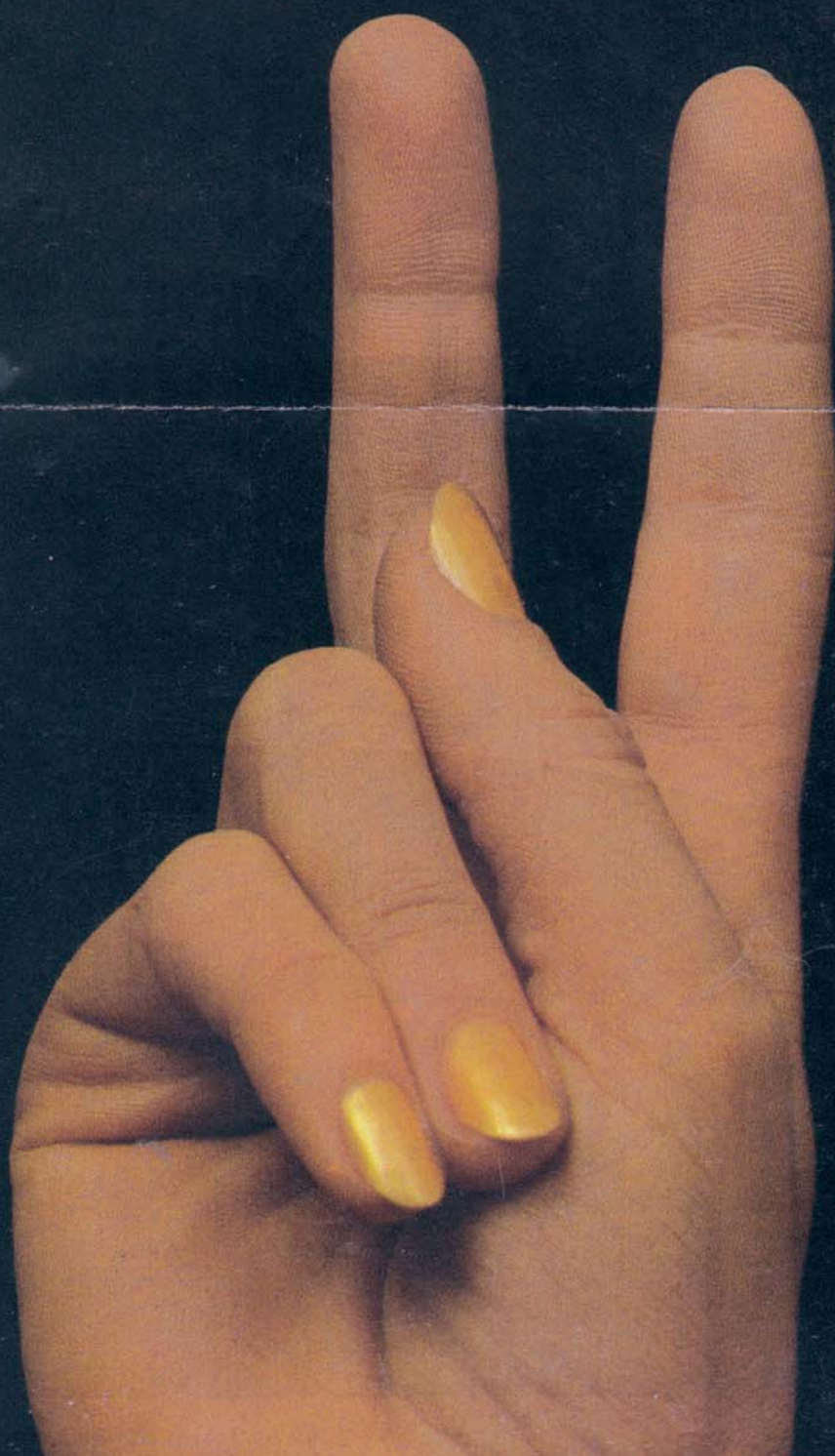
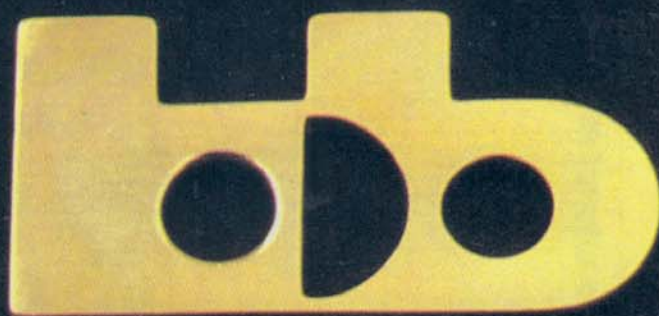
We see this as a logical development from a paper collection to an archive in digital space which is still connected to paper, so we—students and lecturers at the Postgraduate Programme in Curating of the Zurich University of the Arts—started to ask artists and designers whose work we liked and admired and whose capacity to play with the notion of (self-)advertisement reflected in contemporary media had attracted our attention for some time, and we asked these artists to contribute to this issue of *On Curating*. The written content of this issue is closely related to a symposium that took place at Kunsthalle Zurich and was delivered by Barbara Preisig; the articles and interviews for this journal were assembled by Maja Wismer. We, which means in this case the students of the Postgraduate Programme in Curating at ZHdK, who are individuals with their own varied professional backgrounds in the arts: Debora Mona Liem Adinegoro, Lisa Lee Benjamin, Susanne Bernhard Gross, Mariana Bonilla Rojas, Frédéric Bron, Emilie Bruner, Francesca Brusa, Hana Cisar, Matthias Gasser, Michelle Geser Lunau, Matthew Hanson, Cindy Hertach, Raphael Karrer, Katya Knoll, Thomas Lindenmann, Barbara Marbot, Cordelia Oppliger, Diana Padilla, Morgane Paillard, Ludovica Parenti, Paloma Rayon, Silvia Savoldi, Teresa Seabra, Franziska Stern Preisig, Makiko Takahashi, Petra Tomljanovic, Katrijn Van Damme, Simon Marius Zehnder; and we, as lecturers, Ronald Kolb and I, discussed and invited the specific artistic positions. As always, we see the working group of students as a value as such—knowledge from different cultural and professional backgrounds comes together to be confronted, to mingle, to struggle, and to come to new conclusions. And we are most grateful that the artists accepted our offer to use the space of one page as a (self-)advertisement.

As we see it, contemporary artists are well aware of the even more pressing need of self-advertisement in times of immaterial labor in post-Fordism and reacted ironically, intelligently, surprisingly, cool and uncool. Now the ads or inserts will travel to unknown places and our readers will be curators the moment they take the opportunity to print out pages of inspiring contemporary artistic ephemeral practice and put them into private homes, public spaces, and collections, as well as having the advert as part of this issue.



ccV TRE Fluxus Magazine, 1964–1970 (9 issues) Reprint at Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, Archiv Sohm, photographer Dorothee Richter

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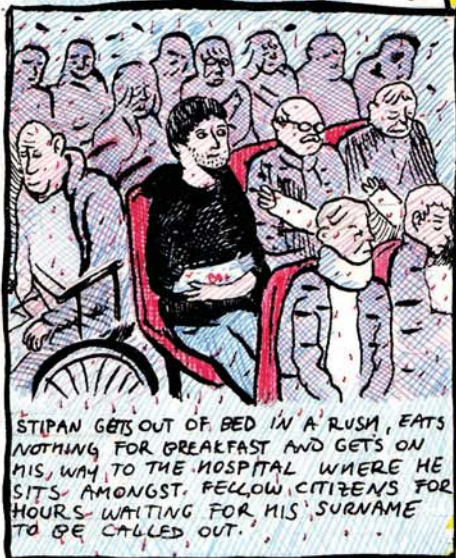




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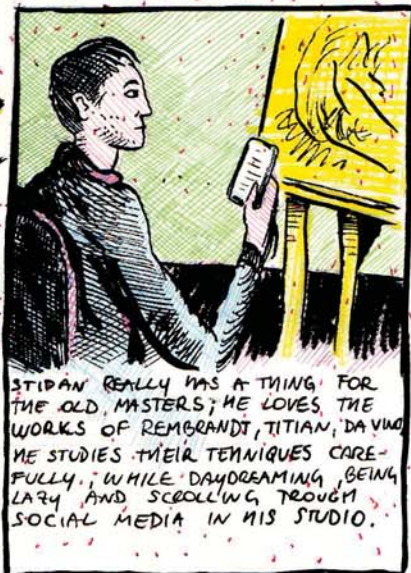
STIPAN TADIĆ, WOKE UP THIS MORNING IN 11 AM. HE FELT TERRIBLE CAUSE HIS ALARM CLOCK DIDN'T GO OFF AND HE OVERSLEPT HIS APPOINTMENT AT THE HOSPITAL IN 8:00 AM. FOR STIPAN HAS BROKEN HIS ARM RECENTLY WHILE HAVING TOO MUCH FUN. HE USUALLY ISN'T LATE BUT THIS TIME HE OVERSLEPT. MORNINGS ARE MOSTLY THE TUFFEST PART OF STIPANS DAY AS HE HAS TO FACE ALL OF HIS FEARS OF FINANCIAL FAILURE, HIS FATHER ISSUES AND OTHER TERRIBLE DEAMONS.



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STIPAN GRADUATED AND MATURED ON TIME! ON THE ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS IN ZAGREB, LIKE ANY OTHER STUDENT HE DIDN'T REALLY HAD TO DO ANYTHING TO GET ALONG WITH PERFECT GRADES. AS THE ACADEMY IS A REALLY FUN AND LEISURE PLACE TO HANG OUT. HE EVEN HAD A FEW SOLO SHOWS, SEVERAL EXHIBITIONS AND IS A RECIPIENT OF SEVERAL APPRECIATIONS AND AWARDS.



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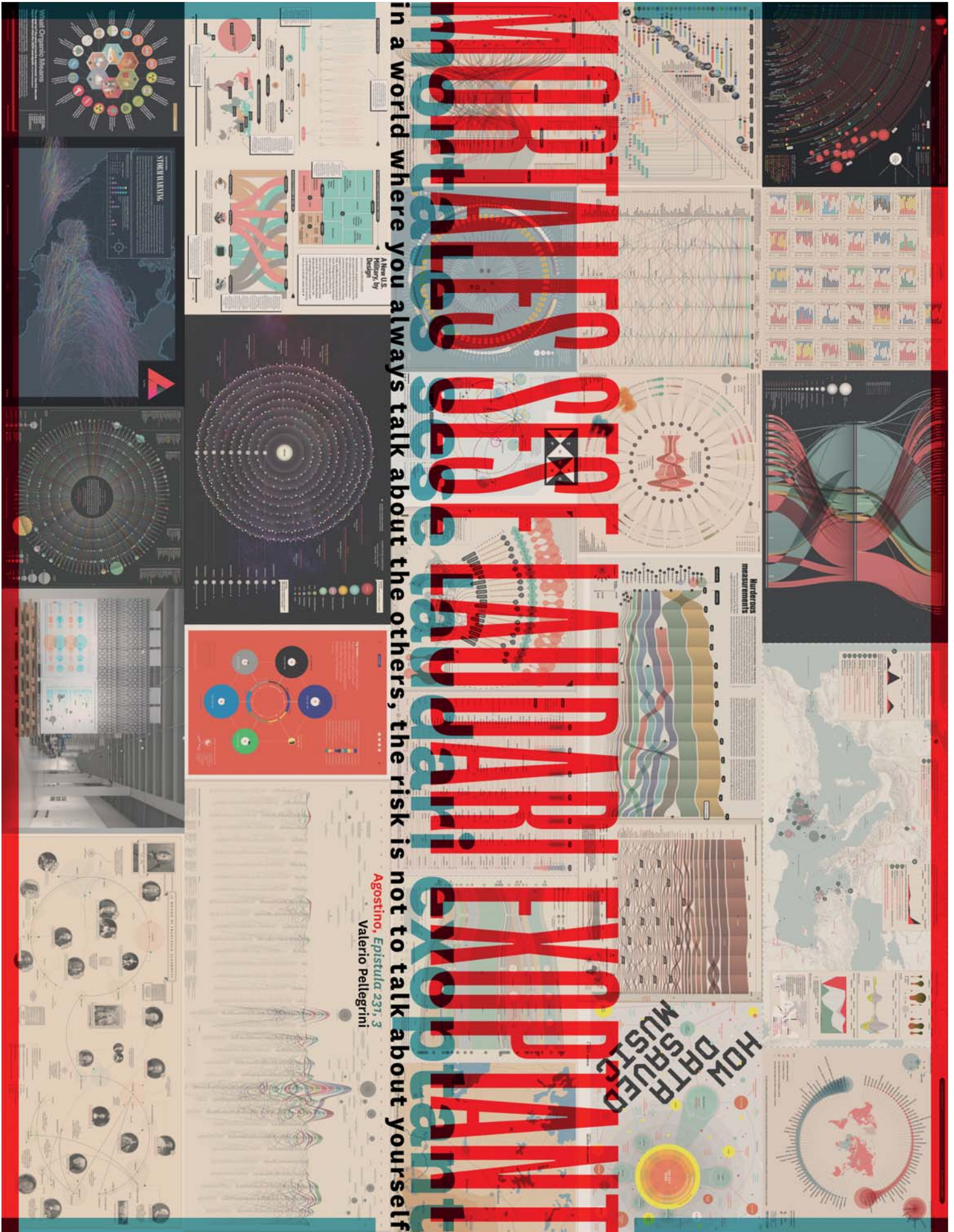
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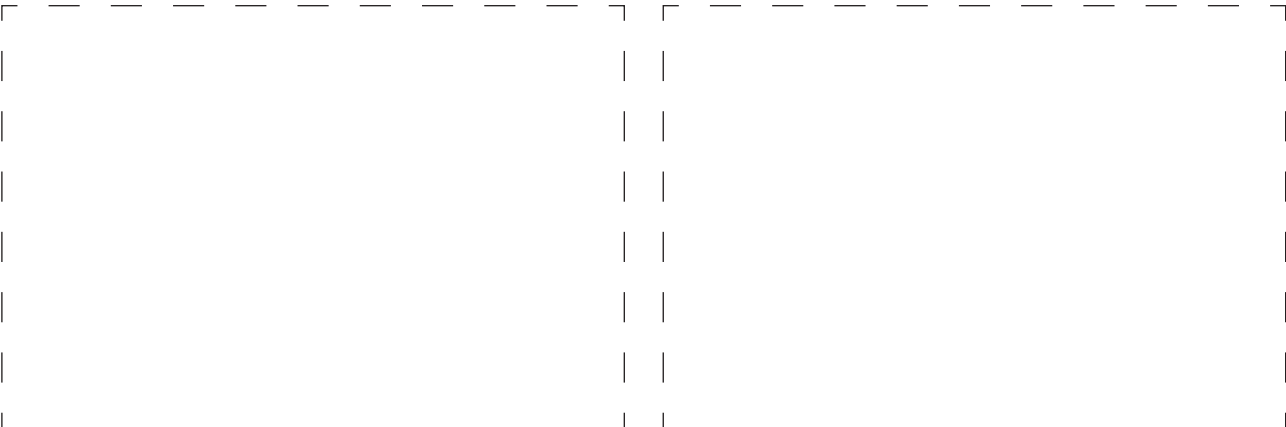




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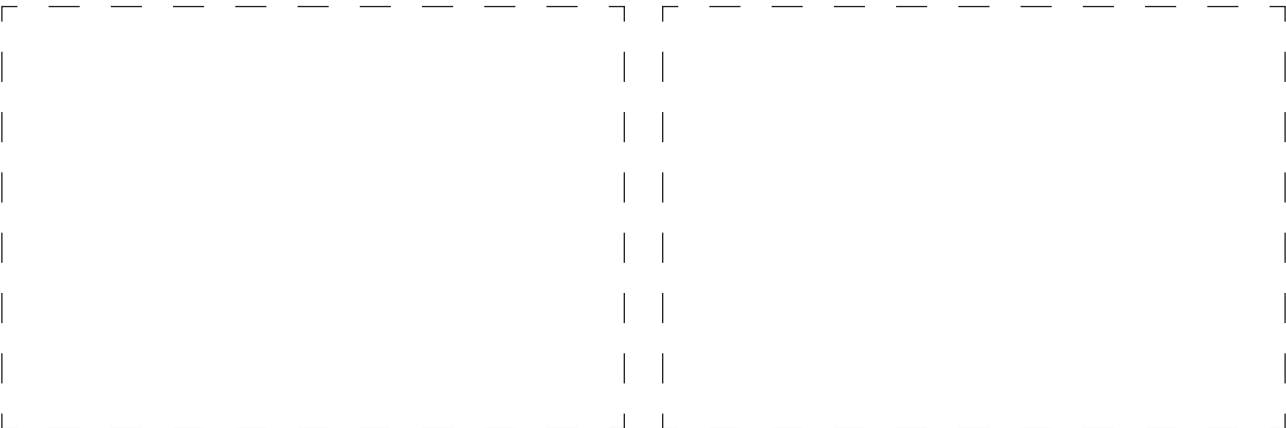


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Artists biographies

Page 77

AES+F Group was originally formed in 1987 by conceptual architects Tatiana Arzamasova and Lev Evzovich and multi-disciplinary designer Evgeny Svyatsky. Exhibiting abroad since 1989, the group expanded its personnel and name with the addition of photographer Vladimir Fridkes in 1995. AES+F's recent work develops at the intersection of photography, video, and digital technologies, although it is nurtured by a persistent interest in more traditional media – sculpture especially, but also painting, drawing, and architecture. Deploying a sophisticated, poetic dialogue among these media, and plumbing the depths of art history and other cultural canons, AES+F's grand visual narratives explore the values, vices, and conflicts of contemporary culture in the global sphere. For more than a decade, works by AES+F have been showcased in signature festivals and biennial exhibitions of contemporary art around the world, including – in addition to Moscow and Venice – those of Adelaide, Gwangju, Havana, Helsinki, Istanbul, Kiev, Lille, Lyon, Melbourne, St-Moritz, Sydney, Taipei, Tirana, and Toronto. Their work has also been featured in influential events devoted to new media – such as ARS Electronica (Linz), Mediacity Seoul, and Video Zone (Tel Aviv) – and photography – such as FotoFest (Houston), Les Rencontres d'Arles, and Moscow's Photo Biennial.

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âyr is an art collective based in London whose work focuses on interiors, domesticity, internet and the city. It was co founded by **Fabrizio Ballabio, Alessandro Bava, Luis Ortega Govela, and Octave Perrault**. Recent exhibitions include Comfort Zone at the Frieze Art Fair in London; Newcomers at Project Native informant, London; Tower at the Ibid Gallery, London; Aspects of Change at Bold Tendencies, London; Welcome You're in the Right Place at the Fondazione Sandretto Re Redbaudengo, Turin; The Easter Show, Weekends, Denmark; AIRBNB Pavillion, Venice Architecture Biennale, Italy. Texts include My flip phone brought me here, Volume; Catfish homes, Rhizome and home 2014, Fulcrum.

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Peter Aerschmann was born in Fribourg (Switzerland) in 1969. He now lives and works in Bern. He is the initiator, co-founder and board member of PROGR foundation Bern and Residency.ch. Peter Aerschmann is an artist in the fields of video and interactive computer installations. His work has been exhibited at galleries, festivals, and museums internationally including Palazzo Grassi Venice; The National Art Museum of China, Beijing; The Musée d'Art Moderne Luxembourg; Moscow House of Photography; Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris; Berlinische Galerie - Landesmuseum für Moderne Kunst, Berlin; Center of Contemporary Art Fri-Art, Fribourg/CH; The Margulies Collection at the Warehouse, Miami; ZKM - Museum of Contemporary Art, Karlsruhe/D; Kunstverein Freiburg/D; Kunst Museum Bern; The Center for Contemporary Images, Geneva. Aerschmann's artwork has been acquired by institutions and collections including The François Pinault Foundation, Venice; The Martin Z. Margulies Collection, Miami; Credit Suisse Collection Zürich; Roche Art Collection; Kunstmuseum Thun, The Carola and Günther Ketterer-Ertle Collection; Kunstmuseum Bern and the Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris; Awards include the Swiss Art Award 2002, the Aeschlimann-Corti Award 2006 and residencies in New York, Berlin and South Africa.

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Beni Bischof was born in Widnau in 1976 and now lives and works as an artist in St Gallen, Switzerland. His works are unruly and intuitive. His spontaneous thoughts on social and political issues are translated into quirky and witty word and character messages and have a disarming directness. Beni Bischof's eruptive creative urge is expressed in his drawings, collages, paintings, sculptures and installations have been shown over the last decade throughout Switzerland and Europe. He leads us to question our preconceived ideas of what things mean and how they are used. Well known for his Handicapped Cars Series, sculptures covered in spray paint and glued on objects have aesthetic, which range from the attractive to the disturbingly bizarre. He has had solo exhibitions at Cabaret Voltaire, Zürich; Galerie Sommer & Kohl, Berlin; Galerie Rupert Pfab, Dusseldorf; and Fumetto in Luzern.

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Maja Cule (born in 1984, Rijeka) lives in New York. In her video works, Cule explores social relations and constructs the scenarios from which the image is formed, encompassing both performance and image production. Cule participated in group exhibitions at Mini / Goethe-Institut, New York, Andreas Huber Gallery, Vienna, Hessel Museum in New York and in Palazzo Peckham at the 55th Venice Biennale. She has had solo exhibitions at Arcadia Missa, London; Stadium Gallery, New York (together with Dora Budor); CEO Gallery, Malmö.

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Critical Art Ensemble is a collective of five tactical media practitioners of various specializations including computer graphics and web design, film/video, photography, text art, book art, and performance.

Formed in 1987, CAE's focus has been on the exploration of the intersections between art, critical theory, technology, and political activism. The group has exhibited and performed at diverse venues internationally, ranging from the street, to the museum, to the internet. Museum exhibitions include the Whitney Museum and the New Museum in NYC; the Corcoran Museum in Washington D.C.; the ICA, London; the MCA, Chicago; Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; and the London Museum of Natural History. The collective has also written 7 books, and its writings have been translated into 18 languages.

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DullTech™ is a hardware startup and performative artwork concurrently. Created as a form of radical corporate publishing in an age of high efficiency capitalism, it creates technologically simplified or 'dull' products in order to distribute artworks in tribute to the late Ray Johnson. Initiated during a 2012 OCAT residency in Shenzhen China, with the company's motto 'neoliberal startup lulz', most products relate to production processes in the artist's studio. The company has exhibited in the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam, HMKV Dortmund, Transmediale Berlin and the White Building in London.

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Karl Holmqvist was born in 1964 in Västerås Sweden. He now lives and works in Berlin. He is well known for his provocative text based art which in the form poetry readings, installations and sculptures. For him poetry is an invisible art and the act of writing is always connected and contains a sense of intimacy. He has exhibited, intervened and published world-wide for over two decades. His latest exhibitions include HURRY UP. CHASE IT DOWN,

Sismografo, Porto, Portugal, *MEN ARE WOMEN*, Freedman Fitzpatrick, Los Angeles, *HERE'S GOOD LOOKING @U, KID*, Gavin Brown's Enterprise, New York and *Y.O.Y.O.G.A.L.A.N.D.*, with Ei Arakawa, Overduin & Co., Los Angeles.

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Marcus Kraft was born in 1980. He is an art director, designer and artist; Marcus Kraft studied graphic design in Switzerland, Germany and USA. In 2011, he opened his studio *marcus kraft*, where he realizes projects for commercial and cultural clients as well as self-initiated projects. The emphasis is on elaborate design concepts, editorial projects all that have a typographical quality. Most are multi disciplinary ventures and importance is placed on collaboration with photographers, architects, artists, etc., from a reliable network. *marcus kraft's* work has been frequently exhibited and published. In 2012, his international bestseller *Don't Eat the Yellow Snow* was published and also part of *Jungkunst 2012*. Kraft is also the founder and curator of *Tableau Zürich*, a public art space in Zürich.

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Juan López was born in Cantabria, Spain in 1979. He graduated with a Fine Arts Degree from UCLM, Cuenca, Spain. His work has been exhibited in galleries, art centers, fairs and national and international museums, most notably: *La Casa Encendida*, Madrid; *Nogueras Blanchard Gallery*, Barcelona; *La Fábrica Gallery*, Madrid; *MUSAC*, León; *Laboral Art Center*, Gijón; *Joan Miró Foundation*, Barcelona; *Artium*, Vitoria; *La Panera*, Lleida; *MARCO Vigo*, Galicia; *Liste Art Fair*, Basel; *O.K. Centrum Linz*, Austria; *National Museum of the Republic*, Brasilia; *Tokyo Wonder Site*, Japan; *Art Basel Miami Beach*, USA or *Den Frie*, Copenhagen. He has also won many awards and grants such as *Hegnspil-Award* Byens Hegn, *Region 0 Video Art Festival* New York, *Generaciones 2013 Art Award*, *CAM Grant of Art*, *ABC Art Award*, *Altadis Art Award*, *Marcelino Botín Foundation Grant*, *Government of Cantabria Art Prize* o *INJUVE Art Show*.

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Meier & Franz

Michael Meier & Christoph Franz have been working since 2009 as an artist duo. Places and the social, historical and political forces that shape them are the starting point for most of their works. In thorough processes of research, the duo appropriates these places and refers to them with temporary installations ranging between sculpture, architecture and image. They live and work in Zürich.

In 2012 they received the *Promotion Prize of the Canton of Zürich* and the *Kiefer Hablitzel Prize*, and in 2013 the *Nationale Suisse Art Prize*.

Michael Meier was born in 1980 in *Wiener Neustadt*, Austria - lives and works in Zürich, Switzerland. He has a *Master of Arts in Fine Arts*, from the *Zürich University of the Arts* and a *Bachelor of Arts in space & design strategies*, from *University of the Arts Linz*.

Christoph Franz was born 1982 in *Singen*, Germany - lives and works in Zürich, Switzerland. He has a *Master of Arts in Fine Arts*, *Zürich University of the Arts*, and a *Bachelor of Arts in space & design strategies*, *University of the Arts Linz*.

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MODELING AGENCY: Curated by *Martyn Reynolds* and *Janus Høm*

Martyn Reynolds is a New Zealand born artist living in Vienna, a student at the *Akademie der Bildenden Künste*, Vienna. His art practice is based on questioning how we objectify our visual environment. Taking conventional forms and established visual codes Reynolds re-contextualizes these to dislodge fixed meanings and open new indeterminate

potentialities. An important aspect of his work is the bodily experience of space, its relationship to the production of knowledge, and understanding it as metaphor. Recent projects were shown at La Salle de Bains, Lyon; Shanaynay, Paris; Gloria Knight, Auckland and IMO, Copenhagen. In 2016 he will show at Rogaland Kunstsenter, Stavanger.

Janus Høm was born in 1985. He studied at The Royal Danish Art Academy, Akademie der Bildende Künste Wien, and Universität der Künste Berlin. His recent exhibitions include "Janus Høm" at 1857, Oslo; Palazzo Peckham, 55. Venice Biennale; "Endless Scroll Deregulated Generation" at IMO, Copenhagen; "Modeling Agency" at 68m2, Copenhagen. Janus Høm is running TOVES and has previously run the galleries Perfect Present (2013) and Pleasant (2012).

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THE NIÑXS: Helena Hernández and Rafael Koller aka The Niñxs

Helena Hernández and **Rafael Koller** partnered in 2014. As *The Niñxs*, the aim is to discuss, analyze and share everyday experiences. The duo sees their daily activities as opportunities to question the world we live in. Rafael and Helena are represented by two stick-figures and their whole world is in front of them. They see the world in a similar way and love the same activity: collective drawing. They are playful, joyful and are surprised by their surroundings. These are the reasons they call themselves "The Niñxs" ("The Kids". The "x" is the Spanish way of gender equality.)

Helena Hernández was born in 1987. She is a visual artist. She carried out her studies of Visual Arts at the National School of Plastic Arts ENAP, UNAM in Mexico and finished her Master studies in Art in Public Spheres at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU DEK) in Switzerland with an Erasmus semester in Vienna, Austria at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste.

Rafael Koller was born in 1983. He is an Illustrator. He studied a Bachelor of Arts in Design with specialization in Scientific Illustration at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSLU DEK) and a Master of Arts in Design focused on Fictional Illustration.

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Sarah Ortmeier was born in 1980 and is a graduate of Städelschule, Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Frankfurt. In the last year her work has been featured in *Artforum*, *Frieze Magazine*, *Kunstzeitung*, *The New York Times* and *The New Yorker* amongst others. She has published on a range of subjects, including: *Chess and Working Class*, Springer, Vienna; *The Chasing of Shiloh Jolie-Pitt as a Boy*, Cura, Rome; *The Wittgenstein House*, Grüner + Jahr, Hamburg; *The Allies WWII*, Verlag für Moderne Kunst, Nürnberg; and *Volvo Car Repair*, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Cologne. Select exhibitions include Museum for Contemporary Art, Ghent; Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw; Palais de Tokyo, Paris; MAK Center, Los Angeles; KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; Luma Foundation, Zürich; Wittgenstein House, Vienna; Stedelijk Museum Bureau, Amsterdam; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; Gesellschaft für aktuelle Kunst, Bremen; Marres Centre for Contemporary Culture, Maastricht; Swiss Institute, New York.

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Angki Purbandono born in 1971 in Kendal now works and lives in Yogyakarta. He is a leading Indonesian contemporary photographer. Angki constantly challenges general perceptions in the field of photography. He radically brings into question the photographer's use of a camera, in order to take a picture of an object. These reflections led Angki, to the development of scanography, a breakthrough technique, by which he substitutes the camera with a scanner. Angki's signature style of scanography, gained major recognition after the

exhibition of "Space and Shadows – Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia" at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in Germany in 2005. Since the early 2000's, Angki has participated in many exhibitions – locally and abroad. In 2002, Angki, together with a group of fellow photographers, initiated Ruang MES 56, a nonprofit institution that focused on the development of art photography in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

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PUNK IS DADA is "futuristically political", [i.e. unrealistic] proposing the contents and makings as a form of post-political entertainment. The content examines other virtual egos and experiences allowing the works to become a dematerialized hybrid of modern day culture. PUNK IS DADA has a consumptive response to civil society, often the "readymade" sits in the works a recognizable tool of identity yet PUNK IS DADA sees this as a compression artifact (or artefact) of Modern-western identity. She exploits the ease of these resources to break down social, political, cultural and aesthetic dimensions. She often creates work with a certain cosmic pessimism allowing problems of the non-human world to be explored through her works ultimate negation of form as anti form is her ideal structure. Yet she declares herself an untrend; PUNK IS DADA assumes the visage of poverty in her anti-nostalgic dystopia she is industrial by nature and de-gendered by style.

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Maria Guggenbichler (*1988) und **Rosalie Schweiker** (*1987) arbeiten seit 1979 zusammen an Installationen und Arbeiten im öffentlichen Raum.

In den meist dialektisch konzipierten Arbeiten setzen sie sich häufig mit den Klischees und Banalitäten des Alltags, der Kunst und der Erwartungshaltung des Publikums auseinander.

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Stipan Tadic was born in 1986 and is a painter from Croatia, Zagreb. In 2011, He made his MA in painting on the Academy of fine Arts in Zagreb. Since then he has been a freelance artist/painter with a wide range of focus, from traditional painting, murals, comic books etc. Every artwork comes thru observation of life where he senses tension of a specific moment. Four years ago, Stipan initiated a project, which is based on daily self-portraying in the context of specific situations, which he encounters. Stylistically and narratively, drawings depict details of his life from a perspective of a young artist after finishing Art School. Focus is on subjectivity through daily events, scoping from emotions and preoccupations, travels, accident and artistic reasoning. They are published daily on Facebook, which erases the limits between private and public.

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Britta Thie, born 1987 in Minden Westfalen in northern Germany, studied fine arts at the Universität der Künste in Berlin in the class of Hito Steyerl, where she was supported by the Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes. She now is a Berlin-based artist whose work engages emerging technologies and the relationship between self and digital representation. She is also a professional model who has worked with brands including Louis Vuitton, Jil Sander, and Eckhaus Latta; in her practice Thie often depicts her own body to examine the meaning of the figurative image in a product-driven society. In recent years she has shown work at Anthology Film Archives, New York; Mumok, Vienna; Auto Italia, London; and Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin. This spring she opened her first solo-show at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt's new curatorial platform 'Digital Art Zone' with her 6-part web-series "Translantics".

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Valentin Hauri

Born 1954 Baden, Switzerland
lives and works in Zurich.
www.valentinhauri.ch

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Valerio Pellegrini was born in Milan in 1987, with a strong bent for illustration from a young age. He is a practicing communication designer, specifically, dealing with data visualization, graphic design, illustration and editorial design. Valerio gives a structure to the data, identifying patterns and highlighting the seemingly invisible though significant relationships, to design eye-catching graphics that manage to convey forcefully the contents. He collaborates with research laboratories and studios in Italy and is a freelancer for the United States, Great Britain, Holland, Japan and China. He was awarded best individual contribution for the Kantar-Information is Beautiful Award in 2013. And third prize for the Malofiej Awards for his *Geopolitica della condivisione* (Geopolitics of sharing) info graphics in 2012.

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Eva Vuillemin & Ruth Erdt

The posters were created and anonymously pasted for an exhibition by Ruth Erdt and Eva Vuillemin. The collaborative work shows self-portraits, staged by both artists in the same age between 16 and 22. "CYANOTYPES 16-22" was published in this context. Eva is Ruth's daughter.

www.erdt.ch

www.evavuillemin.net

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